

OLD FRENCH SERIES • VOLUME 9

LANCELOT

CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES

Lancelot

The Knight of the Cart

with a word-for-word interlinear English translation
preserving the original word order

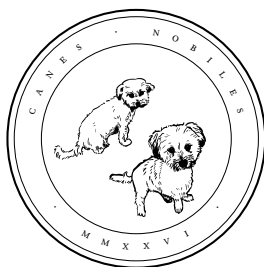


CANES NOBILES · MMXXVI

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Volume 9 of the Canes Nobiles Old French interlinear texts

The Old French text follows Wendelin Foerster's text, Christian von Troyes sämtliche Werke IV: Der Karrenritter (Lancelot) und das Wilhelmsleben (Halle, 1899)

Set from a page scan of Foerster's edition

Translated and composed with AI, edited by Christopher Hench

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The spelling is Foerster's normalized Champenois, with the acute on a tonic final e, the cedilla, the tréma where two vowels do not form a diphthong, and his long s printed as s; speech stands between “ ” and a word or phrase quoted between ‘ ’, and the one speech he leaves unclosed, at 2458, is left so. The verse number the margin carries every fifth row is Foerster's count, a row of air marks each of his drop capitals that does not open a section, and the reading sections and their English heads are this press's.

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The Prologue, and the Stranger's Challenge

I

Chrétien takes this book's matter and sense from the countess of Champagne and claims only the pains for himself. At Camelot on Ascension Day an armed knight enters without greeting; he holds prisoners out of Arthur's land, and the king has neither force nor wealth to get them back. Let a knight lead the queen into the wood after him and win her there, he says, and all of them go free. Kay asks leave, the queen falls at his feet to keep him, and the boon Arthur grants unheard is the queen; Kay leads her off, and Gawain urges pursuit.

Des que ma dame de Chanpaingne

Since that my lady of Champagne

viaut que romanz a feire anpraingne,

wills that a-romance to make I-undertake

je l'anprandrai mout volantiers,

I it-I-shall-undertake most willingly

come cil qui est suens antiers

as he who is hers entirely

de quanqu'il puet el monde feire,

of whatever-he can in-the world do

sanz rien de losange avant treire.

without anything of flattery forward to-draw

Mes teus s'an pöist antremetre

But such himself-thereof might meddle

qui i vossist losange metre,

who there would-wish flattery to-put

si dëist, et jel tesmoignasse,

and would-say and I-it would-attest

- 10 que ce est la dame qui passe
that this is the lady who surpasses
 totes celes qui sont vivanz,
all those who are living
 tant con li suns passe les vanz,
as-much as the south-wind surpasses the winds
 qui vante an mai ou an avril.
which blows in May or in April
 Par foi, je ne sui mie cil
By faith I not am at-all be
- 15 qui vuelle losangier sa dame.
who would-wish to-flatter his lady
 Dirai je: Tant com une jame
Shall-say I As-much as a gem
 vaut de pelles et de sardines,
is-worth than pearls and than sardonxyces
 vaut la contesse de rëines?
is-worth the countess than queens
 Nenil, je n'an dirai ja rien,
No I not-thereof shall-say ever anything
- 20 s'est il voirs maleoit gre mien;
yet-is it true cursed will my
 mes tant dirai je que miauz oevre
but so-much shall-say I that better works
 ses comandemanz an ceste oevre
her commandment in this work
 que sans ne painne que j'i mete.
than sense nor pains that I-therein put

Del Chevalier de la Charrete

Of-the Knight of the Cart

comance Crestiens son livre;

25

begins Chrétien his book

matiere et san l'an done et livre

matter and sense to-him-thereof gives and delivers

la contesse, et il s'antremet

the countess and he himself-applies

de panser si que rien n'i met

to think so that anything not-therein he-puts

fors sa painne et s'antancion;

except his pains and his-attention

des or comance sa raison.

30

from now begins his account

A un jor d'une Asçansion

On a day of-an Ascension

fu venuz devers Carlion

was come from Carlion

li rois Artus et tenu ot

the king Arthur and held bad

cort mout riche a Camaalot,

court very rich at Camelot

si riche com au jor estut.

35

so rich as for-the day was-fitting

Aprés mangier ne se remut

After eating not himself stirred

li rois d'anre ses conpeignons.

the king from-among his companions

Mout ot an la sale barons,

Many there-were in the hall barons

et s'i fu la rëine ansamble:

and so-there was the queen together

40 si ot avuec li, ce me sanble,

and there-were with her this to-me seems

mainte bele dame cortoise,

many-a fair lady courteous

bien parlant an langue françoise.

well speaking in tongue French

Et Kes, qui ot servi as tables,

And Kay who had served at-the tables

manjoit avuec les conestables.

was-eating with the constables

45 La ou Kes seoit au mangier,

There where Kay sat at-the meal

a tant ez vos un chevalier

at that behold you a knight

qui vint a cort mout acesmez,

who came to court very arrayed

de totes ses armes armez,

with all his arms armed

si vint jusque devant le roi

and came right before the king

50 li chevaliers a tel conroi

the knight in such array

la ou antre ses barons sist.

there where among his barons he-sat

Nel salua pas, ainz li dist:

Not-him he-greeted at-all rather to-him said

“Rois Artus, j’ai an ma prison

King Arthur I-have in my prison

de ta terre et de ta meison

from thy land and from thy house

chevaliers, dames et puceles,

knights ladies and maidens

mes ne t’an di pas les noveles

but not to-thee-thereof I-tell at-all the news

por ce que jes te vuelle randre;

for this that I-them to-thee wish to-render

einçois te vuel dire et aprandre

rather to-thee I-wish to-say and to-teach

que tu n’as force ne avoir,

that thou not-hast strength nor wealth

par quoi tu les puisses avoir.

by which thou them mayest have

Et saches bien qu’einsi morras

And know well that-thus thou-wilt-die

que ja eidier ne lor porras.”

that ever to-help not to-them thou-wilt-be-able

Li rois respont qu’il li estuet

The king answers that-it to-him behooves

sofrir, s’amander ne le puet;

to-endure if-to-mend not it he-can

mes mout l’an poise durement.

but much him-thereof it-grieves sorely

Lors fet li chevaliers sanblant

Then makes the knight semblance

qu’aler s’an vuelle, si s’an torne,

that-to-go himself-thence he-wishes and himself-thence turns

55

60

65

- devant le roi plus ne sejourne,
before the king more not he-stays
- et vient jusqu'a l'uis de la sale;
and comes right-to the-door of the hall
- 70 mes les degrez mie n'avale,
but the steps at-all not-he-descends
- einçois s'areste et dit de la:
rather himself-he-stops and says from there
- "Rois, s'a ta cort chevalier a
King if-at thy court knight there-is
- nes un, an cui tant te fiasse
not-even one in whom so-much thyself thou-wouldst-trust
- que la rëine li osasse
that the queen to-him thou-wouldst-dare
- 75 baillier por mener an cel bois
to-deliver to lead into that wood
- après moi, la ou je m'an vois,
after me there where I myself-thence go
- par un covant l'i atandrai,
on a covenant her-there I-shall-await
- que les prisons toz te randrai,
that the prisoners all to-thee I-shall-render
- qui sont an essil an ma terre,
who are in exile in my land
- 80 se il vers moi la puet conquerre
if he against me her can win
- et s'il fet tant qu'il l'an ramaint."
and if-he does so-much that-he her-thence brings-back
- Ce öirent el palés maint,
This heard in-the palace many-a-one

s'an fu la corz tote estormie.

and-thereof was the court all in-uproar

La novele an a Kes öie,

The news thereof has Kay heard

qui avuec les serjanz manjoit:

who with the sergeants was-eating

le mangier leisse, et vient tot droit

the meal he-leaves and comes all straight

au roi, si li comance a dire

to-the king and to-him begins to say

tot autressi come par ire:

all just-so as by anger

“Rois, servi t'ai mout longuemant

King served thee-I-have very long

a buene foi et leaumant;

in good faith and loyally

or praing congié, si m'an irai,

now I-take leave and myself-thence I-shall-go

que ja mes ne te servirai.

for ever more not thee I-shall-serve

Je n'ai volaté ne talant

I not-have will nor desire

de toi servir d'ore an avant”.

to thee serve from-this-hour in forward

Au roi poise de ce qu'il ot;

To-the king it-grieves of this that-he hears

et quant il respondre li pot,

and when he to-answer to-him could

si li a dit eneslepas:

then to-him has said straightway

85

90

95

“Est ce a certes ou a gas?”

Is this in earnest or in jest

Et Kes respont: “Biaus sire rois,

And Kay answers Fair lord king

100 je n'ai or cure de gabois,

I not-have now care of jesting

ainz praing congié trestot a certes.

rather I-take leave quite in earnest

Je ne vos quier autres dessertes,

I not from-you seek other deserts

n'autre loier por mon servise.

nor-other payment for my service

Einsi m'est or volantez prise,

Thus to-me-is now a-will taken

105 que je m'an aille sanz respit.”

that I myself-thence go without delay

“Est ce par ire ou par despit”,

Is this by anger or by spite

fet li rois, “qu'aler an volez?

says the king that-to-go thence you-wish

Seneschaus, si con vos solez,

Seneschal so as you are-wont

soiiez a cort, et sachiez bien

be at court and know well

110 que je n'ai an cest monde rien

that I not-have in this world anything

que je por vostre remenance

that I for your remaining

ne vos doingne sanz demorance.”

not to-you may-give without delay

“Sire”, fet Kes, “ce n’a mestier;

Lord says Kay this not-has use

n’an prandroie pas un sestier

not-thereof I-would-take at-all a sester

chascun jor d’or fin esmeré.”

each day of-gold fine refined

Ez vos le roi mout desperé,

Behold you the king very despairing

s’an est a la rëine alez:

himself-thence is to the queen gone

“Dame”, fet il, “vos ne savez

Lady says he you not know

del seneschal, qu’il me requiert.

of-the seneschal what-be of-me asks

Congié demande, et dit qu’il n’iert

Leave he-asks and says that-be not-will-be

a ma cort plus; ne sai por quoi.

at my court more not I-know for what

Ce qu’il ne viaut feire por moi,

That which-be not wishes to-do for me

fera tost por vostre proiere:

he-will-do soon for your prayer

alez a lui, ma dame chiere!

go to him my lady dear

Quant por moi remenoir ne daingne,

Since for me to-remain not he-deigns

proiiez li que por vos remaingne,

pray him that for you he-remain

et ainz l’an chieez vos as piez;

and rather him-thereof fall you at-the feet

115

120

125

car ja mes ne seroie liez

for ever more not I-would-be glad

se sa conpeignie n'avoie."

if his company not-I-had

130 Li rois la rëine an anvoie

The king the queen thence sends

au seneschal, et ele i va.

to-the seneschal and she thither goes

Avuec les autres le trova;

With the others him she-found

et quant ele vint devant lui,

and when she came before him

si li dit: "Kes, a grant enui

then to-him says Kay to great annoyance

135 me vient, ce sachiez a estros,

to-me comes this know for certain

ce qu'ai öi dire de vos.

that which-I-have heard say of you

L'an m'a conté, ce poise moi,

One to-me-has told this grieves me

que partir vos volez del roi.

that to-part you wish from-the king

Don vos vient ce? De quel corage?

Whence to-you comes this Of what heart

140 Ne vos taing or mie por sage

Not you I-hold now at-all for wise

ne por cortois, si con je suel;

nor for courteous so as I am-wont

del remenoir proier vos vuel:

of-the remaining to-pray you I-wish

remanez! que je vos an pri.”

remain for I you thereof pray

“Dame”, fet il, “vostre merci!

Lady says he by-your leave

Mes je ne remandroie mie.”

145

But I not would-remain at-all

La rëine encore l’an prie,

The queen still him-thereof prays

et tuit li chevalier a masse.

and all the knights in a-body

Et Kes li dit qu’ele se lasse

And Kay to-her says that-she herself wearies

de chose qui rien ne li vaut.

over a-thing which anything not to-her avails

Et la rëine de si haut

150

And the queen from so high

com ele estoit as piez li chiet.

as she was at-the feet to-him falls

Kes li prie qu’ele se liet;

Kay to-her prays that-she herself rise

mes ele dit que nel fera:

but she says that not-it she-will-do

ja mes ne s’an relevera

ever more not herself-thence she-will-rise

jusqu’il otroit sa volanté.

155

until-he grant her will

Lors li a Kes acreanté

Then to-her has Kay granted

qu'il remandra, mes que li rois

that-he will-remain provided that the king

otroit ce qu'il dira einçois

grant that which-he will-say beforehand

et ele mēismes l'otroit.

and she herself it-grant

160 "Kes", fet ele, "que que ce soit,

Kay says she whatever that this be

et je et il l'otroierons.

both I and he it-we-shall-grant

Or an venez, si li dirons

Now thence come and to-him we-shall-say

que vos estes ainsi remés."

that you are thus remained

Avuec la rēine an va Kes,

With the queen thence goes Kay

165 si sont devant le roi venu.

and are before the king come

"Sire, je ai Keu retenu",

Lord I have Kay retained

fet la rēine, "a grant travail;

says the queen with great labor

mes par un covant le vos bail,

but on a covenant him to-you I-deliver

que vos feroiz ce qu'il dira."

that you will-do that which-he will-say

Li rois de joie an sospira

The king from joy thereat sighed

et dit que son comandement

and says that his commandment

fera, que que il li demant.

he-will-do whatever that he of-him ask

“Sire”, fet Kes, “or sachiez dons

Lord says Kay now know then

que je vuel et queus est li dons

what I wish and what is the boon

don vos m’avez assëuré:

whereof you to-me-have assured

mout me taing a buen ëuré

much myself I-hold for well fortunèd

que je l’avrai, vostre merci.

that I it-I-shall-have by-your leave

Sire, ma dame que voi ci

Lord my lady whom I-see here

m’avez otroiïee a baillier,

to-me-have granted to deliver

s’ïrons après le chevalier

and-we-shall-go after the knight

qui nos atant an la forest.”

who us awaits in the forest

Le roi poise et si l’an revest,

The king it-grieves and yet him-thereof he-invests

car ains de rien ne se desdist;

for ever of anything not himself he-unsaid

170

175

180

mes iriez et dolanz le fist

but angry and grieving it he-did

185 si que bien parut a son vout.

so that well it-appeared in his countenance

La rëine an repesa mout,

The queen thereat again-grieved much

et tuit dient par la meison

and all say through the house

qu'orguel, outrage et desreison

that-pride outrage and unreason

avoit Kes demandee et quise.

had Kay demanded and sought

190 Et li rois a par la main prise

And the king has by the hand taken

la rëine, si li a dit:

the queen and to-her has said

“Dame”, fet il, “sanz contredit

Lady says he without gainsaying

estuet qu'avuec Keu an ailliez.”

it-behooves that-with Kay thence you-go

Et cil dit: “Or la me bailliez,

And he says Now her to-me deliver

195 et si n'an dotez ja de rien,

and so not-thereof fear ever of anything

que je la ramanrai mout bien

for I her shall-bring-back very well

tote heitice et tote saine.”

all cheerful and all sound

Li rois li baille, et cil l'an mainne.

The king to-him delivers and he her-thence leads

Aprés aus deus s'an issent tuit;

After them two themselves-out go all

n'i a un seul cui mout n'enuit.

not-there is one single whom much not-it-grieves

Et sachiez que li seneschaus

And know that the seneschal

fu toz armez, et ses chevaus

was all armed and his horse

fu anmi la cort amenez;

was amid the court brought

et ot un palefroi delez

and there-was a palfrey beside

tel com a rëine covient.

such as for a-queen befits

La rëine au palefroi vient,

The queen to-the palfrey comes

qui n'estoit breidis ne tiranz.

which not-was restive nor pulling

Dolante et mate et sospiranz

Grieving and downcast and sighing

monte la rëine et si dist

mounts the queen and then said

an bas por ce qu'an ne l'öist:

in low for this that-one not it-should-bear

"Ha! ha! se vos le sëussiez,

Ab ab if you it knew

ja, ce croi, ne me leississiez

ever this I-believe not me you-would-let

sanz chalonge mener un pas!"

without challenge lead a step

200

205

210

- Mout le cuida avoir dit bas,
Much it she-thought to-have said low
- 215 mes li cuens Guinables l'öi,
but the count Guinable it-heard
- qui au monter fu pres de li.
who at-the mounting was near to her
- Au departir si grant duel firent
At-the parting so great grief made
- tuit cil et celes qui l'öirent,
all those and those-women who it-heard
- con s'ele jëust morte an biere.
as if-she lay dead on bier
- 220 Ne cudent que revaingne arriere
Not they-think that she-come-again back
- ja mes an trestot son aage.
ever more in all her lifetime
- Li seneschaus par son outrage
The seneschal through his outrage
- l'an mainne la ou cil l'atant;
her-thence leads there where he her-awaits
- mes a nelui n'an pesa tant
but to anyone not-thereof grieved so-much
- 225 que del siure s'antremëist,
that of-the following himself-he-should-undertake
- tant que mes sire Gauvains dist
until that my lord Gawain said
- au roi son oncle an audience:
to-the king his uncle in bearing

“Sire”, fet il, “mout grant anfance

Lord says he very great childishness

avez faite, et mout m’an mervoil;

you-have done and much myself-thereat I-marvel

mes se vos creez mon consoil,

but if you believe my counsel

demantiers qu’il sont ancor pres,

while that-they are still near

je et vos an irons après

I and you thence shall-go after

et cil qui i voldront venir.

and those who thither will-wish to-come

Je ne m’an porroie tenir

I not myself-thence could bold

qu’après aus n’aille maintenant.

that-after them not-I-go at-once

Ce ne seroit mie avenant

This not would-be at-all seemly

que nos après aus n’alissiens

that we after them not-should-go

tant seviaus que nos s’eüssiens

so-far at-least that we should-know

que la rëine devandra

what the queen will-become

et comant Kes se contandra.”

and how Kay himself will-bear

“Häi! biaux niés”, ce dist li rois,

Ha fair nephew this said the king

“mout avez or dit que cortois.

much you-have now said as courteous

230

235

240

Et des qu'anpris avez l'afeire,

And since that-undertaken you-have the-business

comandez noz chevaus fors treire

command our horses out to-draw

245 et metre frains et anseler,

and to-put bridles and to-saddle

qu'il n'i et mes que de l'aler."

that-it not-there be more than of the-going

The Cart

II

Arthur and Gawain ride after them, and Kay's horse comes back riderless, its reins broken and its stirrup-strap bloody. A knight on a foundered mount begs one of Gawain's destriers, rides it to death, and is next seen on foot beside a cart. What pillories are now, Chrétien says, the cart was then: for traitors, murderers, thieves, and the beaten. The dwarf driving it will say where the queen is only if he climbs up. Reason forbids, Love commands; he hesitates two steps and mounts, and a whole town hoots him through its streets. At midnight a flaming lance falls on the forbidden bed.

Ja sont li cheval amené

Already are the horses brought

apareillié et anselé.

made-ready and saddled

Li rois monte toz premerains,

The king mounts quite first

250 puis monta mes sire Gauvains

then mounted my lord Gawain

et tuit li autre qui ainz ainz:

and all the others who first first

chascuns an vost estre conpainz,

each thereof wished to-be companion

si va chascuns si con li plot.

so goes each so as to-him pleased

Armé furent, de teus i ot,

Armed were of such there were

s'an i ot sanz armes assez.

255

and-thereof there were without arms plenty

Mes sire Gauvains fu armez

My lord Gawain was armed

et si fist a deus escuiiers

and so made to two squires

mener an destre deus destriers.

lead in hand two chargers

Et einsi com il aprochoient

And just as they were-approaching

vers la forest, issir an voient

260

toward the forest to-come-out thence they-see

le cheval Keu, sel reconurent,

the horse of-Kay and-it they-recognized

et virent que les resnes furent

and saw that the reins were

del frain ronpues anbedeus.

of-the bridle broken both

Li chevaus venoit trestoz seus,

The horse came all alone

s'ot de sanc tainte l'estriviere,

265

and-had with blood stained the-stirrup-strap

et de la sele fu deriere

and of the saddle was behind

li arçons frez et anpiriez.

the saddle-bow broken and damaged

N'i a nul qui n'an soit iriez,

Not-there is anyone who not-thereof be angered

et li uns l'autre an guingne et bote.

and the one the-other thereat nudges and pushes

270 Bien loing devant tote la rote

Well far before all the company

mes sire Gauvains chevauchoit:

my lord Gawain was-riding

ne tarda gueires que il voit

not it-delayed much that he sees

venir un chevalier le pas

come a knight at-the pace

sor un cheval doillant et las

on a horse ailing and weary

275 et panteisant et tressüé.

and panting and sweating

Li chevaliers a salüé

The knight has greeted

mon seignor Gauvain premerains,

my lord Gawain first

et puis lui mes sire Gauvains.

and then him my lord Gawain

Et li chevaliers s'arestut,

And the knight himself-stopped

280 qui mon seignor Gauvain conut,

who my lord Gawain knew

si li dist: "Sire, bien veez

and to-him said Lord well you-see

que mes chevaus est tressüez

that my horse is sweated

et teus qu'il n'a mes nul mestier;

and such that-it not-has more any use

et je cuit que cist dui destrier

and I think that these two chargers

sont vostre; or si vos prieroie

are yours now so you I-would-pray

par covant que je vos randroie

on covenant that I to-you would-render

le servise et le guerredon,

the service and the guerdon

que vos, ou a prest ou a don,

that you either on loan or on gift

le quel que soit, me baillissiez."

the which that it-be to-me would-deliver

Et il li respont: "Choisissiez

And he to-him answers Choose

des deus le quel que miauz vos plect."

of-the two the which that better you pleases

Et cil cui granz besoingne an est

And he to-whom great need thereof is

n'ala pas querant le meillor,

not-went at-all seeking the best

ne le plus bel ne le greignor;

nor the most fair nor the greater

285

290

- 295 ainz sailli mout tost sor celui
rather he-leapt very quickly on that-one
 que il trova plus pres de lui,
which he found most near to him
 si l'a maintenant esleissié.
and it-has at-once set-at-gallop
 Et cil chiet morz qu'il ot leissié;
And that-one falls dead which-he had left
 car mout l'avoit le jor pené
for much him-had the day wearied
 300 et traveillié et sormené.
and labored and overdriven
 Li chevaliers sanz nul arest
The knight without any halt
 s'an vet poignant par la forest,
himself-thence goes spurring through the forest
 et mes sire Gauvains après
and my lord Gawain after
 le siut et chace com angrés,
him follows and chases like eager
 305 tant qu'il ot un pui avalé.
until that-he had a hill descended
 Et quant il ot grant piece alé,
And when he had great while gone
 si retrova mort le destrier
then he-found-again dead the charger
 qu'il ot doné au chevalier,
which-he had given to-the knight

et voit mout grant defolëiz

and sees very great trampling

de chevaus, et grant froissëiz

of horses and great shattering

d'escuz et de lances an tor;

of-shields and of lances round about

si sanbla bien que grant estor

so it-seemed well that great combat

de plusors chevaliers i ot,

of several knights there had-been

si li pesa mout et desplot

so to-him it-grieved much and displeased

de ce qu'il n'i avoit esté.

of this that-he not-there had been

N'i a pas granmant aresté,

Not-there has at-all greatly halted

ainz passe outre grant alëure,

rather be-passes beyond at-great pace

tant qu'il revit par aventure

until that-he saw-again by chance

le chevalier tot seul a pié,

the knight all alone on foot

tot armé, le hiaume lacié,

all armed the helm laced

l'escu au col, l'espee çainte,

the-shield at-the neck the-sword girt

si ot une charrete atainte.

and he-had a cart overtaken

De ce servoit charrete lores,

Of this served a-cart then

310

315

320

don li pilori servent ores,

whereof the pillories serve now

325 et an chascune buene vile,

and in each good town

ou an a or plus de trois mile,

where one has now more than three thousand

n'an avoit a cel tans que une,

not-thereof there-was at that time but one

et cele estoit a ceus comune,

and that was to those common

aussi con li pilori sont,

just as the pillories are

330 qui traïson ou murtre font,

who treason or murder do

et as ceus qui sont chanp chëu,

and to those who are in-the-field fallen

et as larrons qui ont ëu

and to thieves who have had

autrui avoir par larrecin

another's goods by theft

ou tolu par force an chemin.

or taken by force on road

335 Qui a forfet estoit repris,

Whoever in crime was caught

s'estoit an la charrete mis

and-was in the cart put

et menez par totes les rues,

and led through all the streets

s'avoit puis totes lois perdues,

and-had thereafter all rights lost

ne puis n'estoit a cort öiz

nor thereafter not-was at court heard

ne enorez ne conjöiz.

nor honored nor made-welcome

Por ce qu'a cel tans furent teus

Because this that-in that time were such

les charretes et si crüeus,

the carts and so cruel

fu dit premiers: "Quant tu verras

was said first When thou wilt-see

charrete et tu l'anconterras,

a-cart and thou it-wilt-meet

si te saingne et si te sovaingne

then thyself cross and then thee remember

de Deu, que maus ne t'an avaingne."

of God that ill not to-thee-thereof come

Li chevaliers a pié, sanz lance,

The knight on foot without lance

après la charrete s'avance,

after the cart himself-advances

et voit un nain sor les banons,

and sees a dwarf on the shafts

qui tenoit come charretons

who held like a-carter

une longue verge an sa main.

a long rod in his hand

Li chevaliers a dit au nain:

The knight has said to-the dwarf

340

345

350

“Nain”, fet il, “por Deu! car me di

Dwarf says he for God's-sake now to-me tell

se tu as vëu par ici

if thou hast seen through here

355 passer ma dame la rëine.”

pass my lady the queen

Li nains cuiverz de pute orine

The dwarf base of foul stock

ne l'an vost noveles conter,

not to-him-thereof wished news to-tell

ainz li dist: “Se tu viaus monter

rather to-him said If thou wishest mount

sor la charrete que je main,

on the cart which I drive

360 savoir porras jusqu'a demain,

to-know thou-wilt-be-able before tomorrow

que la rëine est devenue.”

what the queen is become

Tantost a sa voie tenue,

At-once he-has his way held

qu'il ne l'atant ne pas ne ore.

so-that-he not him-awaits neither a-step nor an-hour

Tant solemant deus pas demore

So-much only two steps delays

365 li chevaliers que il n'i monte.

the knight before he there mounts

Mar le fist, mar i douta honte,

Ill it he-did ill there he-feared shame

que maintenant sus ne sailli;

that at-once up not he-leapt

qu'il s'an tandra por mal bailli.

for-which-he himself-thereof will-hold for ill used

Mes reisons qui d'amors se part

But reason who from-love herself parts

li dit que de monter se gart,

to-him says that from mounting himself be-guard

si le chastie et si l'ansaingne

and him chides and so him-instructs

que rien ne face ne n'anpraingne,

that anything not be-do nor not-undertake

don il et honte ne reproche.

whereof he have shame nor reproach

N'est pas el cuer, mes an la boche

Not-is at-all in-the heart but in the mouth

reisons qui ce dire li ose;

reason who this to-say to-him dares

mes amors est el cuer anclose,

but love is in-the heart enclosed

qui li comandë et semont

who to-him commands and urges

que tost sor la charrete mont.

that soon on the cart be-mount

Amors le viaut, et il i saut;

Love it wishes and he there leaps

que de la honte ne li chaut

for of the shame not to-him it-matters

puis qu'amors le comande et viaut.

since that-love it commands and wishes

370

375

380

Et mes sire Gauvains s'esquiaux

And my lord Gawain himself-hastens

après la charrete poignant,

after the cart spurring

et quant il i trueve seant

and when he there finds sitting

385 le chevalier, si s'an mervoille;

the knight so himself-thereat he-marvels

puis dist au nain: "Car me consoille

then said to-the dwarf Now to-me counsel

de la rëine se tu sez."

of the queen if thou knowest

Et cil dist: "Se tu tant te hez

And he said If thou so-much thyself hatest

con cist chevaliers qui ci siet,

as this knight who here sits

390 monte avuec lui, se il te siet,

mount with him if it thee suits

et je te manrai après li."

and I thee shall-lead after him

Quant mes sire Gauvains l'öi,

When my lord Gawain it-heard

si le tint a mout grant folie,

then it he-beld for very great folly

et dit qu'il n'i montera mie,

and says that-he not-there will-mount at-all

395 car trop vilain change feroit

for too churlish an-exchange he-would-make

se charrete a cheval chanjoit;

if a-cart for a-horse he-changed

“Mes va, quel part que tu voldras

But go what part that thou wilt-wish

et j’irai la ou tu iras.”

and I-shall-go there where thou wilt-go

A tant a la voie se metent:

At that to the way themselves they-set

cil chevauche, cil dui charretent,

this-one rides these two cart

et ansamble une voie tienent.

and together one way they-hold

De bas vespre a un chastel vienent,

At low evening at a castle they-come

et ce sachiez que li chastiaus

and this know that the castle

estoit mout riches et mout biaux.

was very rich and very fair

Tuit troi antrerent par la porte:

All three entered by the gate

del chevalier que cil aporte

of-the knight whom this-one brings

sor la charrete se mervoillent

on the cart themselves they-marvel

les janz, mes mie n’an consoillent,

the folk but at-all not-thereof they-consult

ainz le huient petit et grant

rather him they-boot small and great

et li veillart et li enfant

both the old-men and the children

par les rues a mout grant hui,

through the streets with very great outcry

400

405

410

s'ot li chevaliers mout de lui
and-beard the knight much about himself

vilenies et despiz dire.

villainies and insults say

Tuit demandent: "A quel martire

All ask To what torment

415 sera cil chevaliers randuz?

will-be this knight given-up

Iert il escorchiez ou panduz,

Will-be he flayed or hanged

noïiez ou ars an feu d'espines?

drowned or burned on fire of-thorns

Di, nains, di tu qui le träïnes,

Tell dwarf tell thou who him draggest

a quel forfeit fu il trovez?

in what crime was he taken

420 Est il de larrecin provez?

Is he of theft convicted

Est il murtriers ou chanp chëuz?"

Is he a-murderer or in-the-field fallen

Et li nains s'est adës tëuz,

And the dwarf himself-is still silent

qu'il ne respont ne un ne el.

so-that-he not answers neither one nor other

Le chevalier mainne a l'ostel:

The knight he-leads to the-lodging

et Gauvains siut adés le nain

425

and Gawain follows still the dwarf

vers une tor qui tot a plain

toward a tower which all in level

par devers la vile seoit.

by toward the town stood

D'autre part praerie avoit,

On-other side meadow there-was

et par delez estoit assise

and by beside was set

la torz sor une roche bise,

430

the tower on a rock gray

haute et tranchiee contre val.

high and cut-away toward the-valley

Aprés la charrete a cheval

After the cart on horse

antre Gauvains dedanz la tor.

enters Gawain within the tower

An la sale ont de bel ator

In the hall they-have of fair bearing

une dameisele ancontree

435

a damsel met

(n'avoit si bele an la contree),

not-there-was so fair in the country

et voient venir deus puceles

and they-see come two maidens

avueques li, jantes et beles.

with her comely and fair

Tot maintenant que eles virent

Right at-once when they saw

440 mon seignor Gauvain, si li firent

my lord Gawain then to-him they-made

grant joie et si le salüerent

great joy and then him they-greeted

et del chevalier demanderent:

and of-the knight they-asked

“Nains, qu’a cist chevaliers messet

Dwarf what-has this knight done-amiss

que tu mainnes come contret?”

that thou ledest like a-cripple

445 Cil ne lor an vost reison randre,

He not to-them thereof wished reason to-render

ainz fist le chevalier desçandre

rather he-made the knight dismount

de la charrete, si s’an va;

from the cart then himself-thence goes

ains ne sorent ou il ala.

ever not they-knew where he went

Et mes sire Gauvains desçant:

And my lord Gawain dismounts

450 a tant vienent vaslet avant,

at that come young-men forward

qui anbedeus les desarmerent.

who both-of-them them disarmed

Deus mantiaus vers, qu’il afublerent,

Two mantles vair which-they put-on

fist la dameisele apporter.

made the damsel bring

Quant il fu ore de soper,

When it was hour of supper

li mangiers fu biaux atornez.

the meal was fairly set-out

La dameisele sist delez

The damsel sat beside

mon seignor Gauvain au mangier.

my lord Gawain at-the meal

Por neant vossissent changier

For nothing they-would-have-wished to-change

lor ostel por querre meillor;

their lodging for to-seek better

car mout lor i fist grant enor

for much to-them there made great honor

et conpeignie buene et bele

and company good and fair

tote la nuit la dameisele.

all the night the damsel

Quant il orent assez veillié,

When they had enough kept-vigil

dui lit furent apareillié

two beds were made-ready

anmi la sale haut et lonc;

amid the hall high and long

et s'an ot un autre selonc,

and thereby there-was an other alongside

plus bel des autres et plus riche;

more fair than-the others and more rich

car si con li contes afiche,

for so as the tale affirms

455

460

465

il i avoit tot le delit

it there had all the delight

470 qu'an sëust deviser an lit.

that-one could devise in a-bed

Quant del couchier fu tans et leus,

When of-the lying-down was time and place

la dameisele prist andeus

the damsel took both

ses ostes qu'ele ot ostelez;

her guests whom-she had lodged

deus liz mout biaux et lons et lez

two beds very fair and long and broad

475 lor mostre et dit: "A oés voz cors

to-them shows and says For the-use-of your bodies

sont fet cist dui lit ça defors;

are made these two beds here outside

mes an celui qui est de la

but in that-one which is of there

ne jist qui desservi ne l'a:

not lies who deserved not it-has

il ne fu pas fez a vostre oés."

it not was at-all made for your use

480 Li chevaliers li respont lués,

The knight to-her answers at-once

cil qui sor la charrete vint,

he who on the cart came

qu'a desdaing et a despit tint

who-for scorn and for contempt held

la deffanse a la dameisele.

the forbidding of the damsel

“Dites moi”, fet il, “la querele

Tell to-me says he the quarrel

por quoi cist liz est an deffanse.”

for which this bed is in forbidding

Cele respont, qui pas ne panse,

She answers who at-all not thinks

qu’ele an iert apansee bien:

that-she thereof will-be thought-of well

“A vos”, fet ele, “ne tient rien

To you says she not it-belongs anything

del demander ne de l’anquerre.

of-the asking nor of the-inquiring

Honiz est chevaliers an terre

Shamed is a-knight on earth

puis qu’il a esté an charrete,

since that-he has been in a-cart

si n’est pas droiz qu’il s’antremete

so not-is at-all right that-he himself-meddle

de ce don vos m’avez requise,

with this whereof you of-me-have asked

antesmes ce que il i jise;

much-less this that he there lie

qu’il le porroit tost comparer.

for-he it might soon pay-for

L’an ne l’a mie fet parer

One not it-has at-all made adorn

si richemant por vos couchier.

so richly for you to-lie-down

485

490

495

Vos le conparriiez mout chier

You it would-pay very dear

se il vos venoit nes an pans.”

if it to-you came not-even in thought

500 “Ce verroiz vos”, fet il, “par tans.”

This will-see you says he in time

“Jel verrai?” — “Voire.” — “Or i parra.”

I-it shall-see Truly Now there it-will-appear

“Je ne sai qui le conparra”,

I not know who it will-pay-for

fet li chevaliers, “par mon chief!

says the knight by my head

Cui qu’il enuit ne ne soit grief,

To-whom that-it displease nor not it-be grievous

505 an cestui lit vuel je jesir

in this bed wish I to-lie

et reposer tot a leisir.”

and to-rest quite at leisure

Lors s’est maintenant deschauciez

Then himself-be-is at-once unshod

el lit, qui fu lons et hauciez

in-the bed which was long and raised

plus des autres deus demie aune,

more than-the others two half-an ell

510 et fu coverz d’un samit jaune,

and was covered with-a samite yellow

d’un covertor d’or estelé.

with-a coverlet with-gold starred

N'estoit mie de ver pelé

Not-was at-all of vair stripped

la forrëure, ainz iert de sables;

the lining rather it-was of sables

bien fust a oés un roi metables

well it-would-be for the-use-of a king suitable

li covertoirs qui fu sor lui.

the coverlet which was over him

Li liz ne fu mie de glui,

The bed not was at-all of straw

ne de pesaz ne de viez nates.

nor of chaff nor of old mats

A mie nuit de vers les lates

At mid night from toward the laths

vint une lance come foudre,

came a lance like a-thunderbolt

le fer dessoz, et cuida coudre

the iron below and it-thought to-pin

le chevalier parmi les flans

the knight through the flanks

au covertoir et as dras blans

to-the coverlet and to-the sheets white

et au lit, ou il se jisoit.

and to-the bed where he himself lay

An la lance un penon avoit,

On the lance a pennon there-was

qui toz estoit de feu espris.

which all was with fire kindled

515

520

525

El covertor est li feus pris

In-the coverlet is the fire caught

et es dras et el lit a masse.

and in-the sheets and in-the bed in mass

Et li fers de la lance passe

And the iron of the lance passes

au chevalier lez le costé,

to-the knight along the side

530 si qu'il li a del cuir osté

so that-it to-him has of-the skin taken

un po, mes ne fu pas bleciez.

a little but not he-was at-all wounded

Et li chevaliers s'est dreciez,

And the knight himself-is raised

s'estaint le feu et prant la lance,

and-quenches the fire and takes the lance

anmi la sale la balance,

amid the hall it he-flings

535 ne por ce son lit ne guerpi,

nor for this his bed not he-quitted

ainz se recoucha et dormi

rather himself he-lay-again and slept

tot autressi sëuremant

quite just-as securely

com il ot fet premieremant.

as he had done at-first

The Queen's Train, and the Ford

III

From the tower window at dawn they see a bier go by and the queen led past, and the knight of the cart is half out of the window before Gawain hauls him back. At a crossroads a maiden names the queen's captor — Meleagant, son of the king of Gorre — and the two ways into a realm no stranger leaves: the Water Bridge and the Bridge of the Sword. Gawain takes the first. The other, lost in thought, hears none of the ford-keeper's three challenges and is knocked into the water; he beats the keeper and spares him, and at evening a damsel offers him lodging if he will lie with her.

Bien par matin au point del jor

Well by morning at-the point of-the day

la dameisele de la tor

the damsel of the tower

lor ot fet messe apareillier,

for-them had made mass be-made-ready

ses fist lever et esveillier.

them she-made rise and awaken

Quant an lor ot messe chantee,

When one for-them had mass sung

as fenestres devers la pree

at-the windows toward the meadow

s'assist li chevaliers pansis,

himself-sat the knight pensive

cil qui sor la charrete ot sis,

he who on the cart had sat

et esgardoit aval les prez.

and was-looking down-at the meadows

540

545

A l'autre fenestre delez

At the-other window beside

estoit la pucele venue,

was the maiden come

550 si l'avoit a consoil tenue

and her-bad in counsel held

mes sire Gauvains an requoi

my lord Gawain in privacy

une piece, ne sai de quoi:

a while not I-know of what

ne sai don les paroles furent,

nor I-know whereof the words were

mes tant sor la fenestre jurent

but so-long on the window they-lay

555 qu'aval les prez lez la riviere

that-down-at the meadows beside the river

an virent porter une biere,

thence they-saw carry a bier

s'avoit dedanz un chevalier,

and-there-was within a knight

et delez duel mout grant et fier

and beside grief very great and fierce

que trois dameiseles feisoient.

which three damsels were-making

Après la biere venir voient

After the bier come they-see

une rote, et devant venoit

a company and before came

uns granz chevaliers, qui menoit

a great knight who was-leading

une bele dame a senestre.

a fair lady on the-left

Li chevaliers de la fenestre

The knight from the window

conut que c'estoit la rëine;

knew that it-was the queen

de l'esgarder onques ne fine

from the-gazing ever not he-ceases

mout antantis et mout li plot

very intent and much to-him it-pleased

au plus longuemant que il pot.

at-the most long that he could

Et quant plus ne la pot veoir,

And when more not her he-could see

si se vost jus leissier cheoir

then himself he-wished down let fall

et trebuchier a val son cors.

and to-hurl to below his body

Et estoit ja demis defors

And he-was already half outside

quant mes sire Gauvains le vit,

when my lord Gawain him saw

sel trait arrieres, si li dit:

and-him draws backward and to-him says

560

565

570

- 575 “Merci, sire, soiez an pes!
Mercy lord be at peace
 Por Deu, nel vos pansez ja mes
For God's-sake not-it to-you think ever more
 que vos façoiz tel desverie.
that you do such madness
 A grant tort haez vostre vie.”
With great wrong you-hate your life
 “Mes a droit”, fet la dameisele;
But with right says the damsel
- 580 “don n’iert sēue la novele
whence not-will-be known the news
 par tot de sa malëurté?
through all of his ill-fortune
 Des qu’il a en charrete esté,
Since that-be has in a-cart been
 bien doit voloir qu’il soit ocis,
well be-ought to-wish that-be be slain
 que miauz vaudroit il morz que vis.
for better would-be be dead than alive
- 585 Sa vie est des or mes honteuse
His life is from now on shameful
 et despite et malëureuse.”
and contemptible and ill-fortuned
 A tant lor armes demanderent
At that tbeir arms they-asked-for
 li chevalier et si s’armerent,
the knights and then they-armed

et lors corteisie et proesce

and then courtesy and prowess

fist la dameisele et largesce;

did the damsel and largesse

que quant ele ot assez gabé

for when she had enough mocked

le chevalier et ranponé,

the knight and taunted

si li dona cheval et lance

then to-him she-gave horse and lance

par amor et par acordance.

through love and through reconciliation

Li chevalier congié ont pris

The knights leave have taken

come cortois et bien apris

as courteous and well bred

a la dameisele, et si l'ont

of the damsel and then her-they-have

saluee, puis si s'an vont

greeted then so themselves-thence they-go

si con la rote aler an virent;

so as the company go thence they-saw

einsi fors del chastel issirent

thus out of-the castle they-issued

qu'onques nus nes i aparla.

that-ever anyone not-them there addressed

Isnelemant s'an vont par la

Swiftly themselves-thence they-go by there

ou la rëine orent vëue.

where the queen they-had seen

590

595

600

N'ont pas la rote aconsëue,

Not-they-have at-all the company overtaken

605 qu'il s'an aloient esleissié.

for-they themselves-thence were-going at-full-gallop

Des prez antrent an un pleissié

From-the meadows they-enter into an enclosure

et truevent un chemin ferré.

and find a road paved

Tant ont par la forest erré

So-long they-have through the forest ridden

qu'il pot estre prime de jor,

that-it could be prime of day

610 et lors ont an un quarrefor

and then they-have at a crossroad

une dameisele trovee,

a damsel found

si l'ont anbedui saluee,

and her-have both greeted

et chascuns li requiert et prie,

and each of-her asks and prays

s'ele le set, qu'ele lor die

if-she it knows that-she to-them tell

615 ou la rëine an est menee.

where the queen thence is led

Cele respont come senee

She answers like a-wise-woman

et dist: "Bien vos savroie metre,

and said Well you I-should-know-how to-set

tant me porriiez vos prometre,

so-much to-me could you promise

el droit chemin et an la voie,

on-the right road and on the way

et la terre vos nomeroie

and the land to-you I-would-name

et le chevalier qui l'an mainne;

and the knight who her-thence leads

mes mout i covandroit grant painne,

but much there would-be-needed great pains

qui an la terre antrer voldroit;

to-whomever into the land to-enter would-wish

qu'ainz qu'il i fust mout se doldroit."

for-before that-be there were much himself he-would-suffer

Et mes sire Gauvains li dit:

And my lord Gawain to-her says

"Dameisele, se Deus m'ait,

Damsel so God me-help

je vos an promet a devise

I to-you thereof promise at will

que je mete an vostre servise,

that I put at your service

quant vos pleira, tot mon pooir,

when you it-will-please all my power

mes que vos me diiez le voir."

provided that you to-me tell the truth

620

625

630

Et cil qui fu sor la charrete

And he who was on the cart

ne dist pas que il li promete

not says at-all that he to-her promise

tot son pooir, einçois afiche

all his power rather he-affirms

come cil cui amors fet riche

as he whom love makes rich

635 et puissant et hardi par tot,

and powerful and bold in all

que sanz arest et sanz redot

that without halt and without misgiving

quanquë ele viaut li promet

whatever she wishes to-her he-promises

et tot an son vouloir se met.

and wholly in her will himself puts

“Donc le vos dirai je”, fet ele;

Then it to-you shall-tell I says she

640 lors lor conte la dameisele:

then to-them tells the damsel

“Par foi, seignor, Meleaganz,

By faith lords Meleagant

uns chevaliers corsuz et granz,

a knight stout and great

fiz le roi de Gorre, l’a prise,

son of-the king of Gorre her-has taken

et si l’a el reaume mise,

and so her-has into-the realm put

645 don nus estranges ne retorne;

whence any stranger not returns

mes par force el päis sejourne

but by force in-the land he-abides

an servitume et an essil.”

in servitude and in exile

Et lors li redemandent cil:

And then of-her ask-again they

“Dameisele, ou est cele terre?

Damsel where is that land

Ou porrons nos la voie querre?”

Where shall-be-able we the way to-seek

Cele respont: “Tost le savroiz;

She answers Soon it you-will-know

mes ce sachiez, mout i avroiz

but this know much there you-will-have

anconbriers et felons trespas;

hindrances and cruel crossings

que de legier n’i antre an pas

for with ease not-there enters one at-all

se par le congié le roi non

except by the leave of-the king not

(li rois Baudemaguz a non),

the king Bademagu has for-name

si puet an antrer totes voies

yet can one enter all the-same

par deus mout perilleuses voies

by two very perilous ways

et par deus mout felons passages.

and by two very cruel passages

Li uns a non Li Ponz Evages,

The one has for-name The Water Bridge

650

655

660

por ce que soz eve est li ponz;

for this that under water is the bridge

si a de l'eve jusqu'au fonz

so there-is of the-water down-to-the bottom

autant de soz come de sus,

as-much of below as of above

ne de ça mains ne de la plus,

neither on this-side less nor on that more

665 ainz est li ponz tot droit an mi;

rather is the bridge quite straight in middle

et si n'a que pié et demi

and so not-there-is but a-foot and a-half

de le et autretant d'espés.

of breadth and as-much of-thickness

Bien fet a refuser cist mes,

Well it-is-fitting to refuse this dish

et s'est ce li mains perilleus;

and yet-is this the less perilous

670 mes il a assez antre deus

but there are enough between the-two

avantures don je me tes.

adventures whereof I myself keep-silent

Li autre ponz est plus mauvés

The other bridge is more evil

et est plus perilleus assez;

and is more perilous by-far

qu'ains par home ne fu passez;

for-ever by man not it-was crossed

675 qu'il est come espee tranchanz,

for-it is like a-sword cutting

et por ce trestotes les janz

and for this all the folk

l'apelent Le Pont de l'Espee.

it-call The Bridge of the-Sword

La verité vos ai contee

The truth to-you I-have told

de tant con dire vos an puis."

of so-much as to-tell to-you thereof I-can

Et cil li redemandent puis:

And they of-her ask-again then

"Dameisele, se vos deigniez,

Damsel if you would-deign

cez deus voies nos anseigniez!"

these two ways to-us teach

Et la dameisele respont:

And the damsel answers

"Vez ci la droite voie au pont

See here the straight way to-the bridge

dessoz eve, et cele de la

under water and that of there

droit au pont de l'espee va."

straight to-the bridge of the-sword goes

Et lors redit li chevaliers,

And then says-again the knight

cil qui ot esté charretiers:

he who had been a-carter

"Sire, je vos part sanz rancune:

Lord I to-you divide without ill-will

prenez de cez deus voies l'une,

take of these two ways the-one

680

685

690

et l'autre quite me clamez;

and the-other quit to-me declare

prenez celi que miauz amez.”

take that-one which better you-love

“Par foi”, fet mes sire Gauvains,

By faith says my lord Gawain

“mout est perilleus et grevains

much is perilous and grievous

695 li uns et li autre passages:

the one and the other passage

del prandre ne puis estre sages,

of-the taking not I-can be wise

je ne sai preu le quel je praingne;

I not know rightly the which I should-take

mes n'est pas droiz qu'an moi remaingne

but not-is at-all right that-on me it-rest

quant parti m'an avez le jeu:

since divided to-me-thereof you-have the game

700 au pont dessoz eve me veu.”

at-the bridge under water myself I-vow

“Donc est il droiz que je m'an voise

Then is it right that I myself-thence go

au pont de l'espee sanz noise”,

to-the bridge of the-sword without dispute

fet li autre, “et je m'i otroi.”

says the other and I myself-to-it agree

A tant se departent tuit troi,

At that themselves depart all three

s'a li uns l'autre comandé

705

and-has the one the-other commended

mout deboneiremant a De.

very graciously to God

Et quant cele aler les an voit,

And when she go them thence sees

si dit: "Chascuns de vos me doit

then says Each of you to-me owes

un guerredon a mon gre randre,

a guerdon at my will to-render

quel ore que jel voldrai prandre.

710

whatever hour that I-it shall-wish to-take

Gardez, ne l'obliez vos mie!"

Take-beed not it-forget you at-all

"Non ferons nos, voir, douce amie!"

Not shall-do we truly sweet friend

Font li chevalier anbedui.

Say the knights both

A tant s'an vet chascuns par lui:

At that himself-thence goes each by himself

et cil de la charrete panse

715

and he of the cart thinks

con cil qui force ne deffanse

as he who force nor defense

n'a vers amor qui le justise;

not-has against love who him rules

et ses pansers est de tel guise

and his thinking is of such wise

que lui mēismes an oblie,

that him himself thereof he-forgets

- 720 ne set s'il est ou s'il n'est mie,
nor knows if-he is or if-he not-is at-all
 ne ne li manbre de son non,
nor not to-him comes-to-mind of his name
 ne set s'il est armez ou non,
nor knows if-he is armed or not
 ne set ou va, ne set don vient;
nor knows where he-goes nor knows whence he-comes
 de rien nule ne li sovient
of thing any not to-him occurs
- 725 fors d'une sole, et por celi
except of-one alone and for that-one
 a mis les autres an obli.
he-has put the others into forgetting
 A cele sole panse tant
On that alone he-thinks so-much
 que il ne voit ne il n'antant;
that he not sees nor he not-bears
 et ses chevaus mout tost l'an porte,
and his horse very fast him-thence carries
- 730 qu'il ne vet mie voie torte,
for-it not goes at-all way crooked
 mes la meillor et la plus droite;
but the best and the most straight
 et tant par aventure exploite
and so-much by chance it-achieves
 qu'an une lande l'a porté.
that-into a beath it-him-has carried
 An cele lande avoit un gué,
In that beath there-was a ford

et d'autre part armez estoit

and on-the-other side armed was

uns chevaliers qui le gardoit,

a knight who it guarded

s'ot une dameisele o soi

and-had a damsel with him

venue sor un palefroï.

come on a palfrey

Et ja estoit pres none basse,

And already it-was near nones low

n'ancor ne se mue ne lasse

nor-yet not himself stirs nor tires

li chevaliers de son panser.

the knight from his thinking

Li chevaus voit et bel et cler

The horse sees both fair and clear

le gué, qui mout grant soif avoit:

the ford which very great thirst had

vers l'eve cort quant il la voit.

toward the-water it-runs when it it sees

Et cil qui fu de l'autre part

And he who was on the-other side

s'escrie: "Chevaliers, je gart

cries-out Knight I guard

le gué, si le vos contredi."

the ford so it to-you I-forbid

Cil ne l'antant ne ne l'oi,

He not it-hears nor not it-heard

que ses pansers ne li leissa.

for his thinking not to-him permitted

735

740

745

- 750 Et totes voies s'esleissa
And all the-same himself-hurled
 li chevaus vers l'eve mout tost.
the horse toward the-water very fast
 Cil li escrie, que il s'ost
He to-him cries-out that he himself-remove
 loing del gué, si fera que sages,
far from-the ford so he-will-do as a-wise-man
 que la n'est mie li passages;
for there not-is at-all the passage
- 755 et jure le cuer de son vantre
and swears the heart of his belly
 qu'il le ferra se il i antre.
that-he him will-strike if he there enters
 Mes li chevaliers ne l'ot mie,
But the knight not it-bears at-all
 et cil tierce foiz li escrie:
and he a-third time to-him cries-out
 "Chevaliers! n'antrez mie el gué
Knight not-enter at-all into-the ford
- 760 sor ma deffanse et sor mon gre;
against my forbidding and against my will
 que, par mon chief, je vos ferrai
for by my head I to-you shall-strike
 si tost come el gué vos verrai."
as soon as in-the ford you I-shall-see
 Cil panse tant qu'il ne l'ot pas.
He thinks so-much that-he not it-bears at-all

Et li chevaus eneslepas

And the horse straightway

saut el gué et del chanp se soivre,

765

leaps into-the ford and from-the field himself withdraws

par grant talant comance a boivre.

with great eagerness begins to drink

Et cil dit qu'il le conparra,

And he says that-he it will-pay-for

ja li escuz ne l'an garra,

ever the shield not him-therefrom will-protect

ne li haubers qu'il a el dos.

nor the hauberk which-he has on-the back

Lors met le cheval es galos,

770

Then he-puts the horse into-the gallop

et des galos el cors l'abat

and from-the gallop into-the charge it-he-drives

et fiert celui si qu'il l'abat

and strikes that-one so that-he him-fells

anmi le gué tot estandu,

amid the ford all stretched-out

que il li avoit deffandu,

which he to-him had forbidden

si li chëi tot a un vol

775

so to-him fell all in one flight

la lance et li escuz del col.

the lance and the shield from-the neck

Quant cil sant l'eve, si tressaut,

When he feels the-water then he-starts

toz estordiz an estant saut,

all stunned in standing he-leaps

aussi come cil qui s'esvoille,

just like he who himself-wakes

780 s'ot et si voit et se mervoille,

and-bears and so sees and himself marvels

qui puet estre qui l'a feru.

who can be who him-has struck

Lors a le chevalier vëu,

Then he-has the knight seen

si li a dit: "Vasaus, por quoi

and to-him has said Vassal for what

m'avez feru, dites le moi,

me-you-have struck tell it to-me

785 quant devant moi ne vos savoie,

when before me not you I-knew

ne rien messfet ne vos avoie?"

nor anything wronged not to-you I-had

"Par foi, si aviiez", fet cil;

By faith indeed you-had says he

"don ne m'ëustes vos por vil

then not to-me-had you for base

quant je le gué vos contredis

when I the ford to-you forbade

790 trois foiees, et si vos dis

three times and so to-you I-said

au plus haut que je poi crier?

at-the most loud that I could cry

Bien vos öistes deffier

Well yourself you-beard defy

au mains deus foiees ou trois,

at-the least two times or three

et si antrastes sor mon pois,

and yet you-entered against my will

et bien dis que je vos ferroie

and well I-said that I to-you would-strike

si tost come el gué vos verroie.”

as soon as in-the ford you I-should-see

Li chevaliers respont adonques:

The knight answers then

“Dahez et, qui vos öi onques,

Cursed be who you heard ever

ne vit onques mes que je soie!

nor saw ever before that I be

Bien puet estre que je pansoie,

Well it-can be that I was-thinking

quant le gué me contredëistes:

when the ford to-me you-forbade

mes sachiez que mar le fëistes

but know that in-ill-hour it you-did

se au frain a une des mains

if by-the bridle with one of-the hands

vos pooie tenir au mains.”

you I-could hold at least

Et cil respont: “Qu’an avandroit?

And he answers What-thereof would-come

Tenir me porras or androit

To-hold me thou-wilt-be-able now at-once

au frain, se tu m’i oses prendre.

by-the bridle if thou me-there darest take

795

800

805

Je ne pris pas plain poing de çandre

I not prize at-all a-full fist of ash

ta menace ne ton orguel.”

thy menace nor thy pride

810 Et cil respont: “Je miauz ne vuel.

And he answers I better not wish

Que qu’il an dēust avenir,

Whatever it thereof should come

je t’i voldroie ja tenir.”

I thee-there would-wish now to-hold

Lors vient li chevaliers avant

Then comes the knight forward

anmi le gué, et cil le prant

amid the ford and he him takes

815 par la resne a la main senestre,

by the rein with the hand left

et par la cuisse a la main destre,

and by the thigh with the hand right

sel sache et tire et si l’estrain

and-him pulls and drags and so him-squeezes

si duremant que cil se plaint,

so hard that he himself complains

qu’il li sanble que tote fors

for-it to-him seems that wholly out

820 li traie la cuisse del cors;

to-him he-draws the thigh from-the body

si li prie que il le lest,

so to-him he-prays that he him let-go

et dist: "Chevaliers, s'il te plect

and said Knight if-it thee pleases

a moi conbatre par igital,

with me to-fight on equal-terms

pran ton escu et ton cheval

take thy shield and thy horse

et ta lance, si joste a moi."

825

and thy lance then joust with me

Cil respont: "Non ferai, par foi,

He answers Not I-shall-do by faith

que je cuit que tu t'an fuiroies

for I think that thou thyself-thence wouldst-flee

tantost qu'eschapez me seroies."

as-soon as-escaped from-me thou-wouldst-be

Quant cil l'oi, s'an ot grant honte,

When he it-heard and-thereof he-had great shame

si li redist: "Chevaliers, monte

830

and to-him says-again Knight mount

sor ton cheval s'eurement,

on thy horse in-safety

et je te creant leaumant

and I to-thee grant loyally

que je ne ganchisse ne fuie.

that I not turn-aside nor flee

Honte m'as dit, si m'an enuie."

Shame to-me-thou-hast said so to-me-thereof it-irks

Et cil li respont autre foiz:

835

And he to-him answers a-second time

"Ainz m'an iert plevie la foiz,

First to-me-thereof will-be pledged the faith

si vuel que tu le me plevisses

and I-wish that thou it to-me pledge

que tu ne fuies ne ganchisses,

that thou not flee nor turn-aside

et que tu ne me tocheras,

and that thou not me wilt-touch

840 ne vers moi ne t'aprocheras

nor toward me not thyself-wilt-approach

tant que tu me voies monté,

until that thou me seest mounted

si t'avrai fet mout grant bonté,

so to-thee-I-shall-have done very great kindness

quant je te taing se je te les."

since I thee bold if I thee let-go

Cil li plevist qui n'an puet mes:

He to-him pledges who not-thereof can more

845 et quant il an ot la fiance,

and when he thereof had the assurance

si prant son escu et sa lance,

then he-takes his shield and his lance

qui par le gué flotant aloient,

which through the ford floating were-going

et totes voies s'avalient,

and all the-same themselves-were-drifting

s'estoient ja mout loing a val;

and-were already very far down valley

850 puis revet prandre son cheval.

then he-goes-again to-take his horse

Quant il l'ot pris et montez fu,

When he it-had taken and mounted was

par les enarmes prant l'escu,
by the shield-straps he-takes the-shield
 et met la lance sor le fautre,
and puts the lance on the rest
 puis point li uns ancontre l'autre
then spurs the one against the-other
 tant con cheval lor pueent randre.
as-much as horses to-them can render
 Et cil qui dut le gué deffandre
And he who had the ford to-defend
 l'autre premieremant requiert,
the-other first assails
 et si tres durement le fiert
and so very hard him strikes
 que sa lance a estros peçoie.
that his lance at outright shatters
 Et cil fiert lui si qu'il l'anvoie
And he strikes him so that-he him-sends
 el gué tot plat dessor le flot,
into-the ford all flat upon the flood
 si que l'eve sor lui reclot;
so that the-water over him closes-again
 puis se trest arriere et desçant,
then himself he-drew back and dismounts
 car il an cuidoit bien teus çant
for he thereof thought well such a-hundred
 devant lui mener et chacier.
before him to-lead and to-drive
 Del fuerre tret le brant d'acier:
From-the scabbard he-draws the blade of-steel

855

860

865

et cil saut sus, si tret le sien

and he leaps up so draws the his

qu'il avoit flanbeant et buen;

which-he had flaming and good

si s'antreviennent cors a cors,

and each-other-they-come-at body to body

870 les escuz ou reluist li ors

the shields where shines the gold

traient avant et si s'an cuevrent,

they-draw forward and so themselves-therewith they-cover

les espees bien i aoevrent,

the swords well thereat they-ply

que ne finent ne ne reposent;

so-that not they-cease nor not rest

mout granz cos antredoner s'osent

very great blows to-give-each-other they-dare

875 tant que la bataille a ce monte

until that the battle to this comes

qu'an son cuer an a mout grant honte

that-in his heart thereof he-has very great shame

li chevaliers de la charrete,

the knight of the cart

et dit que mal randra la dete

and says that ill he-will-render the debt

de la voie qu'il a anprise

of the road which-he has undertaken

880 quant il a si grant piece mise

when he has so great a-while spent

a conquerre un seul chevalier.

in overcoming one single knight

S'il an trovast an un val hier

If-he thereof had-found in a valley yesterday

teus çant, ne croit il ne ne panse

such a-hundred not thinks he nor not imagines

qu'il eüssent vers lui deffanse,

that-they would-have against him defense

s'an est mout dolanz et iriez

and-thereof he-is very grieving and angered

quant il est ja si anpiriez

when he is already so weakened

qu'il pert ses cos et le jor gaste.

that-he loses his blows and the day wastes

Lors li cort sore et si le haste

Then to-him he-runs upon and so him presses

si que cil li ganchist et fuit;

so that he to-him gives-way and flees

le gué, mes que bien li enuit,

the ford though that well to-him it-irk

et le passage li otroie.

and the passage to-him grants

Mes cil le chace tote voie

But he him chases all the-same

tant que il chiet a paumetons.

until that he falls on palms

Lors li cort sus li charretons,

Then to-him runs upon the carter

885

890

- 895 si jure quanqu'il puet veoir
and swears whatever-be can see
 que mar le fist el gué cheoir
that in-ill-hour him he-made into-the ford fall
 et son panser mar li toli.
and his thinking in-ill-hour to-him took-away
 La dameisele qui o li
The damsel who with him
 le chevalier amené ot,
the knight brought had
 900 les menaces autant et ot,
the threats attends and hears
 s'a grant peor et si li prie
and-has great fear and so to-him prays
 que por li lest qu'il ne l'ocie;
that for her he-let-be that-he not him-kill
 et il li dit, si fera voir,
and he to-her says indeed he-will-do truly
 ne puet por li merci avoir,
not he-can for her mercy have
 905 que trop li a grant honte faite.
for too-much to-him he-has great shame done
 Lors li vient sus, l'espee treite;
Then to-him he-comes upon the-sword drawn
 et cil dit, qui fu esmaïiez:
and he says who was dismayed
 "Por Deu et por moi l'an aiiez
For God's-sake and for me it-thereof have
 la merci que je vos demant!"
the mercy that I of-you ask

Et cil respont: “Se Deus m’amant,
And he answers So God me-amend
 onques nus tant ne me messist,
ever anyone so-much not me wronged
 se por Deu merci me requist,
if for God’s-sake mercy of-me he-asked
 que por Deu, si com il est droiz,
that for God’s-sake so as it is right
 merci n’an eüsse une foiz.
mercy not-thereof I-had one time

910

Et aussi avrai je de toi,
And likewise shall-have I of thee
 car refuser ne la te doi
for to-refuse not it to-thee I-ought
 des que demandee la m’as.
since that asked-for it to-me-thou-hast

915

Mes einçois me fianceras
But first to-me thou-wilt-pledge
 a tenir, la ou je voldrai,
to keep there where I shall-wish
 prison quant je t’an semondrai.”
prison when I thee-thereto shall-summon

920

Cil li plevist, cui mout est grief.
He to-him pledges to-whom much it-is grievous
 La dameisele de rechief
The damsel of again
 dit: “Chevaliers, par ta franchise,
says Knight by thy nobleness

des que il t'a merci requise

since that he to-thee-has mercy asked

925 et tu otroiiee li as,

and thou granted-it to-him hast

s'onques nul prison deslias,

if-ever any prisoner thou-didst-loose

deslie moi cestui prison!

loose to-me this prisoner

Claimme moi quite sa prison,

Declare to-me quit his imprisonment

par covant que quant leus sera

on covenant that when place will-be

930 tel guerredon con toi pleira

such a-guerdon as to-thee will-please

t'an randrai selonc ma puissance."

to-thee-thereof I-shall-render according-to my power

Et lors i ot cil conoissance

And then thereat had he recognition

par la parole qu'ele ot dite,

by the speech which-she had said

si li rant le chevalier quite.

so to-her he-renders the knight quit

935 Et cele an a honte et angoisse,

And she thereof has shame and anguish

qu'ele cuide qu'il la conoisse;

for-she thinks that-he her recognize

car ele ne le vossist pas.

for she not it would-wish at-all

Et cil s'an part eneslepas:

And he himself-thence goes straightway

et cil et cele le comandent

and he and she him commend

a Deu, et congié li demandent.

to God and leave of-him they-ask

Il lor done, puis si s'an va

He to-them gives-it then so himself-thence goes

tant que de bas vespre trova

until that at low evening he-found

une dameisele venant

a damsel coming

mout tres bele et mout avenant,

very very fair and very comely

bien acesmee et bien vestue.

well arrayed and well clothed

La dameisele le salue

The damsel him greets

come sage et bien afeitiee,

like a-wise-woman and well bred

et cil respont: "Sainne et heitiee,

and he answers Sound and glad

dameisele, vos face Deus!"

damsel you make God

Puis li dist cele: "Mes osteus,

Then to-him said she My lodging

sire, vos est apareilliez

lord to-you is made-ready

se del prandre estes conseiliez;

if of-the taking you-are of-a-mind

940

945

950

mes par itel herbergeroiz

but on such-terms you-will-lodge

que avuec moi vos coucheroiz;

that with me you will-lie-down

955 ainsi le vos ofre et present.”

thus it to-you I-offer and present

Plusor sont qui de cest present

Many there-are who for this offer

li randissent cinc çanz merciz,

to-her would-render five hundred thanks

et cil an est trestoz nerciz,

and he thereat is quite darkened

si li a respondu tot el:

so to-her he-has answered quite otherwise

960 “Dameisele, de vostre ostel

Damsel for your lodging

vos merci gié, si l’ai mout chier,

you thank I and it-I-have very dear

mes, s’il vos pleisoit, del couchier

but if-it you pleased of-the lying-down

me soferroie je mout bien.”

myself would-excuse I very well

“Je n’an feroie autremant rien”,

I not-thereof would-do otherwise anything

965 fet la pucele, “par mes iauz!”

says the maiden by my eyes

Et cil des que il ne puet miauz

And he since that he not can better

li otroie com ele viaut.

to-her grants as she wishes

De l'otroier li cuers li diaut:

Of the-granting to-him the-heart to-him aches

quant ce tant solemant le blesce,

since this so-much only him wounds

mout avra au couchier destresce;

much he-will-have at-the lying-down distress

mout i avra travail et painne

much thereat will-have travail and pain

la dameisele qui l'an mainne.

the damsel who him-thence leads

Espoir tant le puet ele amer,

Perhaps so-much him can she love

ne l'an voldra quite clamer.

not him-thereof she-will-wish quit to-declare

Des qu'il li ot acreanté

Since that-he to-her had granted

son pleisir et sa volanté,

her pleasure and her will

si l'an mainne jusqu'an un baile,

then him-thence she-leads as-far-as-into a bailey

n'avoit plus bel jusqu'an Thessaile;

not-there-was more fair as-far-as-into Thessaly

qu'il estoit clos a la reonde

for-it was enclosed in the round

de haut mur et d'eve parfonde;

with high wall and with-water deep

et la dedanz home n'avoit

and there within a-man not-there-was

fors celui qu'ele i amenoit.

except that-one whom-she there brought

970

975

980

The Hostess Who Asked a Night

IV

The damsel brings him over the drawbridge into her empty hall, and they sup alone. Afterward he finds her pinned on a bed by a knight, with two swordsmen and four axemen at the door; he goes in anyway and breaks through them, and she calls off her household — the whole assault was hers. He keeps the covenant exactly, lying beside her in his shirt and never looking at her, because his heart is not his to lend. She leaves him for her own room, and tells herself no knight she has known is worth a third of an angevin beside him.

Cele i ot fet por son repeire

She there had made for her dwelling

assez de beles chanbres feire,

plenty of fair chambers to-make

985 et sale mout grant et pleniére.

and a-hall very great and spacious

Chevauchant lez une riviere

Riding beside a river

s'an vindrent jusqu'au herberjage,

themselves-thence they-came as-far-as-the lodging

et l'an lor ot por lor passage

and one for-them had for their passage

un pont tornëiz avalé:

a bridge drawbridge lowered

990 par sor le pont sont anz antré,

by over the bridge they-are inside entered

si ont trové la sale overte,

and they-have found the hall open

qui de tiules estoit coverte.

which with tiles was covered

Par l'uis qu'il ont trové overt

Through the-door which-they have found open

antrent anz et voient covert

they-enter inside and see covered

un dois d'un doblier blanc et le,

a dais with-a cloth white and broad

et sus estoient aporté

and upon were brought

li mes, et les chandoiles mises

the disbes and the candles set

es chandeliers totes esprises,

in-the candlesticks all lighted

et li henap d'arjant doré

and the goblets of-silver gilt

et dui pot, l'uns plains de moré

and two pots the-one full of mulberry-wine

et li autre de fort vin blanc.

and the other of strong wine white

Delez le dois, au chief d'un banc,

Beside the dais at-the end of-a bench

troverent deus bacins toz plains

they-found two basins all full

d'eve chaude a laver lor mains;

of-water hot for to-wash their hands

et de l'autre part ont trovee

and on the-other side they-have found

une toaille bien ovree,

a towel well worked

bele et blanche, as mains essuiier.

fair and white for-the hands to-wipe

995

1000

1005

Vaslet, serjant ne escuier

Young-man sergeant nor squire

n'ont leanz trové ne vëu.

not-they-have therein found nor seen

1010 De son col oste son escu

From his neck he-takes his shield

li chevaliers, et si le pant

the knight and so it he-hangs

a un croc, et sa lance prant

on a hook and his lance he-takes

et met sor un hanstier an haut.

and puts on a lance-rack on high

Tantost jus de son cheval saut

At-once down from his horse he-leaps

1015 et la dameisele del suen.

and the damsel from-the hers

Au chevalier fu bel et buen

To-the knight it-was fair and good

quant ele tant ne vost atandre

when she so-much not wished to-wait

que il li eidast a desçandre.

that he to-her should-help in dismounting

Tantost qu'ele fu desçandue,

At-once that-she was dismounted

1020 sanz demore, sanz atandue

without delay without waiting

jusqu'a une chanbre s'an cort:

as-far-as a chamber herself-thence she-runs

un mantel d'escarlate cort

a mantle of-scarlet short

li aporte, si l'an afuble.

to-him she-brings so him-there-with she-puts

La sale ne fu mie enuble,

The hall not was at-all dark

si luisoient ja les estoiles;

and-yet shone already the stars

mes tant avoit leanz chandoiles

but so-many there-were therein candles

tortices, grosses et ardan,

torch-like thick and burning

que la clartez estoit mout granz.

that the brightness was very great

Quant ele li ot au col mis

When she to-him had at-the neck put

le mantel, si li dist: "Amis,

the mantle then to-him she-said Friend

veez ci l'ève et la toaille:

see here the-water and the towel

nus ne la vos ofre ne baille,

anyone not it to-you offers nor hands

car ceanz fors moi ne veez.

for herein except me not you-see

Lavez voz mains, si asseez

Wash your hands then sit-down

quant vos pleira et buen vos iert:

when you it-will-please and good to-you it-will-be

1025

1030

1035

l'ore et li mangiers le requiert

the-hour and the meal it require

si con vos le poez veoir.”

so as you it can see

Cil leve, si se va seoir

He washes then himself goes to-sit

mout volantiers et si li siet,

very willingly and so to-him it-suits

1040 et cele delez lui s'assiet,

and she beside him herself-seats

et manjüent ansamble et boivent

and they-eat together and drink

tant que del mangier lever doivent.

until that from-the meal to-rise they-must

Quant levé furent del mangier,

When risen they-were from-the meal

dist la pucele au chevalier:

said the maiden to-the knight

1045 “Sire, alez vos la fors deduire,

Lord go you out there to-take-your-ease

mes que il ne vos doie nuire,

provided that it not to-you should harm

et solemant tant i seroiz,

and only so-long there you-will-be

s'il vos plect, que vos panseroiz

if-it to-you pleases as you will-think

que je porroie estre couchiee.

that I could be laid-down

1050 Ne vos enuit ne ne dessiee,

Not to-you let-it-irk nor not displease

que lors porroiz a tans venir
for then you-will-be-able in time to-come

se covant me volez tenir.”
if covenant to-me you-wish to-keep

Et cil respont: “Je vos tandrai
And he answers I to-you shall-keep

vostre covant et revandrai
your covenant and shall-return

quant je cuiderai qu’il soit ore.”
when I shall-think that-it be the-hour

1055

Lors s’an ist fors, et si demore
Then himself-thence he-goes out and so he-stays

une mout grant piece an la cort
a very great while in the court

tant qu’il estuet qu’il s’an retort;
until that-it behooves that-he himself-thence turn-again

que covant tenir li covient.
for a-covenant to-keep to-him it-behooves

Arriere an la sale revient,
Back into the hall he-comes-again

1060

mes cele qui se fet s’amie
but her who herself makes his-friend

ne trueve, qu’ele n’i iert mie.
not he-finds for-she not-there was at-all

Quant il ne la trueve ne voit,
When he not her finds nor sees

si dist: “An quel leu qu’ele soit,
then he-said In what place that-she be

je la querrai tant que je l’aie.”
I her shall-seek so-long that I her-have

1065

Del querre plus ne se delaie

Of-the seeking more not himself he-delays

por le covant que il li ot.

because-of the covenant that he to-her had

An une chanbre antre, si ot

Into a chamber he-enters and he-heard

an haut crier une pucele,

on high cry-out a maiden

1070 et ce estoit mēismes cele

and this was that-same one

o cui couchier il se devoit.

with whom to-lie he himself was-to

A tant d'une autre chanbre voit

At that of-an other chamber he-sees

l'uis overt, et vient cele part,

the-door open and comes that way

et voit tres anmi son esgart,

and sees right amid his sight

1075 qu'uns chevaliers l'ot anversee,

that-a knight her-had thrown-on-her-back

si la tenoit antraversee

and her held crosswise

sor le lit tote descoverte.

on the bed all uncovered

Cele qui cuidoit estre certe

She who thought to-be certain

que il li venist an äie,

that he to-her should-come to aid

1080 crioit an haut: "Äie, äie,

was-crying on high Help help

chevaliers, tu qui ies mes ostes!

knight thou who art my host

Se de sor moi cestui ne m'ostes,

If from over me this-one not from-me-thou-takest

ne troverai qui le m'an ost;

not I-shall-find who him from-me-thereof take

et se tu ne me secors tost,

and if thou not me succorest soon

il me honira devant toi.

he me will-shame before thee

Ja te doiz tu couchier o moi

Indeed thee oughtest thou to-lie with me

si con tu le m'as creanté:

so as thou it to-me-hast granted

fera donc cist sa volanté

will-do then this-one his will

de moi, veant tes iauz, a force?

of me seeing thy eyes by force

Jantis chevaliers, car t'esforce,

Noble knight now thyself-exert

si me secor isnelemant!"

and me succor swiftly

Cil voit que mout vilainnemant

He sees that very basely

tenoit la dameisele cil

was-holding the damsel he

descoverte jusqu'au nonbril,

uncovered as-far-as-the navel

1085

1090

1095 s'an a grant honte et si l'an poise
and-thereof has great shame and so him-thereof grieves

quant nu a nu a li adoise,
when naked to naked to her he-touches

si n'an iert il mie jalos,
yet not-thereof will-be he at-all jealous

ne ja de lui ne sera cos.
nor ever of him not he-will-be cuckolded

Mes a l'antree avoit portiers
But at the-entry there-were doorkeepers

1100 trestoz armez deus chevaliers,
quite-all armed two knights

qui espees nues tenoient.
who swords naked were-holding

Aprés quatre serjant estoient,
Behind four sergeants there-were

si tenoit chascuns une hache,
and held each an axe

tel don l'an pöist une vache
such wherewith one could a cow

1105 tranchier outre parmi l'eschine
cut through along the-backbone

tot autressi con la racine
quite just so-as the root

d'un genoivre ou d'une geneste.
of-a juniper or of-a broom

Li chevaliers a l'uis s'aresté
The knight at the-door himself-stops

et dist: "Deus, que porrai je feire?
and said God what shall-be-able I to-do

Mëuz sui por si grant afeire

1110

Set-out I-am for so great a-matter

con por la rëine Guenievre.

as for the queen Guinevere

Ne doi mie avoir cuer de lievre

Not I-ought at-all to-have heart of hare

quant por li sui an ceste queste.

since for her I-am in this quest

Se mauvestiez son cuer me preste

If cowardice her heart to-me lend

et je son comandement faz,

1115

and I her commandment do

n'ateindrai pas la ou je chaz.

not-I-shall-attain at-all there where I hunt

Honiz sui se je ci remaing:

Shamed I-am if I here remain

mout me vient ore a grant desdaing

much to-me it-comes now into great scorn

quant j'ai parlé del remenoir.

that I-have spoken of-the remaining

Mout an ai le cuer triste et noir:

1120

Much thereof I-have the heart sad and black

or an ai honte, or an ai duel,

now thereof I-have shame now thereof I-have grief

tel que je morroie mon vuel

such that I would-die by-my will

quant je ai tant demoré ci.

since I have so-long delayed here

Et ja Deus n'et de moi merci,

And ever God not-have of me mercy

- 1125 si nel di mie por orguel,
and-so not-it I-say at-all through pride
 se assez miauz morir ne vuel
if by-far better to-die not I-wish
 a enor, que a honte vivre.
in honor than in shame to-live
 Se la voie m'estoit delivre,
If the way to-me-were free
 quel enor i avroie gié
what honor thereat should-have I
- 1130 se cil me donoient congié
if these to-me were-giving leave
 de passer outre sanz chalonge?
to pass beyond without challenge
 Donc i passeroit sanz mançonge
Then thereat would-pass without lie
 aussi li pires hon qui vive;
just-so the worst man who lives
 et je oi que ceste cheitive
and I hear that this wretched-woman
- 1135 me crie merci mout sovant
to-me cries mercy very often
 et si m'apele de covant
and so me-calls-upon of covenant
 et mout vilmant le me reproche.”
and very basely it to-me reproaches

Maintenant jusqu'a l'uis s'aproche

At-once as-far-as the-door himself-he-draws-near

et bote anz le col et la teste

and thrusts inside the neck and the head

et esgarde a mont vers le feste,

and looks to up toward the roof-tree

si voit deus espees venir.

then he-sees two swords come

Arriers se tret, et retenir

Backward himself he-draws and to-bold-back

li chevalier lor cos ne porent:

the knights their blows not could

de tel äir mēuz les orent

with such fury set-going them they-had

qu'an terre les espees fierent

that-on earth the swords they-strike

si qu'anbedeus les peçoierent.

so that-both-of-them them they-shattered

Quant cil voit qu'eles sont brisiees,

When he sees that-they are broken

mais en a les haches prisiees

less thereof he-has the axes prized

et mais les an crient et redote.

and less them thereof he-fears and dreads

Antr' aus se lance et fiert del cote

Among them himself he-flings and strikes with-the elbow

un serjant, et un autre après.

one sergeant and an other after

1140

1145

1150

Les deus que il trova plus pres

The two whom he found most near

hurte des cotes et des braz

he-shoves with-the elbows and with-the arms

si qu'andeus les abat toz plaz;

so that-both-of-them them he-fells all flat

1155 et li tierz a a lui failli,

and the third has at him missed

et li quarz qui l'a assailli

and the fourth who him-has assailed

fiert si que le mantel li tranche

strikes so that the mantle to-him he-cuts

et la chemise et la char blanche

and the sbirt and the flesh white

li ret anprès l'espaule tote

to-him he-shaves close-by the-shoulder wholly

1160 si que li sans jus an degote.

so that the blood down thereof drips

Mes cil de rien ne se delaie,

But he in anything not himself delays

ne se plaint mie de sa plaie,

nor himself complains at-all of his wound

ainz vet et fet ses pas plus anples

rather he-goes and makes his steps more ample

tant qu'il aert parmi les tanples

until that-he seizes through the temples

1165 celui qui esforçoit s'ostesse.

that-one who was-forcing his-hostess

Randre li voldra sa promesse

To-render to-her he-will-wish his promise

et son covant, ainz qu'il s'an aut.

and his covenant before that-he himself-thence go

Vueille ou non, le redresce an haut;

Wish-it-he or not him he-sets-up on high

et cil qui a lui failli ot

and he who at him missed had

vient après lui plus tost qu'il pot

comes after him more quickly than-he could

et lieve son cop de rechief,

and raises his blow of again

sel cuide bien parmi le chief

and-it thinks well through the head

jusqu'es danz de la hache fandre.

down-to-the teeth with the axe to-cleave

Et cil qui bien se sot deffandre

And he who well himself knew defend

li tant le chevalier ancontre;

to-him holds-out the knight to-meet-it

et cil de la hache l'ancontre

and he with the axe him-meets

la ou l'espaule au col li joint,

there where the-shoulder to-the neck to-him joins

si que l'un de l'autre desjoint.

so that the-one from the-other he-parts

Et li chevaliers prant la hache,

And the knight takes the axe

des poinz isnelemant li sache,

from-the hands swiftly to-him he-wrests

1170

1175

1180

et leisse celui qu'il tenoit,

and lets-go that-one whom-be held

qu'a deffandre le covenoit;

for-to defend him it-bebooved

car li chevalier sus li viennent

for the knights upon him come

et cil qui les trois haches tienent,

and those who the three axes hold

1185 si l'assailent mout crüelmant:

so him-they-assail very cruelly

et cil saut mout delivremant

and he leaps very nimbly

antre le lit et la paroi

between the bed and the wall

et dist: "Or ça trestuit a moi!

and said Now here all to me

Se vos estiiez trante et set,

If you were thirty and seven

1190 des que je ai tant de recet,

since that I have so-much of shelter

si avroiz vos bataille assez;

so will-have you battle enough

ja par vos n'an serai lassez."

ever by you not-thereof I-shall-be wearied

Et la pucele qui l'esgarde

And the maiden who him-watches

dist: "Par mes iauz, vos n'avez garde

said By my eyes you not-have fear

1195 d'or an avant la ou je soie."

from-now in onward there where I be

Tot maintenant arriere anvoie

Right at-once back she-sends

les chevaliers et les serjanz.

the knights and the sergeants

Et cil s'an vont lors de leanz

And they themselves-thence go then from therein

sanz arest et sanz contredit.

without halt and without gainsaying

Et la dameisele redit:

1200

And the damsel says-again

“Sire, bien m’avez desresniee

Lord well to-me-you-have defended-at-law

ancontre tote ma mesniee.

against all my household

Or an venez, je vos an main.”

Now thence come I you thence lead

An la sale an vont main a main,

Into the hall thence they-go hand in hand

mes celui mie n’anbeli,

1205

but to-him at-all not-it-pleased

qu’il se sofrist mout bien de li.

for-he himself would-forbear very well of her

Un lit ot fet anmi la sale

A bed there-had been-made amid the hall

don li drap n’ierent mie sale,

whereof the sheets not-were at-all soiled

mes blanc et le et delié.

but white and broad and fine

- 1210 N'estoit pas de fuerre esmië
Not-was at-all of straw crumbled
 la couche, ne de coutes aspres.
the couch nor of quilts rough
 Un covertor de deus diaspres
A coverlet of two figured-silks
 ot estandu desor la couche:
there-had been-spread over the couch
 et la dameisele se couche,
and the damsel herself lies-down
- 1215 mes n'oste mie sa chemise.
but not-she-takes-off at-all her shift
 Et cil a mout grant painne mise
And he has very great pains put
 au deschaucier, au desnoer.
into-the unsboeing into-the unknotting
 D'angoisse le covint süer:
With-anguish him it-behooved to-sweat
 totes voies parmi l'angoisse
all the-same through the-anguish
- 1220 covanz le vaint et si le froisse.
covenant him conquers and so him breaks
 Donc est ce force? — Autant se vaut.
Then is this force As-much it is-worth
 Par force covient que il s'aut
By force it-behooves that he himself-go
 couchier avuec la dameisele.
to-lie with the damsel
 Covanz l'an semont et apele:
Covenant him-thereto summons and calls

et il se couche tot a tret, 1225
and he himself lies-down quite at length

mes sa chemise pas ne tret
but his shirt at-all not he-draws-off
 ne plus qu'ele ot la soe feite.
no more than-she had the hers done

De tochiez a li mout se gueite,
From to-touch at her much himself he-guards
 ainz s'an esloingne et gist anvers,
rather himself-thence he-moves-away and lies face-up

ne ne dit mot ne qu'uns convers 1230
nor not says word any-more than-a lay-brother

cui li parlers est deffanduz,
to-whom the speaking is forbidden
 quant an son lit gist estanduz;
when in his bed he-lies stretched-out

n'onques ne torne son esgart
nor-ever not turns his look

ne devers li ne d'autre part.
nor toward her nor to-other side

Bel sanblant feire ne li puet: 1235
Fair semblance to-make not to-her he-can

por quoi? — Car del cuer ne li muet;
for what For from-the heart not to-him it-stirs

s'estoit ele mout bele et jante,
and-yet-was she very fair and comely

mes ne li plect ne atalante
but not to-him pleases nor delights

quanqu'est bel et jant a chascun.
whatever-is fair and comely to each

- 1240 Li chevaliers n'a cuer que un,
The knight not-has heart but one
 et cil n'est mie ancor a lui,
and that not-is at-all still at him
 ainz est comandez a autrui
rather is committed to another
 si qu'il nel puet aillors prester.
so that-he not-it can elsewhere lend
 Tot le fet an un leu ester
Wholly it makes in one place stay
- 1245 Amors qui toz les cuers justise.
Love who all the hearts rules
 Toz? — Non fet, fors ceus qu'ele prise.
All Not does except those whom-she prizes
 Et cil se redoit plus prsier
And he himself ought-in-turn more to-prize
 que Amors daingne justisier.
whom Love deigns to-rule
 Amors le cuer celui prisoit
Love the heart of-that-one prized
- 1250 tant que sor toz le justisoit,
so-much that above all it ruled
 si li donoit si grant orguel
and to-him gave so great pride
 que de rien blasmer ne le vuel
that of anything to-blame not him I-wish
 s'il let ce qu'amors li deffant
if-he leaves that which-love to-him forbids
 et la ou ele viaut antant.
and there where she wishes he-attends

La pucele voit bien et set

1255

The maiden sees well and knows

que cil sa conpeignie het

that he her company hates

et volantiers s'an soferoit,

and willingly himself-thereof would-forbear

ne ja plus ne li requerroit,

nor ever more not of-him he-would-ask

qu'il ne quiert a li adeser;

for-he not seeks to her to-touch

et dist: "S'il ne vos doit peser,

1260

and said If-it not to-you ought to-weigh

sire, de ci me partirai.

lord from here myself I-shall-part

An ma chanbre couchier irai,

Into my chamber to-lie-down I-shall-go

et vos an seroiz plus a eise.

and you thereof will-be more at ease

Ne cuit mie que mout vos pleise

Not I-think at-all that much to-you please

mes solaz ne ma conpeignie.

1265

my solace nor my company

Nel tenez mie a vilenie

Not-it hold at-all for baseness

se je vos di ce que je cuit.

if I to-you say this that I think

Or vos reposez mes anuit,

Now yourself rest now tonight

que vos m'avez randu si bien

for you to-me-have rendered so well

1270 mon covant que nes une rien

my covenant that not-even one thing

par droit ne vos puis demander.

by right not of-you I-can ask

Or vos vuel a Deu comander,

Now you I-wish to God to-commend

si m'an irai." Lors si se lieve:

so myself-thence I-shall-go Then so herself she-rises

au chevalier mie ne grieve,

to-the knight at-all not it-grieves

1275 ainz l'an let aler volantiers

rather her-thence he-lets go willingly

con cil qui est amis antiers

as he who is a-friend entire

autrui que li; bien l'aparçoit

to-another than her well it-perceives

la dameisele et bien le voit,

the damsel and well it sees

si est an sa chanbre venue

and is into her chamber come

1280 et s'est couchiee tote nue,

and herself-is laid-down all naked

et lors a dit a li mēismes:

and then she-has said to her self

“Des lores que je conui primes

From then that I knew first

chevalier, un seul n'an conui

a-knight one single not-thereof I-knew

que je prisasse avers cestui

whom I should-prize beside this-one

la tierce part d'un angevin;

the third part of-an Angevin-penny

car si con je pans et devin,

for so as I think and divine

il viaut a si grant chose antandre

he wishes to so great a-thing to-attend

qu'ains chevaliers n'osa anprendre

that-ever a-knight not-dared undertake

si perilleuse ne si grief;

so perilous nor so grievous

et Deus doint qu'il an vaingne a chief.”

and God grant that-he thereof come to end

A tant s'andormi et si jut

At that herself-she-fell-asleep and so lay

tant que li clers jorz aparut.

until that the bright day appeared

1285

1290

The Comb, and the Queen's Hair

V

The damsel asks his escort under the customs of Logres, and he promises that nothing shall touch her that does not touch him first. At a spring they find a gilded ivory comb left on the stone block, with hair caught in its teeth. When she tells him whose hair it is he has to lean on the saddle-bow to stay on the horse. He draws the hairs out so gently that none breaks, touches them to his eyes and mouth, and puts them in his shirt against his heart. Gold beside them, Chrétien says, would look darker than night.

Tot maintenant que l'aube crieve

Right at-once that the-dawn breaks

cele s'esvoille et si se lieve.

she herself-wakes and so herself rises

1295 Et li chevaliers se resvoille,

And the knight himself wakes-in-turn

si s'atorne, si s'aparoille,

so himself-be-makes-ready so himself-be-prepares

si s'arme qu'äie n'atant.

so himself-be-arms for-help not-be-awaits

La dameisele vient a tant,

The damsel comes at that

si voit qu'il est ja atornez.

and sees that-be is already made-ready

1300 "Buens jorz vos soit hui ajornez",

Good day to-you be today dawned

fet ele, quant ele le voit.

says she when she him sees

"Et vos, dameisele, si soit",

And to-you damsel so be

fet li chevaliers d'autre part,

says the knight on-other side

et si dit que mout li est tart,

and so says that much to-him it-is late

qu'an li et son cheval fors tret.

that-one to-him and his horse out draws

1305

La pucele amener li fet

The maiden brought to-him has

et dist: "Sire, je m'an iroie

and said Lord I myself-thence would-go

o vos grant piece an ceste voie

with you a-great while on this road

se vos mener m'an osiiez

if you to-lead me-thence dared

et se vos me conduisiiez

and if you me were-to-conduct

1310

par les us et par les costumes

by the usages and by the customs

qui furent ainz que nos ne fumes

which were before that we — were

el reaume de Logres mises."

in-the realm of Logres set

Les costumes et les franchises

The customs and the franchises

estoient teus a cel termine,

were such at that time

1315

que dameisele ne meschine,

that a-damsel nor a-serving-girl

se chevaliers la trovast sole,

if a-knight her found alone

ne plus qu'il se tranchast la gole

no more than-he himself should-cut the throat

ne fëist se tote enor non,

not would-do except all honor not

1320 s'estre vossist de buen renon;

if-to-be he-wished of good renown

et s'il l'esforçast, a toz jorz

and if-he her-forced for all days

an fust honiz an totes corz.

thereof he-would-be shamed in all courts

Mes se ele conduit ëust,

But if she conduct had

uns autre, se tant li plëust

an other if so-much to-him it-pleased

1325 qu'a celui bataille an fëist,

that-with that-one battle thereof he-made

se par armes la conquëist,

if by arms her he-won

sa volanté an pöist feire

his will thereof he-might do

sanz honte et sanz blasme retreire.

without shame and without blame to-draw-on-himself

Por ce la damoisele dist

For this the damsel said

1330 que s'il l'osast ne ne vossist

that if-he it-dared nor not would-wish

par ceste costume conduire

by this custom to-conduct

que autre ne li pöist nuire,

so-that another not to-her could harm

qu'ele s'an alast avuec lui.

that-she herself-thence should-go with him

Et cil li dit: "Ja nus enui

And he to-her says Ever any harm

ne vos fera, ce vos otroi,

1335

not to-you will-do this to-you I-grant

que primes ne le face a moi."

that first not it he-do to me

"Dons i vuel je", fet ele, "aler".

Then there wish I says she to-go

Son palefroï fet anseler:

Her palfrey she-has-made be-saddled

tost fu ses comandemanz fez.

soon was her commandment done

Li palefroiz li fu fors trez

1340

The palfrey to-her was out drawn

et li chevaus au chevalier.

and the horse to-the knight

Andui montent sanz escuiier,

Both mount without a-squire

si s'an vont mout grant alëure.

so themselves-thence they-go at-very great pace

Cele l'aresne, et il n'a cure

She to-him-speaks and he not-has care

de quanquë ele l'aparole,

1345

of whatever she to-him-speaks

mout het son plet et sa parole:

much he-bates her talk and her speech

pansers li plest, parlers li grieve.

thinking to-him pleases speaking to-him grieves

Amors mout sovant li escrivee

Love very often to-him bursts-open

la plaie que feite li a.

the wound which made to-him it-has

1350 Onques anplastre n'i lia

Ever a-plaster not-there he-bound

por garison ne por santé,

for healing nor for health

qu'il n'a talant ne volanté

for-he not-has desire nor will

d'anplastre querre ne de mire

for-a-plaster to-seek nor for a-physician

se sa plaie ne li anpire;

if his wound not to-him worsens

1355 mes celi querroit volantiers...

but that-one he-would-seek willingly

tant tienent voies et santiers,

so-long they-bold ways and paths

si con li droiz chemins les mainne,

so as the straight road them leads

qu'il viennent pres d'une fontainne.

that-they come near to-a spring

La fontainne iert anmi uns prez,

The spring was amid a meadow

1360 et s'avoit un perron delez.

and and-there-was a block beside

Sor le perron qui iert iqui

On the block which was there

avoit oblié, ne sai qui,

had forgotten not I-know who

un paingne d'ivoire doré.

a comb of-ivory gilt

Onques des le tens Ysoré

Ever since the time of-Ysoré

ne vit si bel sages ne fos.

1365

not saw so fair a-wise-man nor a-fool

Es danz del paingne ot des chevos

In-the teeth of-the comb there-were of-the hairs

celi qui s'an estoit peigniee

of-her who herself-there-with had combed

remés po mains d'une poigniee.

left a-little less than-a handful

Quant la dameisele aparçoit

When the damsel perceives

la fontainne et le perron voit,

1370

the spring and the block sees

si ne viaut pas que cil la voie,

then not she-wishes at-all that he it see

ainz se mist an une autre voie.

rather herself she-put into an other way

Et cil qui se delite et pest

And he who himself delights and feeds

de son panser, que mout li plect,

on his thinking which much to-him pleases

ne s'aparçoit mie si tost

1375

not himself-perceives at-all so soon

qu'ele fors de sa voie l'ost;

that-she out of his way him-takes

mes quant s'an est aparceüz,

but when himself-thereof he-is aware

si crient qu'il ne soit decëuz;

then he-fears that-he — be deceived

que il cuide qu'ele ganchisse

for he thinks that-she turn-aside

1380 et que fors de son chemin isse

and that out of his road she-go

por eschiver aucun peril.

in-order-to avoid some peril

“Estez, dameisele”, fet il,

Stop damsel says he

“n'alez pas bien, venez de ça!

not-go at-all well come this way

Onques, ce cuit, ne s'adreça

Ever this I-think not himself-set-right

1385 qui fors de cest chemin issi.”

whoever out of this road went

“Sire, nos irons miauz par ci”,

Lord we shall-go better by here

fet la pucele, “bien le sai.”

says the maiden well it I-know

Et cil li respont: “Je ne sai,

And he to-her answers I not know

dameisele, que vos pansez;

damsel what you think

1390 mes ce poez veoir assez

but this you-can see enough

que c'est li droiz chemins batuz.

that it-is the straight road beaten

Des que je m'i sui anbatuz,

Since that I myself-into-it am thrust

je ne tornerai autre san;

I not shall-turn other way

se il vos plest, venez vos an,

if it you pleases come yourself thence

que j'irai ceste voie adés."

for I-shall-go this way still

Lors s'an vont tant qu'il viennent pres

Then themselves-thence they-go so-long that-they come near

del perron et voient le paingne.

to-the block and see the comb

"Onques certes, don me sovaingne",

Ever certainly whereof to-me come-to-mind

fet li chevaliers, "mes ne vi

says the knight before not I-saw

si bel paingne con je voi ci."

so fair a-comb as I see here

"Donez le moi", fet la pucele.

Give it to-me says the maiden

"Volantiers", fet il, "dameisele."

Willingly says he damsel

Et lors s'abeisse et si le prant.

And then himself-be-stoops and so it takes

Quant il le tint, mout longuemant

When he it held very long

l'esgarde et les chevos remire,

it-he-looks-at and the hairs he-gazes-on

et cele s'an comance a rire.

and she thereat begins to laugh

Et quant cil la voit, si li prie,

And when he her sees then to-her he-prays

1395

1400

1405

por quoi a ris qu'ele li die.

for what she-has laughed that-she to-him tell

Et cele dit: "Teisiez vos an,

And she says Be-silent you thereof

1410 ne vos an dirai rien oan."

not to-you thereof I-shall-say anything this-year

"Por quoi?" fet il. — "Car je n'ai cure."

For what says he For I not-have care

Et quant cil l'ot, si la conjure

And when he it-heard then her he-conjures

come cil qui ne cuide mie

as he who not thinks at-all

qu'amie ami, n'amis amie

that-a-woman-friend a-friend nor-a-friend a-woman-friend

1415 doient parjurer a nul fuer:

ought to-forswear at any price

"Se vos rien nule amez de cuer,

If you thing any love from heart

dameisele, de par celi

damsel by the-part of-that-one

vos requier et conjur et pri

you I-require and conjure and pray

que vos plus ne le me celez."

that you more not it from-me conceal

1420 "Trop a certes m'an apelez",

Too-much in earnest to-me-thereof you-appeal

fet ele, "si le vos dirai,

says she so it to-you I-shall-tell

de rien nule n'an mantirai.

of thing any not-thereof I-shall-lie

Cist paingnes, se onques soi rien,
This comb if ever I-knew anything

fu la rëine, jel sai bien;
was the queen's I-it know well

et d'une chose me creez,
and of-one thing me believe

que li chevol que vos veez
that the hairs which you see

si biaux, si clers et si luisanz,
so fair so bright and so shining

qui sont remés antre les danz,
which are left between the teeth

que del chief la rëine furent;
that of-the head of-the queen they-were

onques an autre pre ne crurent."
ever in another meadow not they-grew

Et li chevaliers dist: "Par foi,
And the knight said By faith

assez sont rëines et roi;
plenty there-are queens and kings

mes de la quel volez vos dire?"
but of the which wish you to-say

Et cele dist: "Par foi, biaux sire,
And she said By faith fair lord

de la fame le roi Artu."
of the wife of-the king Arthur

Quant cil l'ot, n'ot tant de vertu
When he it-heard not-he-had so-much of strength

que tot nel covenist ploier:
that quite not-it behooved to-bend

1425

1430

1435

par force l'estut apoïer

by force him-it-behooved to-lean

devant a l'arçon de la sele.

forward on the-saddle-bow of the saddle

1440 Et quant ce voit la dameisele,

And when this sees the damsel

si s'an mervoille et esbäist,

then herself-thereat she-marvels and is-dismayed

qu'ele cuida que il chëist.

for-she thought that he should-fall

S'ele ot peor, ne l'an blasmez,

If-she had fear not her-thereof blame

qu'ele cuida qu'il fust pasmez.

for-she thought that-he was swooned

1445 Si iert il, autant se valoit,

So was he as-much it was-worth

mes po de chose s'an failloit;

but little of a-thing thereof was-lacking

qu'il avoit au cuer tel dolor

for-he had at-the heart such sorrow

que la parole et la color

that the speech and the color

ot une grant piece perdue.

he-had a great while lost

1450 Et la pucele est desçandue

And the maiden is dismounted

et si cort quanqu'ele pot corre

and so runs whatever-she could run

por lui sotenir et secorre,

for him to-sustain and to-succor

qu'ele ne le vossist veoir

for-she not him would-wish to-see

por rien nule a terre cheoir.

for a-thing any to earth fall

Quant cil la vit, s'an ot vergoingne,

When he her saw thereof he-had shame

si li a dit: "Por quel besoingne

so to-her has said For what errand

venistes vos ci devant moi?"

came you here before me

Ne cuidiez pas que le porquoi

Not think at-all that the wherefore

la dameisele li conoisse;

the damsel to-him make-known

qu'il an eüst honte et anguisse

for-he thereof would-have shame and anguish

et si li grevast et nēüst

and so to-him it-would-grieve and harm

s'ele le voir li conēüst;

if-she the truth to-him made-known

si s'est de voir dire gueitee,

so herself-she-is from truth to-tell guarded

et dist come bien afeitee:

and said like well bred

"Sire, je ving le paingne querre,

Lord I came the comb to-seek

por ce sui desçandue a terre;

for this I-am dismounted to earth

que de l'avoir oi tel apans,

for of the-having I-had such intent

1455

1460

1465

ja nel cuidai tenir a tans.”

ever not-it I-thought to-hold in time

Cil qui viaut qu’ele le paingne et,

He who wishes that-she the comb have

1470 li done, et les chevos an tret

to-her gives-it and the hairs thereof draws

si soef que nul n’an deront.

so gently that any not-thereof breaks

Ja mes oel d’ome ne verront

Ever more eyes of-man not will-see

nule chose tant enorer,

any thing so-much honor

qu’il les comance a aorer;

for-be them begins to adore

1475 et bien çant mile foiz les toche

and well a-hundred thousand times them be-touches

et a ses iauz et a sa boche

both to his eyes and to his mouth

et a son front et a sa face:

and to his forehead and to his face

n’est nule joie qu’il n’an face.

not-is any joy that-he not-thereof makes

Mout s’an fet lié, mout s’an fet riche:

Much himself-thereof he-makes glad much himself-thereof he-makes rich

1480 an son sain pres del cuer les fiche

in his bosom near to-the heart them he-sets

antre sa chemise et sa char.

between his shirt and his flesh

N'an prëist pas chargié un char

Not-for-them be-would-take at-all loaded a cart

d'esmeraudes ne d'escharboncles,

of-emeralds nor of-carbuncles

ne cuide mie que raoncles

nor thinks at-all that abscesses

ne autre maus ja mes le praingne;

nor other ills ever more him take

diamargariton desdaingne,

diamargariton be-disdains

et plëuriche et tiriaque,

and pleurisy-electuary and theriac

nëis saint Martin et saint Jaque;

even saint Martin and saint James

car an cez chevos tant se fie

for in these hairs so-much himself be-trusts

qu'il n'a mestier de lor äie.

that-be not-has need of their help

Mes quel estoient li chevol?

But of-what-kind were the hairs

Et por mançongier et por fol

Both for a-liar and for a-fool

me tandra l'an se voir an di.

me will-hold one if truth thereof I-tell

Quant la foire iert plainne au landi

When the fair will-be full at-the Lendit

et il i avra plus avoir,

and there there will-be most goods

1485

1490

1495

nel vossist mie tot avoir

not-it he-would-wish at-all all to-have

li chevaliers, c'est voirs provez,

the knight this-is truth proved

s'il n'ëust les chevos trovez.

if-be not-had the hairs found

Et se le voir m'an requerez,

And if the truth of-me-thereof you-require

1500 ors çant mile foiz esmerez

gold a-hundred thousand times refined

et puis autantes foiz recuiz

and then as-many times recooked

fust plus obscurs que n'est la nuiz

would-be more dark than is the night

anvers le plus bel jor d'esté,

beside the most fair day of-summer

qui et an tot cest an esté,

that has in all this year been

1505 qui l'or et les chevos vëist

to-whomever the-gold and the hairs saw

si que l'un lez l'autre mëist.

so that the-one beside the-other he-put

Mes por quoi feroie lonc conte?

But for what should-I-make a-long tale

La pucele mout tost remonte

The maiden very quickly remounts

a tot le paingne qu'ele an porte;

with all the comb which-she thence carries

et cil se delite et deporte

1510

and he himself delights and takes-his-pleasure

es chevos qu'il a an son sain.

in-the hairs which-he has in his bosom

Une forest après le plain

A forest after the plain

truevent et vont par une adresce

they-find and go by a short-cut

tant que la voie lor estresce,

until that the way for-them narrows

s'estuet l'un après l'autre aler

1515

and-it-bebooves the-one after the-other to-go

qu'an n'i pöist mie mener

for-one not-there could at-all lead

por rien deus chevaus coste a coste.

for anything two horses side by side

La pucele devant son oste

The maiden before her guest

s'an vet mout tost la voie droite.

herself-thence goes very quickly the way straight

La ou la voie iert plus estroite,

1520

There where the way was most narrow

voient un chevalier venant.

they-see a knight coming

La dameisele maintenant

The damsel at-once

de si loing com ele le vit

from as far as she him saw

l'a conëu et si a dit:

him-has recognized and so has said

- 1525 “Sire chevaliers, veez vos
Lord knight see you
celui qui vient ancontre nos
that-one who comes against us
toz armez et prez de bataille?
all armed and ready for battle
Il m’an cuide or androit sanz faille
He me-thereof thinks right now without fail
avuec lui mener sanz deffanse,
with him to-lead without defense
- 1530 ce sai je bien que il le panse.
this know I well that he it thinks
Il m’aimme et ne fet pas que sages:
He me-loves and not acts at-all as a-wise-man
et par lui et par ses messages
and by himself and by his messengers
m’a proiiee, mout a lonc tans;
me-has wooed much it-is a-long time
mes m’amors li est an deffans,
but my-love to-him is in forbidding
- 1535 que por rien amer nel porroie,
for for anything to-love not-him I-could
si m’äit Deus, ainz m’ocirroie
so me-belp God rather myself-I-would-kill
que je l’amasse an nul androit.
than I him-should-love in any way

Je sai bien qu'il a or androit

I know well that-be has right now

si grant joie, et tant s'i delite

so great joy and so-much therein delights

con s'il m'eüst ja tote quite.

as if-be me-had already all quit

Mes or verrai que vos feroiz,

But now I-shall-see what you will-do

or i parra se preuz seroiz,

now there it-will-appear if valiant you-will-be

or le verrai, or i parra

now it I-shall-see now there it-will-appear

se vostre conduiz me garra.

if your conduct me will-protect

Se vos me poez garantir,

If you me can warrant

dons dirai je bien sanz mantir

then shall-say I well without lying

que preuz estes et mout valez."

that valiant you-are and much you-are-worth

Et cil li dit: "Alez, alez!"

And he to-her says Go go

Et ceste parole autant vaut

And this speech as-much is-worth

con se il dëist: "Po m'an chaut,

as if he had-said Little to-me-thereof matters

que por neant vos esmaïiez

for for nothing you are-dismayed

de chose que dite m'aïiez."

at a-thing which said to-me-you-have

1540

1545

1550

The Presumptuous Suitor

VI

A knight who has long loved the damsel takes her rein and says he will keep her. The knight of the cart answers without a taunt and asks for open ground, and they ride to a meadow where a company is dancing. There the young man's father forbids the combat, and when forbidding fails has his own men hold his son by the arms. He offers a bargain instead: they will follow the stranger a day or two, and the boy may try him later. The dancers, who had broken off to jeer at the cart, go back to their carols.

Que que il vont ainsi parlant,

While that they go thus talking

ne vint mie cele part lant

not came at-all that way slowly

1555 li chevaliers qui venoit seus.

the knight who was-coming alone

Le grant cors vint ancontre aus deus;

At-the great course he-came against them two

et por ce li plect a haster

and because of-this to-him it-pleases to hasten

que ses pas ne cuide gaster;

so-that his steps not he-thinks to-waste

car por buen ëuré se claimme

for for well fortunéd himself he-calls

1560 quant la rien voit que il plus aime.

when the thing he-sees that he most loves

Tot maintenant que il l'aproche,

Right at-once that he her-approaches

de cuer la salue et de boche

from heart her he-greets and from mouth

et dist: "La riens que je plus vuel,

and said The thing that I most wish

don mains ai joie et plus me duel,

whereof least I-have joy and most myself I-grieve

soit bien veignanz, don qu'ele vaingne!"

be well come whence that-she come

N'est mie droiz que cele taigne

Not-is at-all right that she hold

vers lui sa parole si chiere,

toward him her speech so dear

que ele ne li rande arriere

that she not to-him render back

au mains de boche son salu.

at least of mouth his greeting

Mout a au chevalier valu

Much it-has to-the knight availed

quant la pucele le salue,

when the maiden him greets

qui sa boche pas n'an palue

who her mouth at-all not-thereby soils

ne ne li a neant costé.

nor not to-her has anything cost

Et s'il eüst tot fors josté

And if-he had all out jousted

a cele ore un tornoiemant,

at that hour a tournament

1565

1570

1575

ne s'an prisast il mie tant
not himself-thereof would-prize he at-all so-much

ne ne cuidast avoir conquis
nor not would-think to-have won

ne tant d'enor ne tant de pris.
nor so-much of-honor nor so-much of prize

Por ce que miauz s'an aime et prise,
For this that better himself-thereof he-loves and prizes

1580 l'a par la resne del frain prise
her-he-has by the rein of-the bridle taken

et dist: "Or vos an manrai gié:
and said Now you thence shall-lead I

mout ai or bien et droit nagie
much I-have now well and rightly navigated

qu'a mout buen port sui arivez.
for-at very good harbor I-am arrived

Or sui je toz descheitiez:
Now am I quite disburdened

1585 de peril sui venuz a port,
from peril I-am come to harbor

de grant enui a grant deport,
from great trouble to great delight

de grant dolor a grant santé;
from great sorrow to great health

or ai tote ma volanté

now I-have all my will

quant an tel meniere vos truis

since in such manner you I-find

qu'avuec moi mener vos an puis

that-with me to-lead you thence I-can

1590

or androit, que n'i avrai honte."

right now that not-there I-shall-have shame

Et cele dit: "Rien ne vos monte,

And she says Anything not to-you it-avails

que cist chevaliers me conduit."

for this knight me conducts

"Certes, ci a mauvés conduit,"

Certainly here is a-poor conduct

fet il, "qu'adés vos an main gié.

says he for-still you thence lead I

1595

Un mui de sel avroit mangié

A bushel of salt he-would-have eaten

cist chevaliers, si con je croi,

this knight so as I believe

einçois qu'il vos desrest vers moi;

before that-he you wins against me

ne cuit qu'onques un an vëisse,

not I-think that-ever one thereof I-saw

vers cui je ne vos conquëisse.

1600

against whom I not you should-win

Et quant je vos truis ci an eise,

And since I you find here at ease

mes que bien li poist et despleise,

provided that well to-him it-grieve and displease

vos an manrai veant ses iauz,

you thence I-shall-lead seeing his eyes

si an face trestot son miauz.”

and thereof let-him-do quite-all his best

1605 Li autre de rien ne s’aire

The other in anything not himself-angers

de tot l’orguel qu’il li ot dire,

at all the-pride which-he to-him hears say

mes sanz ranposne et sanz vantance

but without taunt and without boasting

a chalangier la li comance,

at to-challenge her to-him he-begins

et dist: “Sire, ne vos hastez,

and said Lord not yourself hasten

1610 ne voz paroles ne gastez,

nor your words not waste

mes parlez un po a mesure.

but speak a little with measure

Ja ne vos iert vostre droiture

Ever not to-you will-be your right

tolue quant vos li avroiz.

taken-away when you her will-have

Par mon conduit, bien le savroiz,

By my conduct well it you-will-know

1615 est ci la pucele venue.

is here the maiden come

Leissiez la, trop l’avez tenue!

Leave her too-long her-you-have held

Ancor n’a ele de vos garde.”

Still not-has she of you fear

Et cil otroie que l'an l'arde

And he grants that one him-burn

s'il ne l'an mainne mal gre suen.

if-be not her-thence leads ill will his

Et cil dit: "Ne seroit pas buen

And he says Not it-would-be at-all good

se mener la vos an leissoie;

if to-lead her you thence I-let

sachiez, einçois m'an combatroie.

know first myself-thereof I-would-fight

Mes se nos bien nos voliiens

But if we well ourselves wished

combatre, nos ne porriens

to-fight we not could

an cest chemin por nule painne;

on this road for any pains

mes alons jusqu'a voie plainne,

but let-us-go as-far-as-to a-way open

ou jusqu'an prez ou jusqu'an lande."

either as-far-as-into meadows or as-far-as-into heath

Cil li dit que miauz ne demande

He to-him says that better not he-asks

et dit: "Certes, bien m'i acort:

and says Certainly well myself-there-to agree

de ce n'avez vos mie tort,

in this not-have you at-all wrong

que cist chemins est trop estroiz;

for this road is too narrow

1620

1625

1630

ja iert mes chevaus si destroiz

already will-be my horse so hard-put

einçois que je torner le puisse,

before that I to-turn it may

que je crien qu'il se brist la cuisse."

that I fear that-it itself break the thigh

1635 Lors se torne a mout grant destresce,

Then himself he-turns with very great difficulty

mes son cheval mie ne blesce,

but his horse at-all not he-burts

ne de rien n'i est anpiriez;

nor in anything not-there is harmed

et dit: "Certes, mout sui iriez

and says Certainly much I-am angered

quant antrancontré ne nos somes

that met-each-other not we are

1640 an place lee et devant homes,

in a-place broad and before men

que bel me fust que l'an vëist,

for fair to-me it-would-be that one should-see

li queus de nos miauz le fëist.

the which of us better it did

Mes or venez, si l'irons querre:

But now come and it-we-shall-go seek

nos troverons pres de ci terre

we shall-find near to here land

1645 tote delivre et grant et lee."

all free and great and broad

Lors s'an vont jusqu'a une pree.

Then themselves-thence they-go as-far-as-to a meadow

An cele pree avoit puceles

In that meadow there-were maidens

et chevaliers et dameiseles,

and knights and damsels

qui jooient a plusors jeux,

who were-playing at several games

por ce que biaux estoit li leus.

for this that fair was the place

Ne jooient pas tuit a gas,

Not were-playing at-all all at trifles

mes as tables et as eschas,

but at tables and at chess

li un as dez, li autre au san,

the ones at dice the others at a-game

a la mine i rejooit l'an.

at the dice there was-playing-also one

A cez jeux li plusor jooient:

At these games the most were-playing

li autre qui iluec estoient

the others who there were

redemenioient lor anfances,

were-renewing their childhoods

baules et caroles et dances,

round-dances and carols and dances

et chantent et tument et saillent

and they-sing and tumble and leap

et au luitier se retravaillent.

and at-the wrestling themselves they-labor-in-turn

1650

1655

1660

Uns chevaliers auques d'aé

A knight somewhat of-age

estoit de l'autre part del pré

was on the-other side of-the meadow

sor un cheval d'Espaingne sor:

on a horse of-Spain sorrel

s'avoit lorain et sele a or

and-had harness and saddle with gold

1665 et s'estoit de chienes meslez.

and and-was with gray-hairs mingled

Une main a un de ses lez

One hand on one of his sides

avoit par contenance mise.

he-had by bearing put

Por le bel tans iert an chemise,

For the fair weather he-was in shirt

s'esgardoit les jeux et les baules,

and-was-watching the games and the round-dances

1670 un mantel cort par ses espauls

a mantle short over his shoulders

d'escarlate et de ver antier.

of-scarlet and of vair whole

De l'autre part lez un santier

On the-other side beside a path

an avoit jusqu'a vint et trois

thereof there-were as-many-as twenty and three

armez sor buens chevaus irois.

armed on good horses Irish

1675 Tantost con li troi lor sorvienent,

As-soon as the three to-them come-upon

tuit de joie feire se tienent,

all from joy to-make themselves they-bold

et criënt tuit parmi les prez:

and cry all through the meadows

“Veez le chevalier, veez,

See the knight see

qui fu menez sor la charrete!

who was led on the cart

N'i et mes nul qui s'antremete

Not-there be more any who himself-meddle

de joer tant com il i iert.

with playing so-long as he there will-be

Dahez et, qui joer i quiert,

A-curse have whoever to-play there seeks

et dahez et, qui deignera

and a-curse have whoever will-deign

joer tant com il i sera.”

to-play so-long as he there will-be

Et antre tant ez vos venu

And amid that-much behold you come

devant le chevalier chenu

before the knight hoary

celui qui la pucele amoit

that-one who the maiden loved

et por soe ja la clamoit,

and for his already her called

si dist: “Sire, mout ai grant joie,

and said Lord much I-have great joy

et qui le viaut öir, si l'oie,

and whoever it wishes to-bear so let-him-bear-it

1680

1685

1690

que Deus m'a la chose donee

that God to-me-has the thing given

que j'ai toz jorz plus desirree;

which I-have all days most desired

n'il ne m'eüst pas tant doné

nor-he not to-me-would-have at-all so-much given

s'il m'eüst fet roi coroné,

if-he me-had made a-king crowned

1695 ne si buen gre ne l'an s'eüsse,

nor so good thanks not to-him-thereof I-should-know

ne tel gaainz fet n'i eüsse;

nor such a-gain made not-thereat I-should-have

car cist gaainz est biaux et buens."

for this gain is fair and good

"Je ne sai ancor s'il est tuens",

I not know yet if-it is thine

fet li chevaliers a son fil.

says the knight to his son

1700 Tot maintenant li respont cil:

Right at-once to-him answers he

"Nel savez? Nel veez vos donques?

Not-it you-know Not-it see you then

Por Deu, sire, n'an dotez onques

For God's-sake lord not-thereof doubt ever

quant vos veez que je la taing:

when you see that I her hold

an cele forest don je vaing

in that forest whence I come

1705 l'ancontrai or qu'ele venoit.

her-I-met just-now as-she was-coming

Je cuit que Deus la m'amenoit,
I think that God her to-me-was-bringing

si l'ai prise come la moie."
so her-I-have taken as the mine

"Ne sai ancor se cil l'otroie,
Not I-know yet if he it-grants

que je voi venir après toi;
whom I see come after thee

chalangier la te vient, ce croi."
to-challenge her to-thee he-comes this I-believe

1710

Antre cez diz et cez paroles
Amid these sayings and these words

furent remeses les caroles
were ceased the carols

por le chevalier que il virent,
because-of the knight whom they saw

ne jeu ne joie plus ne firent
nor game nor joy more not they-made

por mal de lui et por despit.
for ill of him and for contempt

1715

Et li chevaliers sanz respit
And the knight without delay

vint mout tost après la pucele
came very fast after the maiden

et dist: "Leissiez la dameisele,
and said Leave the damsel

chevaliers, car n'i avez droit!
knight for not-there you-have right

- 1720 Se vos osez, tot or androit
If you dare quite right now
 la deffandrai vers vostre cors.”
her I-shall-defend against your body
 Et li viauz chevaliers dist lors:
And the old knight said then
 “Don ne le savoie je bien?
Then not it knew I well
 Biaus fiz, ja plus ne la retien,
Fair son ever more not her retain
 1725 la pucele, mes leisse li.”
the maiden but leave her
 A celui mie n’anbeli,
To that-one at-all not-it-pleased
 ainz jure qu’il n’an randra point,
rather he-swears that-he not-thereof will-render a-whit
 et dist: “Ja puis Deus ne me doint
and said Ever thereafter God not to-me grant
 joie, que je la li randrai!
joy if I her to-him shall-render
 1730 Je la taing et si la tandrai
I her hold and so her I-shall-hold
 come la moie chose lige.
as the mine thing liege
 Ainz iert de mon escu la guige
Sooner will-be of my shield the strap
 ronpue et totes les enarmes,
broken and all the shield-straps

ne an mon cors ne an mes armes

nor in my body nor in my arms

n'avrai je puis point de fiance,

not-shall-have I thereafter a-whit of trust

ne an m'espee n'an ma lance,

nor in my-sword nor-in my lance

que je li leisserai m'amie."

that I to-him shall-leave my-friend

Et cil dit: "Ne te leirai mie

And he says Not thee I-shall-let at-all

combatre por rien que tu dies.

fight for anything that thou sayest

An ta proesce trop te fies;

In thy prowess too-much thyself thou-trustest

mes fai ce que je te comant."

but do this that I thee command

Cil par orguel respont: "Comant?

He through pride answers How

Sui j' anfes a espoanter?

Am I a-child to frighten

De ce me puis je bien vanter,

Of this myself can I well boast

qu'il n'a tant con la mers açaint

that-there not-is as-much as the sea encircles

chevalier, ou il an a maint,

a-knight where there thereof are many-a-one

nul si buen, cui je la leissasse,

any so good to-whom I her should-leave

1735

1740

1745

et que je feire ne cuidasse

and whom I to-make not should-think

an mout po d'ore recreant."

in very little of-an-hour recreant

1750 Li pere dit: "Je te creant,

The father says I thee grant

biaus fiz, ainsi le cuides tu,

fair son thus it thinkest thou

tant te fies an ta vertu;

so-much thyself thou-trustest in thy strength

mes ne vuel ne ne voldrai hui

but not I-wish nor not I-shall-wish today

que tu t'essaies a cestui."

that thou thyself-try against this-one

1755 Et cil respont: "Honiz seroie

And he answers Shamed I-should-be

se je vostre consoil creoie.

if I your counsel believed

Mal dahé et, qui le crerra

Ill curse have whoever it will-believe

et qui por vos se recrerra,

and who for you himself will-give-up

que fieremant ne me conbate.

so-that fiercely not myself be-fight

1760 Voirs est que privez mal achate:

True it-is that a-kinsman ill buys

miauz pöisse aillors barguignier,

better I-could elsewhere bargain

que vos me volez angignier.

for you me wish deceive

Bien sai qu'an un estrange leu

Well I-know that-in a strange place

pöisse miauz feire mon preu.

I-could better make my profit

Ja nus qui ne me conëust

Ever anyone who not me knew

de mon vouloir ne me nëust,

of my will not me would-thwart

et vos m'an grevez et nuisiez.

and you me-thereof aggrieve and thwart

De tant sui je plus angoissiez

By so-much am I the-more distressed

por ce que blasmé le m'avez;

for this that blamed it to-me-you-have

car qui blasme, bien le savez,

for whoever blames well it you-know

son vouloir a home n'a fame,

bis will to a-man nor-to a-woman

plus an art et plus an anflame.

the-more thereat he-burns and the-more thereat he-inflames

Mes se je rien por vos an les,

But if I a-thing for you thereof leave

ja Deus joie ne me doint mes;

ever God joy not to-me grant more

ainz me combatrai mal gre vostre."

rather myself I-shall-fight ill will yours

"Foi que doi saint Pere l'apostre",

By-the-faith that I-owe saint Peter the-apostle

1765

1770

1775

fet li peres, “or voi je bien

says the father now see I well

que proiere n'i vaudroit rien.

that prayer not-there would-avail anything

Tot pert quanque je te chasti;

All is-lost whatever I thee chastise

1780 mes je t'avrai mout tost basti

but I to-thee-shall-have very soon built

tel plet que maleoit gre tuen

such a-plight that cursed will thine

t'estovra feire tot mon buen,

thee-it-will-beboove to-do all my pleasure

car tu an feras au dessoz.”

for thou thereof wilt-do at-the worse

Tot maintenant apele toz

Right at-once he-calls all

1785 les chevaliers, que a lui vaingnent,

the knights that to him they-come

si lor comande qu'il li taignent

and to-them commands that-they for-him bold

son fil qu'il ne puet chastiier;

his son whom-he not can chastise

et dit: “Je le ferai liier

and says I him shall-have bound

ainz que conbatre le leissasse.

before that to-fight him I-should-let

1790 Vos estes tuit mi home a masse,

You are all my men in body

si me devez amor et foi:

so to-me you-owe love and faith

sor quanque vos tenez de moi

upon whatever you hold of me

le vos comant et pri ansamble.

it to-you I-command and pray together

Grant folie fet, ce me sanble,

Great folly he-does this to-me seems

et mout li vient de grant orguel,

and much to-him it-comes from great pride

quant il desdit ce que je vuel.”

when he gainsays this which I wish

Et cil dient qu’il le prandront,

And they say that-they him will-take

ne ja puis que il le tandront

nor ever after that they him will-hold

de conbatre ne li prandra

of fighting not to-him will-take

talanz, et si li covandra

desire and so to-him it-will-behoove

mal gre suen la pucele randre.

ill will his the maiden to-render

Lors le vont tuit a masse prendre

Then him go all in body to-take

et par les braz et par le col.

and by the arms and by the neck

“Dons ne te tiens tu or por fol?”,

Then not thee holdest thou now for mad

fet li peres; “or conois voir:

says the father now know truly

1795

1800

1805

or n'as tu force ne pooir

now not-hast thou strength nor power

de combatre ne de joster

of fighting nor of jousting

que que il te doie coster,

whatever that it thee should cost

que qu'il t'enuit ne qu'il te griet.

however that-it thee-irk nor that-it thee grieve

1810 Ce qui me plect et qui me siet

This which me pleases and which me suits

otroie, si feras que sages.

grant so thou-wilt-do as a-wise-man

Et sez tu queus est mes corages?

And knowest thou what is my mind

Por ce que mandre soit tes diaus

For this that lesser be thy grief

siurons moi et toi, se tu viaus,

let-us-follow me and thee if thou wishest

1815 le chevalier hui et demain,

the knight today and tomorrow

et par le bois et par le plain,

both through the wood and through the plain

chascuns sor son cheval anblant.

each on his horse ambling

De tel estre et de tel sanblant

Of such bearing and of such semblance

le porriens nos tost trover

him could we soon find

que je t'i leiroie esprover

that I thee-there should-let make-trial

et combatre a ta volanté.”

and fight at thy will

Lors li a cil acreanté

Then to-him has he granted

mal gre suen quant feire l'estuet.

ill will his since to-do him-it-behooves

Con cil qui amander nel puet

As he who to-mend not-it can

dit qu'il s'an soferra por lui,

says that-be himself-thereof will-forbear for him

mes qu'il le siuront anbedui.

provided that-they him will-follow both

Et quant ceste avanture voient

And when this adventure they-see

les janz qui par le pre estoient,

the folk who through the meadow were

si dient tuit: “Avez vëu?

then they-say all Have-you seen

1820

1825

- 1830 Cil qui sor la charrete fu
He who on the cart was
 a ci conquise tel enor
has here won such honor
 que l'amie au fil mon seignor
that the-friend of-the son of-my lord
 an mainne et sel suefre mes sire.
thence he-leads and so-it suffers my lord
 Par verité poomes dire
By truth we-can say
- 1835 que aucun bien cuide qu'il et
that some good he-thinks that-there be
 an lui quant il mener li let.
in him since he to-lead to-him lets
 Et çant dahez et, qui mes hui
And a-hundred curses have whoever more today
 leissera a joer por lui.
will-leave off playing for him
 Ralons joer". Lors recomacent
Let-us-go-again to-play Then they-begin-again
- 1840 lor jeus et carolent et dacent.
their games and carol and dance

The Cemetery of Those to Come

VII

He goes into a church to pray, and an old monk shows him the walled cemetery beside it. The tombs carry letters naming the men who will lie in them — here Gawain, here Yvain — and one of marble, finer than the rest, waits for whoever frees the captives. Seven strong men could not raise its slab; he raises it alone. The monk asks his name and gets only that he was born in Logres. The father and son, coming after, hear what he did and turn for home, and the damsel, refused his name, takes her leave.

Tantost li chevaliers s'an torne,

At-once the knight himself-thence turns

en la pree plus ne sejourne;

in the meadow more not he-stays

mes après lui pas ne remaint

but after him at-all not stays

la pucele, qu'il ne l'an maint.

the maiden that-he not her-thence lead

Andui s'an vont a grant besoing;

Both themselves-thence go in great haste

li fiz et li pere de loing

the son and the father from afar

les siuent par le pre fauchié,

them follow through the meadow mown

1845

s'ont jusqu'a none chevauchié

and-have until nones ridden

et truevent an un leu mout bel

and find in a place very fair

1850 un mostier et lez le chancel

a church and beside the chancel

un cemetire de mur clos.

a cemetery with wall enclosed

Ne fist que vilains ne que fos

Not he-did as a-churl nor as a-fool

li chevaliers qui el mostier

the knight who into-the church

antra a pié por Deu proier,

entered on foot for God to-pray

1855 et la dameisele li tint

and the damsel for-him held

son cheval tant que il revint.

his horse until that he came-back

Quant il ot feite sa proiere

When he had made his prayer

et il s'an revenoit arriere,

and he himself-thence was-coming back

si li vient uns moignes mout viauz

then to-him comes a monk very old

1860 a l'ancontre devant ses iauz.

at the-meeting before his eyes

Quant il l'ancontre, si li prie
When he him-meets then to-him he-prays

mout doucement que il li die
very gently that he to-him tell

que ce estoit qu'il ne savoit.
what this was which-he not knew

Et cil respont qu'il i avoit
And he answers that-he there had

un cemetire. Et cil li dit:
a cemetery And he to-him says

"Menez m'i, se Deus vos äit."
Lead me-thither so God you help

"Volantiers, sire", lors l'i moinne.
Willingly lord then him-thither he-leads

Li chevaliers après le moinne
The knight after the monk

antre et voit les plus beles tonbes
enters and sees the most fair tombs

qu'an pöist trover jusqu'a Donbes
that-one could find as-far-as-to Dombes

ne de la jusqu'a Panpelune,
nor from there as-far-as-to Pamplona

et s'avoit letres sor chascune,
and and-there-were letters upon each

qui les nons de ceus devoient
which the names of those set-out

qui dedanz les tonbes girroient.
who within the tombs should-lie

1865

1870

- 1875 Et il mēismes tire a tire
And he himself one after another
 comança les letres a lire,
began the letters to read
 et trova: “Ci girra Gauvains,
and found Here will-lie Gawain
 ci Looys et ci Yvains.”
here Looys and here Yvain
 Après cez trois i a mainz liz
After these three there are many beds
 1880 des nons des chevaliers esliz,
of-the names of-the knights chosen
 des plus prisiez et des meillors
of-the most prized and of-the best
 et de cele terre et d’ailors.
both of that land and from-elsewhere
 Antre les autres une an trueve
Among the others one thereof he-finds
 de marbre, si sanble estre nueve,
of marble and it-seems to-be new
 1885 sor totes autres riche et bele.
above all others rich and fair
 Li chevaliers le moinne apele
The knight the monk calls
 et dist: “Cez tonbes qui ci sont
and said These tombs which here are
 de quoi servent?” Et cil respont:
of what serve And he answers
 “Ja avez les letres vëues:
Already you-have the letters seen

se vos les avez antandues,

if you them have understood

donc savez vos que eles dient

then know you what they say

et que les tonbes senefient.”

and what the tombs signify

“Et de cele grant la me dites

And of that great there to-me tell

de quoi sert ele?” Et li hermites

of what serves it And the hermit

respont: “Jel vos dirai assez.

answers I-it to-you shall-tell enough

C'est uns veissiaus qui a passez

It-is a vessel which has surpassed

toz ces qui onques furent fet;

all those which ever were made

si riche ne si bien portret

so rich nor so well wrought

ne vit onques ne je ne nus.

not saw ever neither I nor anyone

Biaus est defors et dedanz plus:

Fair it-is outside and within more

mes ce metez an nonchaloir,

but this put in indifference

que rien ne vos porroit valoir;

for anything not to-you could avail

que ja ne le verroiz dedanz,

for ever not it you-will-see within

1890

1895

1900

car set homes mout forz et granz

for seven men very strong and great

1905 i covandroit au descovrir,

there it-would-need at-the uncovering

qui la tonbe voldroit ovrir;

whoever the tomb should-wish to-open

qu'ele est d'une lame coverte.

for-it is with-a slab covered

Et sachiez que c'est chose certe,

And know that it-is a-thing certain

qu'au lever covandroit set homes

that-at-the lifting it-would-need seven men

1910 plus forz que moi et vos ne somes.

more strong than I and you — are

Et letres escrites i a,

And letters written there are

qui dient, cil qui levera

which say he who will-lift

ceste lame seus par son cors,

this slab alone by his body

getera ceus et celes fors,

will-cast those and those-women out

1915 qui sont an la terre an prison,

who are in the land in prison

don n'ist ne sers ne jantis hon

whence not-issues neither serf nor noble man

qui ne soit de la antor nez;

who not be from there round-about born

n'ancor n'an est nus retornez.

nor-yet not-thence is anyone returned

Les estranges prisons i tienent:

The strangers prisoners there they-hold

et cil del päis vont et viennent

and those of-the land go and come

et anz et fors a lor pleisir.”

both in and out at their pleasure

Tantost vet la lame seisir

At-once he-goes the slab to-seize

li chevaliers, et si la lieve

the knight and so it he-lifts

si que de neant ne li grieve,

so that of anything not to-him it-grieves

miauz que dis home ne fëissent

better than ten men — would-do

se tot lor pooir i mëissent.

if all their power there they-put

Et li moignes s'an esbäi

And the monk himself-thereat was-astounded

si qu'a bien pres qu'il ne chäi

so that-at very near that-he not fell

quant vëue ot ceste mervoille;

when seen he-had this marvel

car il ne cuidoit sa paroille

for he not thought its like

veoir an trestote sa vie;

to-see in all-of his life

et dist: “Sire, or ai grant anvie

and said Lord now I-have great longing

que je sëusse vostre non;

that I should-know your name

1920

1925

1930

diriez le me vos?" — "Je non",

would-say it to-me you I not

1935 fet li chevaliers, "par ma foi."

says the knight by my faith

"Certes", fet il, "ce poise moi;

Certainly says he this grieves me

mes se vos le me disiiez,

but if you it to-me were-to-tell

grant cortisie feriez,

great courtesy you-would-do

s'i porriez avoir grant preu.

and-there you-could have great profit

1940 Qui estes vos et de quel leu?"

Who are you and from what place

"Uns chevaliers sui, ce veez,

A knight I-am this you-see

del reaume de Logres nez:

of-the realm of Logres born

a tant an voldroie estre quites.

at that thereof I-would-wish to-be quit

Et vos, s'il vos plest, me redites

And you if-it you pleases to-me tell-in-turn

1945 an cele tonbe qui girra."

in that tomb who will-lie

"Sire, cil qui deliverra

Lord he who will-deliver

toz ces qui sont pris a la trape

all those who are caught in the trap

el reaume don nus n'eschape."

in-the realm whence anyone not-escapes

Et quant il li ot tot conté,

And when he to-him had all told

li chevaliers l'a comandé

the knight him-has commended

a Deu et a trestoz ses sainz;

to God and to all his saints

et lors est, qu'onques ne pot ainz,

and then he-is since-ever not he-could sooner

a la dameisele venuz.

to the damsel come

Et li viauz moignes, li chenuz,

And the old monk the hoary

fors de l'eglise le convoie,

out of the-church him escorts

et cil se metent a la voie.

and they themselves put on the way

Et que que la pucele monte,

And while that the maiden mounts

li moignes trestot li raconte

the monk everything to-her recounts

quant cil leanz fet avoit,

whatever he therein done had

et son non, s'ele le savoit,

and his name if-she it knew

li pria qu'ele li dëist,

to-her he-prayed that-she to-him tell

1950

1955

1960

tant que cele li regëist

until that she to-him confessed

qu'ele nel set, mes une chose

that-she not-it knows but one thing

sëuremant dire li ose,

surely to-say to-him she-dares

1965 qu'il n'a tel chevalier vivant

that-there not-is such a-knight living

tant con vantent li quatre vant.

as-far as blow the four winds

Tantost la pucele le leisse,

At-once the maiden him leaves

après le chevalier s'esleisse.

after the knight herself-she-speeds

Maintenant cil qui les sivoient

At-once those who them were-following

1970 viennent et si truevent et voient

come and so find and see

le moinne seul devant l'eglise.

the monk alone before the-church

Li viauz chevaliers an chemise

The old knight in shirt

li dist: "Sire, vëistes vos

to-him said Lord saw you

un chevalier, dites le nos,

a knight tell it to-us

1975 qui une dameisele mainne?"

who a damsel leads

Et cil respont: "Ja ne m'iert painne

And he answers Ever not to-me-will-be trouble

que tot le voir ne vos an cont,

that all the truth not to-you thereof I-tell

car or androit de ci s'an vont.

for right now from here themselves-thence they-go

Et li chevaliers fu leanz,

And the knight was therein

si a fet mervoilles si granz

and has done marvels so great

que toz seus la lame leva,

that all alone the slab he-lifted

qu'onques de rien ne s'i greva,

so-that-ever in anything not himself-thereat he-strained

de sor la grant tonbe marbrine.

from over the great tomb of-marble

Il vet rescorre la rëine,

He goes to-rescue the queen

et il la rescorra sanz dote,

and he her will-rescue without doubt

et avuec li l'autre jant tote.

and with her the-other folk all

Vos mëismes bien le savez,

You yourself well it know

qui sovant lëues avez

who often read have

les letres qui sont sor la lame.

the letters which are on the slab

1980

1985

- 1990 Onques voir d'ome ne de fame
Ever truly of-man nor of woman
 ne nasqui n'an sele ne sist
not was-born nor-in saddle not sat
 chevaliers qui cestui vaussist."
a-knight who this-one might-be-worth
 Et lors dit li pere a son fil:
And then says the father to his son
 "Fiz, que t'an sanble? Don n'est il
Son what to-thee-thereof seems Then not-is he
- 1995 mout preuz, qui a fet tel esforz?
very valiant who has done such an-effort
 Or sez tu bien cui fu li torz:
Now knowest thou well whose was the wrong
 bien sez se il fu tuens ou miens.
well thou-knowest if it was thine or mine
 Je ne voldroie por Amiens
I not should-wish for Amiens
 qu'a lui te fusses conbatuz,
that-with him thyself thou-hadst fought
- 2000 si t'an ies tu mout debatuz
and-yet thyself-thereof hast thou much debated
 ainz qu'an t'an pöist destorner.
before that-one thee-thereof could turn-away
 Or nos an poons retorner,
Now us thence we-can turn-back
 car grant folie ferriens
for great folly we-should-do
 s'avant de ci le siviens."
if-further from here him we-followed

Et cil respont: “Je l’otroi bien:

And he answers I it-grant readily

li siures ne nos vaudroit rien.

the following not to-us would-avail anything

Des qu’il vos plect, ralons nos an.”

Since that-it you pleases let-us-go-again ourselves thence

Del retorner ont fet grant san:

Of-the returning they-have made great sense

et la pucele tote voie

and the maiden all the-same

le chevalier de pres costoe,

the knight from near keeps-beside

si le viaut feire a li antandre,

and him she-wishes to-make to her attend

et son non viaut de lui aprendre,

and his name she-wishes from him to-learn

si li requiert que il li die

so to-him she-asks that he to-her tell

une foiz, et autre li prie,

one time and another to-him she-prays

tant qu’il li respont par enui:

until that-he to-her answers through annoyance

“Ne vos ai je dit que je sui

Not to-you have I told that I am

del reaume le roi Artu?

of-the realm of-the king Arthur

Foi que doi Deu et sa vertu,

By-the-faith that I-owe to-God and his power

de mon non ne savroiz vos point.”

of my name not will-know you a-whit

2005

2010

2015

2020 Lors li dit cele qu'il li doint

Then to-him says she that-be to-her give

congié, si s'an ira arriere;

leave and herself-thence she-will-go back

et il li done a bele chiere.

and he to-her gives with fair countenance

The Vavasour's House, and the Passage of the Stones

VIII

A vavasour born in Logres, held in this country with his wife and seven children, takes him in. The custom here, they tell him, lets any stranger enter and none leave; he means to get out, he answers, and if one leaves lawfully, all can. He says he came for the queen and nothing else. Warned of the Passage of the Stones, he rides at it in the morning with two of his host's sons: the guard's lance shatters, he takes him in the throat and throws him across the rocks, and the sergeants with the axes miss him on purpose.

A tant la pucele s'an part,

At that the maiden herself-thence parts

et cil tant que il fu mout tart

and he so-long that it was very late

2025 a chevauchié sanz conpeignie.

has ridden without company

Aprés vespres androit conplie,

After vespers about compline

si com il son chemin tenoit,

just as he his road was-holding

vit un chevalier qui venoit

he-saw a knight who was-coming

del bois ou il avoit chacié.

from-the wood where he had hunted

Cil venoit le hiaume lacié

2030

He was-coming the helm laced

et ot sa venison trossee,

and had his venison trussed

tel con Deus li avoit donee,

such as God to-him had given

sor un grant chaceor ferrant.

on a great hunter iron-gray

Li vavasors mout tost errant

The vavasour very fast hurrying

vint ancontre le chevalier,

2035

came to-meet the knight

si li prie de herbergier.

and to-him prays for to-lodge

“Sire”, fet il, “nuiz iert par tans:

Lord says he night will-be in time

de herbergier est hui mes tans,

for to-lodge is today now time

sel devez feire par reison.

and-it you-ought to-do by reason

Et j’ai une moie meison

2040

And I-have a mine house

ci pres, ou je vos manrai ja.

here near where I you shall-lead at-once

Ains nus miauz ne vos herberja

Ever anyone better not you lodged

lonc mon pooir que je ferai:

according-to my power than I shall-do

s'il vos plest, mout liez an serai."

if-it you pleases very glad thereof I-shall-be

2045 "Et j'an resui mout liez", fet cil.

And I-thereof am-also very glad says he

Avant an anvoie son fil

Ahead thence he-sends his son

li vavasors tot maintenant,

the vavasour right at-once

por feire l'ostel avenant

to make the-lodging fitting

et por la cuisine haster.

and to the kitchen hasten

2050 Et li vaslez sanz arester

And the young-man without stopping

fet tantost son comandement

does at-once his commandment

mout volontiers et lieemant,

very willingly and gladly

si s'an vet mout grant alëure.

and himself-thence goes at-very great pace

Et cil qui de haster n'ont cure

And they who of hastening not-have care

2055 ont après lor chemin tenu

have after their road held

tant qu'il sont a l'ostel venu.

until that-they are at the-lodging come

Li vavasors avoit a fame

The vavasour had for wife

une bien afeitee dame

a well bred lady

et cinc fiz qu'il avoit mout chiers,

and five sons whom-he had very dear

trois vaslez et deus chevaliers,

three young-men and two knights

et deus filles jantes et beles,

and two daughters comely and fair

qui ancore estoient puceles.

who still were maidens

N'estoient pas ne de la terre,

Not-they-were at-all born of the land

mes il i estoient an serre,

but they there were in constraint

et prison tenu i avoient

and prison kept there they-had

mout longuemant, et si estoient

very long and so they-were

del reaume de Logres né.

of-the realm of Logres born

Li vavasors a amené

The vavasour has brought

le chevalier dedanz sa cort,

the knight within his court

et la dame a l'ancontre cort,

and the lady to the-meeting runs

et si fil et ses filles saillent,

and his sons and his daughters leap-up

2060

2065

2070

por lui servir tuit se travaillent;

for him to-serve all themselves labor

si le saluent et desçandent.

and him they-greet and help-dismount

A lor seignor gueires n'antandent

To their lord much not-they-attend

2075 ne les serors ne li cinc frere,

neither the sisters nor the five brothers

car bien savoient que lor pere

for well they-knew that their father

voloit que einsi le fëissent.

wished that thus it they-should-do

Mout l'enorent et conjöissent:

Much him-they-honor and make-welcome

et quant il l'orent desarmé,

and when they him-had disarmed

2080 son mantel li a afublé

her mantle to-him has put-on

l'une des deus filles son oste:

the-one of-the two daughters of-his host

au col li met et del suen l'oste.

at-the neck to-him puts and from-the hers it-takes

S'il fu bien serviz au soper,

If-he was well served at-the supper

de ce ne quier je ja parler;

of this not seek I ever to-speak

2085 mes quant ce vint après mangier,

but when this came after eating

onques n'i ot puis fet dangier
ever not-there was thereafter made difficulty

de parler d'afeires plusors.

of speaking of-matters many

Premieremant li vavasors

First the vavasour

comança son oste a anquerre,

began his guest to question

qui il estoit et de quel terre,

who he was and from what land

mes son non ne li anquist pas.

but his name not of-him he-asked at-all

Et il respont eneslepas:

And he answers straightway

“Del reaume de Logres sui,

Of-the realm of Logres I-am

ains mes an cest päis ne fui.”

ever before into this land not I-was

Et quant li vavasors l'antant,

And when the vavasour it-hears

si s'an mervoille duremant

then himself-thereat he-marvels greatly

et sa fame et si anfant tuit,

and his wife and his children all

n'i a un seul cui mout n'enuit;

not-there is one single whom much not-it-grieves

si li comancierent a dire:

and to-him they-began to say

“Tant mar i fustes, biaux douz sire,

So in-ill-hour there you-were fair sweet lord

2090

2095

2100

tant est granz damages de vos!

so is great the-harm of you

Qu'or seroiz aussi come nos

For-now you-will-be just like us

an servitume et an essil."

in servitude and in exile

"Et don estes vos dons?" fet il.

And whence are you then says he

2105 "Sire, de vostre terre somes.

Lord of your land we-are

An cest päis a mainz des homes

In this land there-are many of-the men

de vostre terre an servitume.

of your land in servitude

Maleoite soit la costume

Accursed be the custom

et cil avuec, qui la maintienent!

and those with-it who it maintain

2110 Car nul estrange ça ne vienent,

For any strangers hither not come

que remenoir ne lor covaingne

but-that to-remain not to-them it-behooves

et que la terre nes detaingne;

and that the land not-them detain

car qui se viaut, antrer i puet,

for whoever himself wishes to-enter there can

mes a remenoir li estuet.

but to remain to-him it-behooves

2115 De vos mēismes est or pes:

Of you yourself is now peace

vos n'an istroiz, ce cuit, ja mes."

you not-thence will-issue this I-think ever more

"Si ferai", fet il, "se je puis."

Indeed I-shall-do says he if I can

Li vavasors li redit puis:

The vavasour to-him says-again then

"Comant? Cuidiez an vos issir?"

How Think thence you to-issue

"Öil, se Deu vient a pleisir;

Yes if to-God it-comes to pleasure

et j'an ferai mon pooir tot."

and I-thereof shall-do my power all

"Donc an istroient sanz redot

Then thence would-issue without doubt

trestuit li autre quitemant;

all-quite the others freely

car puis que li uns leaumant

for since that the one loyally

istra fors de ceste prison,

will-issue out of this prison

tuit li autre sanz mesprison

all the others without wrong

an porront issir sanz deffanse."

thence will-be-able to-issue without hindrance

2120

2125

A tant li vavasors s'apanse

At that the vavasour himself-bethinks

qu'an li avoit dit et conté

that-one to-him had said and told

2130 qu'uns chevaliers de grant bonté

that-a knight of great worth

el päis a force venoit

into-the land by force was-coming

por la rëine que tenoit

for the queen whom was-holding

Meleaganz, li fiz le roi;

Melegant the son of-the king

et dit: "Certes, je pans et croi

and says Certainly I think and believe

2135 que ce soit il, dirai li donques."

that this be he I-shall-tell to-him then

Lors li dist: "Ne me celez onques,

Then to-him he-said Not from-me conceal ever

sire, rien de vostre besoingne

lord anything of your business

par tel covant, que je vos doingne

on such covenant that I to-you give

consoil au miauz que je savrai.

counsel at-the best that I shall-know

2140 Je mëismes preu i avrai

I myself profit thereat shall-have

se vos bien feire le poez.

if you well to-do it can

La verité m'an desnoez

The truth to-me-thereof unknot

por vostre preu et por le mien.

for your profit and for the mine

An cest päis, ce cuit je bien,

Into this land this think I well

estes venuz por la rëine

you-are come for the queen

antre ceste jant sarradine,

among this folk Saracen

qui peor que Sarrazin sont.”

who worse than Saracens are

Et li chevaliers li respont:

And the knight to-him answers

“Onques n'i ving por autre chose.

Ever not-there I-came for another thing

Ne sai ou ma dame est anclose,

Not I-know where my lady is shut-up

mes a li rescorre tesoil,

but at her to-rescue I-strive

et s'ai grant mestier de consoil.

and and-I-have great need of counsel

Conseilliez moi, se vos savez.”

Counsel me if you know

Et cil dit: “Sire, vos avez

And he says Lord you have

anprise voie mout grevainne.

undertaken a-way very grievous

2145

2150

2155

La voie ou vos estes vos mainne

The way where you are you leads

au pont de l'espee tot droit.

to-the bridge of the-sword quite straight

Consoil croire vos covandroit:

Counsel to-believe to-you it-would-beboove

se vos croire me voliiiez,

if you to-believe me were-willing

2160 au pont de l'espee iriiez

to-the bridge of the-sword you-would-go

par une plus sëure voie,

by a more safe way

et je mener vos i feroie.”

and I to-lead you there would-have

Et cil qui la menor covoit

And he who the shorter covets

li demande: “Est ele aussi droite

of-him asks Is it as straight

2165 come ceste voie de ça?”

as this way of here

“Nenil”, fet il, “einçois i a

No says he rather there is

plus longue voie et plus sëure.”

more long way and more safe

Et cil dit: “De ce n'ai je cure;

And he says Of this not-have I care

mes an cesti me conseiliez!”

but on this-one me counsel

2170 “J'an sui”, fet il, “apareilliez;

I-thereof am says he ready

mes ja, ce cuit, n'i avroiz preu
but ever this I-think not-there you-will-have profit

se vos alez par autre leu.

if you go by another place

Demain vandroiz a un passage

Tomorrow you-will-come to a passage

ou tost porroiz avoir damage,

where soon you-will-be-able to-have harm

s'a non Li Passages des Pierres.

and-it-has for-name The Passage of-the Stones

2175

Volez que je vos die gierres

Wish-you that I to-you tell much

del passage com il est maus?

of-the passage how it is bad

N'i puet passer qu'uns seus chevaus:

Not-there can pass but-a single horse

lez a lez n'i iroient pas

side by side not-there would-go at-all

dui home, et si est li trespas

two men and so is the crossing

2180

bien gardez et bien deffanduz.

well guarded and well defended

Ne vos sera mie randuz

Not to-you it-will-be at-all yielded

maintenant que vos i vandroiz:

at-once when you there will-come

d'espee et de lance i prandroiz

of-sword and of lance there you-will-take

2185 maint cop et s'an randroiz assez

many-a blow and so-thereof you-will-render enough

ainz que soiez outre passez."

before that you-be beyond passed

Et quant il li ot tot retret,

And when he to-him had all recounted

uns chevaliers avant se tret,

a knight forward himself draws

qui estoit fiz au vavasor,

who was son to-the vavasour

2190 et dit: "Sire, avuec cest seignor

and says Lord with this lord

m'an irai, se il ne vos grieve."

myself-thence I-shall-go if it not to-you grieves

A tant uns des vaslez se lieve

At that one of-the young-men himself raises

et dit: "Aussins i irai gié."

and says Likewise there shall-go I

Et li pere an done congié

And the father thereof gives leave

2195 mout volantiers a anbedeus.

very willingly to both

Or ne s'an ira mie seus

Now not himself-thence will-go at-all alone

li chevaliers, ses an mercie,

the knight and-them thereof he-thanks

que mout aime lor conpeignie.

for much he-loves their company

A tant les paroles remainnent,
At that the words cease
 le chevalier couchier an mainnent, 2200
the knight to-lie-down thence they-lead
 andormiz s'est; talant an ot.
asleep himself-be-is desire thereof he-had
 Tantost con le jor veoir pot,
As-soon as the day to-see he-could
 se lieve sus, et cil le voient,
himself be-raises up and they it see
 qui avuec lui aler devoient,
who with him to-go were-to
 si sont tot maintenant levé. 2205
and are right at-once risen
 Li chevalier se sont armé,
The knights themselves have armed
 si s'an vont et ont congié pris;
and themselves-thence go and have leave taken
 et li vaslez s'est devant mis,
and the young-man himself-is in-front put
 et tant lor voie ansamble tienent
and so-long their way together they-hold
 qu'au passage des pierres viennent 2210
that-at-the passage of-the stones they-come
 a ore de prime tot droit.
at hour of prime quite straight
 Une bretesche anmi avoit,
A wooden-tower amid there-was
 ou il avoit un home adés.
where there was a man always

Einçois que il venissent pres,

Before that they should-come near

2215 cil qui sor la bretesche fu

he who on the wooden-tower was

les voit et crie a grant vertu:

them sees and cries with great force

“Cist vient por mal, cist vient por mal!”

This-one comes for harm this-one comes for harm

A tant ez vos sor un cheval

At that behold you on a horse

un chevalier de la bretesche

a knight from the wooden-tower

2220 armé d’une armëure fresche,

armed with-an armor fresh

et de chascune part serjanz

and on each side sergeants

qui tenoient haches tranchanz.

who were-holding axes cutting

Et quant il au passage aproche,

And when he to-the passage draws-near

cil qui le garde li reproche

he who it guards to-him reproaches

2225 la charrete mout leidemant,

the cart very shamefully

et dit: “Vasaus, grant hardemant

and says Vassal great boldness

as fet, et mout ies fos nâis

thou-hast done and very thou-art a-fool born

quant antrez ies an cest päis.

when entered thou-art into this land

Ja hon ça venir ne dëust,

Ever a-man hither to-come not should

qui an charrete esté ëüst,

who in a-cart been had

ne ja Deus jöir ne t'an doint!"

nor ever God to-enjoy not to-thee-thereof grant

A tant li uns vers l'autre point

At that the one toward the-other spurs

quant que cheval pueent aler.

as-much-as horses can go

Et cil qui le pas dut garder

And he who the pass had to-guard

peçoie sa lance a estros

shatters his lance to pieces

et leisse andeus cheoir les tros;

and lets both fall the fragments

et cil an la gorge l'assanne

and he in the throat him-strikes

trestot droit par desoz la panne

quite straight by beneath the flap

de l'escu, si le giete anvers

of the-shield so him casts backward

dessus les pierres an travers;

upon the stones in crosswise

et li serjant as haches saillent,

and the sergeants with-the axes leap-up

mes a esciant a lui faillent,

but on purpose at him they-miss

2230

2235

2240

qu'il n'ont talant de feire mal

for-they not-have desire of to-do harm

ne a lui ne a son cheval.

neither to him nor to his horse

2245 Et li chevaliers parçoit bien

And the knight perceives well

qu'il nel vuelent grever de rien,

that-they not-it wish to-injure in anything

ne n'ont talant de lui mal feire;

nor not-have desire of him harm to-do

si n'a soing de s'espee treire,

so not-has heed of his-sword to-draw

ainz s'an passe outre sanz tançon,

rather himself-thence he-passes beyond without dispute

2250 et après lui si conpeignon.

and after him his companions

Et li uns d'aus a l'autre dit:

And the one of-them to the-other says

“Nus si buen chevalier ne vit,

Anyone so good a-knight not saw

ne nus a lui ne s'aparaille.

nor anyone to him not himself-compares

Don n'a il feite grant mervoille,

Then not-has he done a-great marvel

2255 qui par ci est passez a force?”

who through here is passed by force

“Biaus frere, por Deu! car t'esforce”,

Fair brother for God's-sake now thyself-exert

fet li chevaliers a son frere,

says the knight to his brother

“Tant que tu vaingnes a mon pere,

So-far as thou comest to my father

si li conte ceste aventure.”

and to-him tell this adventure

Et li vaslez affiche et jure

And the young-man declares and swears

que ja dire ne li ira,

that ever to-say not to-him he-will-go

ne ja mes ne se partira

nor ever more not himself will-part

de cel chevalier, tant qu’il l’et

from that knight until that-he him-have

adobé et chevalier fet;

dubbed and a-knight made

mes il aut feire le message

but let-him go to-do the message

se il an a si grant corage.

if he thereof has so great a-heart

2260

2265

The Trap, and the Battle in the Meadows

IX

A man who has offered them lodging leads them into a fortress, and a portcullis drops behind them and another in front. The ring a fairy gave the knight shows no enchantment, so they cut the bar of a postern and come out on a battle in the meadows, a good thousand knights on the two sides. He all but routs the other side alone before nightfall, and the news of who he is heartens the captives of Logres, who come near to blows over lodging him. The next evening, in another house, a knight rides to the door and taunts him with the cart.

A tant s'an vont tuit troi a masse

At that themselves-thence go all three in a-body

tant qu'il pot estre none basse.

until that-it could be nones low

Vers none un home trové ont,

Toward nones a man found they-have

2270 qui lor demande, qui il sont.

who to-them asks who they are

Et il dient: "Chevalier somes,

And they say Knights we-are

qui an noz afeires alomes."

who on our affairs are-going

Et li hon dit au chevalier:

And the man says to-the knight

"Sire, or voldroie herbergier

Lord now I-would-wish to-lodge

2275 vos et voz conpeignons ansanble."

you and your companions together

A celui le dit, qui li sanble

To that-one it he-says who to-him seems

qu'il soit des autres sire et mestre.

that-be be of-the others lord and master

Et cil li dit: "Ne porroit estre

And he to-him says Not it-could be

que je herberjasse a ceste ore;

that I should-lodge at this hour

car mauvés est qui se demore

for a-bad-man is-he who himself delays

et qui a eise se repose

and who at ease himself rests

puis qu'il a anprise grant chose.

after that-be has undertaken a-great thing

Et je ai tel afeire anpris

And I have such a-matter undertaken

qu'a piece n'iert mes osteus pris."

that-for a-while not-will-be my lodging taken

Et li hon li reedit après:

And the man to-him says-again after

"Mes osteus n'est mie ci pres,

My lodging not-is at-all here near

ainz est grant piece ça avant.

rather is a-great way here ahead

Venir i porroiz par covant

To-come there you-will-be-able on covenant

que a droite ore ostel prandroiz,

that at right hour lodging you-will-take

que tart iert quant vos i vandroiz."

for late it-will-be when you there will-come

2280

2285

2290

“Et je”, fet il, “i irai donques.”

And I says he there shall-go then

A la voie se met adonques

To the way himself puts then

li hon devant, qui les an mainne,

the man in-front who them thence leads

et cil après la voie plainne.

and they after by-the way open

2295 Et quant il ont grant piece alé,

And when they have a-great while gone

s'ont un escuiier ancontré,

and-they-have a squire met

qui venoit trestot le chemin

who was-coming quite-along the road

les granz galos sor un roncun

at-the great gallops on a nag

gras et reont com une pome.

fat and round as an apple

2300 Et li escuiiers dit a l'ome:

And the squire says to the-man

“Sire, sire, venez plus tost!

Lord lord come more quickly

Car cil de Logres sont a ost

For those of Logres are in host

venu sor ceus de ceste terre,

come against those of this land

s'ont ja commanciee la guerre

and-have already begun the war

2305 et la tançon et la meslee;

and the quarrel and the mêlée

et dient qu'an ceste contree

and they-say that-into this country

s'est uns chevaliers anbatuz,

himself-is a knight thrust

qui an mainz leus s'est conbatuz,

who in many places himself-has fought

n'an ne li puet contretenir

nor-one not to-him can withbold

passage, ou il vuelle venir,

a-passage where he wishes to-come

que il n'i past, cui qu'il enuit.

but-that he not-there pass to-whom that-it irk

Et dient an cest päis tuit

And they-say in this land all

que il les deliverra toz

that he them will-deliver all

et metra les noz au dessoz.

and will-put the ours at-the below

Or si vos hastez, par mon los!"

Now so yourself hasten by my advice

Lors se met li hon es galos,

Then himself puts the man into-the gallops

et cil an sont mout esjöi,

and they thereat are much rejoiced

qui autressi l'orent öi;

who likewise it-had heard

car il voldront eidier as lor.

for they will-wish to-help to-the their-own

Et dit li fiz au vavazor:

And says the son of-the vavasour

2310

2315

2320

“Sire, öez que dit cist serjanz!

Lord hear what says this sergeant

Alons, si eidons a noz janx

Let-us-go and let-us-help to our folk

qui sont meslé a ceus de la!”

who are engaged with those of yonder

Et li hon tot adés s’an va,

And the man quite still himself-thence goes

2325 qu’il nes atant, einçois s’adresce

for-be not-them awaits rather himself-be-directs

mout tost vers une forteresce

very fast toward a fortress

qui sor un tertre estoit fermee,

which on a hill was built

et cort tant qu’il vint a l’antree,

and runs so-long that-be came to the-entry

et cil après a esperon.

and they after at spur

2330 Li bailes estoit anviron

The bailey was around

clos de haut mur et de fossé.

enclosed with high wall and with ditch

Tantost qu’il furent anz antré,

As-soon as-they were inside entered

si lor leissa l’an avaler,

then for-them let one fall

qu’il ne s’an pöissent raler,

so-that-they not themselves-thence should-be-able to-go-again

2335 une porte après les talons.

a gate behind the heels

Et cil diënt: "Alons, alons!

And they say Let-us-go let-us-go

Que ci n'aresterons nos pas."

For here not-shall-stop we at-all

Après l'ome plus que le pas

After the-man more than the pace

vont tant qu'il viennent a l'issue

they-go so-long that-they come to the-exit

qui ne lor fu pas deffandue;

which not for-them was at-all forbidden

mes maintenant que cil fu fors

but at-once as this-one was outside

li lessierent après le cors

to-him they-let behind the body

cheoir une porte colant.

fall a gate sliding

Et cil an furent mout dolant,

And they thereof were very grieving

qui dedanz anfermé se voient,

who within shut-in themselves see

car il cuident qu'anchanté soient;

for they think that-enchanted they-be

mes cil don plus dire vos doi

but he whereof most to-tell to-you I-ought

avoit un anel an son doi,

had a ring on his finger

2340

2345

don la pierre tel force avoit

whereof the stone such power had

2350 qu'anchantemanz ne le pooit

that-enchantment not it could

tenir puis qu'il l'avoit vëue.

hold after that-he it-had seen

L'anel met devant sa vëue,

The-ring he-puts before his sight

s'esgarde la pierre et si dit:

and-looks-at the stone and so says

"Dame, dame, se Deus m'äit,

Lady lady so God me-belp

2355 or avroie je grant mestier

now should-have I great need

que vos me venissiez eidier!"

that you me should-come to-belp

Cele dame une fee estoit,

That lady a fairy was

qui l'anel doné li avoit,

who the-ring given to-him had

et si le norri an s'anfance;

and so him nursed in his-childhood

2360 s'avoit an li mout grant fiance

and-had in her very great trust

que ele, an quel leu que il fust,

that she in what place that he were

secorre et eidier li dëust;

to-succor and to-belp to-him should

mes il voit bien a son apel

but he sees well by his call

et a la pierre de l'anel,

and by the stone of the-ring

qu'il n'i a point d'anchantement,

that-there not-there is a-whit of-enchancement

2365

et set trestot certainnement

and knows quite-all certainly

qu'il sont anclos et anserré.

that-they are shut-in and locked-up

Lors viennent a un huis barré

Then they-come to a door barred

d'une posterne estreite et basse.

of-a postern narrow and low

Les espees traient a masse,

The swords they-draw in a-body

2370

si fiert tant chascuns de s'espee

and strikes so-much each with his-sword

qu'il orent la barre coupee.

that-they had the bar cut

Quant il furent fors de la tor,

When they were out of the tower

si voient comancié l'estor

then they-see begun the-combat

aval les prez mout grant et fier,

down-in the meadows very great and fierce

2375

et furent bien mil chevalier

and they-were fully a-thousand knights

que d'une part que d'autre au mains

either on-one side or on-other at least

estre la jaude des vilains.

besides the rabble of-the churls

Quant il vindrent aval les prez,

When they came down-in the meadows

2380 come sages et atanprez

like a-wise-man and moderate

li fiz au vavasor parla:

the son of-the vavasour spoke

“Sire, ainz que nos veigniemes la,

Lord before that we should-come there

feriiemes, ce cuît savoir,

we-should-do this I-think wisely

qui iroit anquerre et savoir

whoever should-go to-inquire and to-know

2385 de quel part les noz janz se tienent.

on what side the our folk themselves hold

Je ne sai, de quel part il viennent,

I not know from what side they come

mes j'i irai se vos volez.”

but I-there shall-go if you wish

“Jel vuel”, fet il, “tost i alez,

I-it wish says he quickly there go

et tost revenir vos covient.”

and quickly to-come-back you it-bebooves

2390 Cil i va tost, et tost revient,

He there goes quickly and quickly comes-back

et dit: "Mout nos est bien chëu,
and says Much for-us it-is well fallen

que j'ai certainnement vëu
for I-have certainly seen

que ce sont li nostre de ça."
that these are the ours of here

Et li chevaliers s'adreça
And the knight himself-directed

vers la meslee maintenant,
toward the mêlée at-once 2395

s'ancontre un chevalier venant
and-he-meets a knight coming

et joste a lui, sel fiert si fort
and jousts with him and-him strikes so hard

parmi l'uel que il l'abat mort.
through the-eye that he him-fells dead

Et li vaslez a pié desçant,
And the young-man on foot dismounts

le cheval au chevalier prant
the horse of-the knight takes 2400

et les armes que il avoit,
and the arms which he had

si s'an arme bel et adroit.
so himself-there-with arms fairly and fitly

Quant armez fu, sanz demorance
When armed he-was without delay

monte et prant l'escu et la lance
he-mounts and takes the-shield and the lance

qui estoit grosse et roide et painte,
which was thick and stiff and painted 2405

s'ot une espee au costé çainte

and-had a sword at-the side girt

tranchant et flanbeant et clere.

cutting and flaming and bright

An l'estor est après son frere

Into the-combat he-is after his brother

et après son seignor venuz,

and after his lord come

2410 qui mout bien s'i est contenuz

who very well himself-there is borne

an la meslee une grant piece,

in the mêlée a great while

que il ront et fant et depiece

so-that he breaks and splits and shatters

escuz et hiaumes et haubers.

shields and helms and hauberks

Nes garantist ne fuz ne fers,

Not-them protects neither wood nor iron

2415 cui il fiert bien, qu'il ne l'afolt

whom he strikes well that-he not him-maim

ou morz jus del cheval ne volt.

or dead down from-the horse not fling

Il seus si tres bien le feisoit

He alone so very well it was-doing

que trestoiz les desconfisoit.

that quite-all them he-was-routing

Et cil mout bien le refeisoient,

And they very well it were-doing-also

2420 qui avuec lui venu estoient.

who with him come were

Mes cil de Logres s'an mervoillent,

But those of Logres themselves-thereat marvel

qu'il nel conoissent, et consoillent

for-they not-him know and take-counsel

de lui as fiz au vavasor.

about him with-the sons of-the vavasour

Tant an demandent li plusor

So-much thereof ask the most

qu'an lor dist: "Seignor, ce est cil

that-one to-them said Lords this is he

qui nos gitera toz d'essil

who us will-cast all out-of-exile

et de la grant malëurté

and out-of the great ill-fortune

ou nos avons lonc tans esté,

where we have a-long time been

si li devons grant enor feire

so to-him we-ought great honor to-do

quant por nos fors de prison treire

since for us out of prison to-draw

a tant perilleus leus passez,

he-has so-many perilous places passed

et passera ancore assez.

and will-pass still many

Mout a a feire et mout a fet."

Much he-has to do and much he-has done

N'i a celui, joie n'an et.

Not-there is one-of-them joy not-thereof have

Quant ceste novele ont öie,

When this news they-have heard

2425

2430

2435

mout an est lor sanz esjöie.

much thereat is their folk rejoiced

Quant la novele est tant alec

When the news is so-far gone

que ele fu a toz contee,

that it was to all told

tuit l'öirent et tuit le sorent.

all it-heard and all it knew

2440 De la joie que il an orent

From the joy which they thereof had

lor croist force et s'an esvertüent

to-them grows strength and themselves-thereof they-exert

tant que mainz des autres an tüent,

so-much that many of-the others thereof they-kill

et plus les mainnent leidemant

and more them they-handle roughly

por le bien feire solemant

for the well doing only

2445 d'un seul chevalier, ce me sanble,

of-one single knight this to-me seems

que por toz les autres ansanble.

than for all the others together

Et s'il ne fust si pres de nuit,

And if-it not had-been so near of night

desconfit s'an alassent tuit;

routed themselves-thence would-have-gone all

mes la nuiz si oscure vint

but the night so dark came

2450 que departir les an covint.

that to-part them thence it-behooved

Au departir tuit li cheitif
At-the parting all the captives
 autressi come par estrif
just as by contention
 anviron le chevalier vindrent,
around the knight came
 de totes parz au frain le prindrent,
from all sides at-the bridle him they-took
 si li comancierent a dire:
and to-him they-began to say
 “Bien veignanz soïiez vos, biaux sire!”
Well come be you fair lord
 Et dist chascuns: “Sire, par foi,
And said each Lord by faith
 vos vos herbergeroiz o moi!
you yourself will-lodge with me
 “Sire, por Deu et por son non,
Lord for God's-sake and for his name
 ne herbergiez se o moi non!”
not lodge except with me not
 Tuit dïent ce que dit li uns,
All say this which says the one
 que herbergier le viaut chascuns
for-that to-lodge him wishes each
 aussi li juenes con li viauz,
as-well the young as the old
 et dit chascuns: “Vos seroiz miauz
and says each Yôu will-be better
 an mon ostel que an l'autrui!”
in my lodging than in the-other's

2455

2460

2465

Ce dit chascuns androit de lui;

This says each for-the-part of him

et li uns a l'autre le tot,

and the one from the-other it takes-away

si con chascuns avoir le vot,

just as each to-have it wished

et par po qu'il ne s'an combatent.

and by little that-they — themselves-thereof fight

2470 Et il lor dit qu'il se debaten

And he to-them says that-they themselves contend

de grant oiseuse et de folie.

over great idleness and over folly

“Leissiez ester ceste anreidie,

Let be this obstinacy

qu'il n'a mestier n'a moi n'a vos.

for-it not-has use nor-to me nor-to you

Noise n'est pas buene antre nos,

Quarrel not-is at-all good among us

2475 ainz devroit li uns l'autre eidier.

rather ought the one the-other to-help

Ne vos covient mie pleidier

Not you it-behooves at-all to-plead

de moi herbergier par tançon,

about me to-lodge through quarrel

ainz devez estre an cusançon

rather you-ought to-be in concern

de moi herbergier an tel leu,

about me to-lodge in such a-place

2480 por ce que tuit i aiiez preu,

for this that all thereat may-have profit

que je soie an ma droite voie.”

that I be on my straight way

Ancor dit chascuns tote voie:

Still says each all the-same

“C'est a mon ostel—” — “Mes au mien—”

It-is at my lodging But at mine

“ne dites mie ancore bien”,

not you-say at-all yet well

fet li chevaliers; “a mon los

says the knight by my advice

li plus sages de vos est fos

the most wise of you is a-fool

de ce don je vos oi tancier.

about this whereof I you hear quarrel

Vos me devriez avancier

You me ought to-advance

et vos me volez feire tordre.

and you me wish to-make turn-aside

Se vos m'aviiez tuit an ordre

If you to-me-had all in order

li uns après l'autre a devise

the one after the-other at will

fet tant d'enor et de servise

done so-much of-honor and of service

con l'an porroit feire a un home,

as one could do to a man

par toz les sainz qu'an prie a Rome,

by all the saints that-one prays-to at Rome

2485

2490

2495 ja plus buen gre ne l'an savroie
ever more good thanks not to-him-thereof I-should-know

quant la bonté prise an avroie,
when the kindness taken thereof I-should-have

que je faz de la volanté.
than I do for the will

Si me doint Deus joie et santé,
So to-me give God joy and health

la volantez autant me heite
the will as-much me gladdens

2500 con se chascuns m'avoit ja faite
as if each to-me-had already done

mout grant enor et grant bonté,
very great honor and great kindness

si soit an leu de fet conté."
so let-it-be in place of deed counted

Einsi les vaint toz et apeise.
Thus them he-overcomes all and appeases

Chiés un chevalier mout a eise
At-the-house-of a knight very at ease

2505 el chemin a ostel l'an mainnent,
on-the road to lodging him-thence they-lead

et de lui servir tuit se painnent.
and with him to-serve all themselves labor

Trestuit mout grant joie li firent,
Quite-all very great joy to-him made

mout l'enorerent et servirent
much him-they-honored and served

tote la nuit jusqu'au couchier;
all the night until-the lying-down

car il l'avoient tuit mout chier.

2510

for they him-had all very dear

Au main quant vint au dessevrer

In-the morning when it-came to-the parting

vost chascuns avuec lui aler,

wished each with him to-go

chascuns se porofre et presante;

each himself offers and presents

mes lui ne plect ne n'atalante

but to-him not it-pleases nor not-delights

que nus hon s'an voist avuec lui,

2515

that any man himself-thence go with him

fors que tant solemant li dui

except that so-much only the two

que il avoit la amenez;

whom he had thither brought

ceus sanz plus an a ramenez.

those without more thence he-has taken-back

Cel jor ont des la matinee

That day they-have from the morning

chevauchié jusqu'a la vespree,

2520

ridden until the evening

qu'il ne troverent avanture.

that-they not found an-adventure

Chevauchant mout grant alëure

Riding at-very great pace

d'une forest mout tart issirent,

from-a forest very late they-issued

a l'issir une meison virent

at the-issuing a house they-saw

2525 a un chevalier, et sa fame,

of a knight and his wife

qui sanbloit estre buene dame,

who seemed to-be a-good lady

virent a la porte seoir.

they-saw at the gate sitting

Tantost qu'ele les pot veoir

As-soon as-she them could see

s'est contre eus an estant dreciee.

herself-she-is toward them in standing risen

2530 A chiere mout riant et liee

With countenance very laughing and glad

les salue et dit: "Bien veigniez!

them she-greets and says Well may-you-come

Mon ostel vuel que vos preigniez:

My lodging I-wish that you take

herbergiez estes, desçandez!"

lodged you-are dismount

"Dame, quant vos le comandez,

Lady since you it command

2535 vostre merci, nos desçandrions:

by-your leave we shall-dismount

vostre ostel anuit mes prandrions."

your lodging tonight now we-shall-take

Il desçandent; et au desçandre

They dismount and at-the dismounting

la dame fist les chevaus prandre,

the lady had the horses taken

qu'ele avoit mesniee mout bele.

for-she had a-household very fair

Ses fiz et ses filles apele,

Her sons and her daughters she-calls

et il vindrent tot maintenant,

and they came right at-once

vaslet cortois et avenant

young-men courteous and comely

et chevalier et filles beles.

and knights and daughters fair

As uns comande oster les seles

To-the ones she-commands to-take-off the saddles

des chevaus et bien conreer.

from-the horses and well to-tend

N'i ot nul qui l'osast veer,

Not-there was anyone who it-dared refuse

ainz le firent mout volantiers.

rather it they-did very willingly

Desarmer fist les chevaliers:

To-disarm she-had the knights

au desarmer les filles saillent.

at-the disarming the daughters leap-up

Desarmé sont, puis si lor baillent

Disarmed they-are then so to-them they-hand

a afubler trois corz mantiaus.

to put-on three short mantles

A l'ostel, qui mout estoit biaux,

To the-lodging which very was fair

les an mainnent eneslepas.

them thence they-lead straightway

2540

2545

2550

Mes li sire n'i estoit pas,

But the lord not-there was at-all

2555 ainz iert an bois, et avuec lui

rather be-was in wood and with him

estoient de ses fiz li dui;

were of his sons the two

mes il vint lués, et sa mesniee,

but he came at-once and his household

qui mout estoit bien anresniee,

which very was well trained

saut contre lui de fors la porte.

leaps toward him from outside the gate

2560 La veneison que il aporte

The venison which he brings

destrossent mout tost et deslient,

they-untruss very quickly and unbind

et si li recontent et dïent:

and so to-him they-recount and say

“Sire, sire, vos ne savez,

Lord lord you not know

trois ostes chevaliers avez.”

three guests knights you-have

2565 “Deus an soit aorez”, fet il.

God thereof be adored says he

Li chevaliers et si dui fil

The knight and his two sons

font de lor ostes mout grant joie.

make of their guests very great joy

La mesniee n'estoit pas coie,

The household not-was at-all idle

que toz li mandre s'aprestoït
for quite the least himself-was-making-ready

de feire ce qu'a feire estoit. 2570
to do that which-to do there-was

Cil corent le mangier haster,
These run the meal hasten

et cil les chandoïles gaster,
and these the candles use

si les alument et esprannent;
and them they-light and kindle

la toaille et les bacins prannent,
the towel and the basins they-take

si donent l'eve as mains laver: 2575
so they-give the-water for-the hands to-wash

de ce ne sont il mie aver.
of this not are they at-all sparing

Tuit levent, si vont asseoir.
All wash then go to-sit

Riens qu'an pöist leanz veoir
Anything that-one could therein see

n'estoit charjable ne pesanz.
not-was burdensome nor heavy

Au premier mes vint uns presanz 2580
At-the first course came a present

d'un chevalier a l'uis defors,
from-a knight at the-door outside

plus orgueilleus que n'est uns tors,
more proud than is a bull

qui est mout orgueilleuse beste.
which is a-very proud beast

Cil des les piez jusqu'a la teste

He from the feet up-to the head

2585 sist toz armez sor un destrier.

sat all armed on a charger

De l'une janbe an son estrier

With the-one leg in his stirrup

fu afichiez, et l'autre ot mise

he-was braced and the-other he-had put

par contenance et par cointise

for bearing and for elegance

sor le col del destrier crenu.

on the neck of-the charger maned

2590 Estes le vos ainsi venu

Behold him you thus come

qu'onques nus garde ne s'an prist,

that-ever anyone heed not himself-thereof took

tant qu'il vint devant eus et dist:

until that-he came before them and said

"Li queus est ce, savoir le vuel,

The which is this to-know it I-wish

qui tant a folie et orguel

who so-much has folly and pride

2595 et de cervel la teste vuide,

and of brain the head empty

qu'an cest päis vient et si cuide

that-into this land he-comes and so thinks

au pont de l'espee passer?

at-the bridge of the-sword to-pass

Por neant s'est venuz lasser,

For nothing himself-he-is come to-tire

por neant a ses pas perduz.”

for nothing he-has his steps lost

Et cil qui ne fu esperduz

And he who not was dismayed

mout sëuremant li respont:

very confidently to-him answers

“Je sui qui vuel passer au pont.”

I am he-who wishes to-pass at-the bridge

“Tu? Tu? Comant l’osas panser?”

Thou Thou How it-thou-darest to-think

Ainz te dëusses apanser

Sooner thee thou-shouldst to-bethink

que tu anprëisses tel chose,

before thou shouldst-undertake such a-thing

a quel fin et a quel parclose

to what end and to what close

tu an porroies parvenir,

thou thereof mightest come

si te dëüst ressovenir

so thee should to-remember

de la charrete ou tu montas.

of the cart where thou mountedst

Ce ne sai je se tu honte as

This not know I whether thou shame hast

de ce que tu i fus menez;

of this that thou there wast led

2600

2605

2610

mes ja nus qui fust bien senez

but ever anyone who were well sensible

n'ëust si grant afeire anpris

not-would-have so great a-matter undertaken

se de cest blasme fust repris."

if of this blame he-were reproached

The Head the Maiden Asked

X

A knight rides to the door at the first course and offers to ferry him over for the price of his head, taunting him with the cart. They fight outside until both horses are killed, and the stranger, ashamed of how long it is taking, tears off the other's helm and brings him to beg for mercy. The terms are a ride in a cart, which he refuses. Then a maiden comes over the beath on a tawny mule and asks for his head. Pity and largesse pull both ways; he offers a second fight, wins it, and gives her the head.

2615 A ce que cil dire li ot

To this which he to-say to-him had

ne li daingne respondre mot;

not to-him he-deigns to-answer a-word

mes li sire de la meison

but the lord of the house

et tuit li autre par reison

and all the others by reason

s'an mervoillent a desmesure:

themselves-thereat marvel beyond measure

2620 "Ha, Deus! con grant mesaventure!"

Ab God what a-great misadventure

Fet chascuns d'eus a lui mēismes;

Says each of-them to him self

"l'ore que charrete fu primes

the-hour when a-cart was first

pansee et faite soit maudite!

thought-of and made be accursed

Car mout est vis chose et despite.

For very is a-vile thing and contemptible

Ha! Deus, de quoi fu il retez?

Ab God of what was he accused

Et por quoi fu il charretez?

And for what was he carted

Por quel pechié, por quel forfet?

For what sin for what crime

Ce li iert mes toz jorz retret.

This to-him will-be henceforth all days cast-up

S'il fust de cest reproche mondes,

If-he were of this reproach clean

an tant con dure toz li mondes,

in as-much as lasts all the world

ne fust uns chevaliers trovez,

not would-be a knight found

tant fust de proesce esprovez,

however he-were in prowess proved

qui cestui valoir ressanblast;

who this-one in-worth should-resemble

et qui trestoz les assanblast,

and whoever quite-all them assembled

si bel ne si jant n'i vëist,

so fair nor so comely not-there he-would-see

2625

2630

2635

por ce que le voir an dëist.”

for this that the truth thereof he-should-tell

Ce disoient comunement.

This they-were-saying commonly

Et cil mout orgueilleusement

And he very proudly

sa parole recomança

his speech began-again

2640 et dist: “Chevaliers, autant ça,

and said Knight hear here

qui au pont de l'espee an vas:

who to-the bridge of the-sword thence goest

se tu viaus, l'eve passeras

if thou wilt the-water thou-wilt-cross

mout legierement et soef.

very easily and gently

Je te ferai an une nef

I thee shall-make in a boat

2645 mout tost outre l'eve nagier.

very quickly over the-water swim

Mes si te ferai paagier

But so thee I-shall-make pay-toll

quant de l'autre part te tandrai,

when on the-other side thee I-shall-hold

se je vuel, la teste an prandrai,

if I wish the head thereof I-shall-take

ou se non, an ma merci iert.”

or if not in my mercy it-will-be

Et cil respont que il ne quiert

2650

And he answers that he not seeks

avoir mie desaventure;

to-have at-all misadventure

ja sa teste an ceste aventure

ever his head in this adventure

n'iert mise por nes un meschief.

not-will-be put for not-even one mishap

Et cil li respont de rechief:

And he to-him answers of again

“Des que tu ce feire ne viaus,

2655

Since that thou this to-do not wishest

cui qu'an soit la honte et li diaus,

to-whom that-thereof be the shame and the grief

venir te covandra la fors

to-come thee it-will-behoove there outside

a moi conbatre cors a cors.”

with me to-fight body to body

Et cil dit por lui amuser:

And he says for him to-amuse

“Se jel pooie refuser,

2660

If I-it could refuse

mout volantiers m'an soferroie;

very willingly myself-thereof I-would-excuse

mes einçois voir me conbatroie

but sooner truly myself I-would-fight

que noauz feire m'esteüst.”

than worse to-do to-me-should-behoove

Einçois que il se remeüst

Before that he himself should-stir

2665 de la table ou il se seoient,

from the table where they themselves were-sitting

dist as vaslez qui le servoient

he-said to-the young-men who him were-serving

que sa sele tost li mēissent

that his saddle quickly for-him they-should-put

sor son cheval, et si prēissent

on his horse and so should-take

ses armes, si li aportassent.

his arms and to-him should-bring

2670 Et cil del tost feire se lassent:

And they for-the quickly to-do themselves weary

li un de lui armer se painnent,

the ones about him to-arm themselves take-pains

li autre son cheval amainnent.

the others his horse bring

Et sachiez, ne ressanbloit pas,

And know not it-seemed at-all

si com il s'an aloit le pas

just as he himself-thence was-going at-the pace

2675 armez de trestotes ses armes

armed with quite-all his arms

et tint l'escu par les enarmes

and held the-shield by the shield-straps

et sor son cheval fu montez,

and on his horse was mounted

qu'il dēust estre mescontez

that-be ought to-be miscounted

n'antre les biaux n'antre les buens.

nor-among the fair nor-among the good

Bien sanble qu'il doie estre suens

Well it-seems that-it ought to-be his

li chevaus, tant li avenoit,

the horse so-much to-him it-became

et li escuz que il tenoit

and the shield which he held

par les enarmes anbracié,

by the shield-straps embraced

s'ot el chief un hiaume lacié

and-be-had on-the head a helm laced

qui tant i estoit bien assis,

which so-much there was well set

que il ne vos fust mie a vis

that it not to-you would-be at-all in mind

qu'anprunté n'acrēu l'ēust;

that-borrowed nor-taken-on-credit it-be-had

ainz dēissiez, tant vos plēust,

rather you-would-say so-much you it-would-please

qu'il fu einsi nez et crēuz:

that-be was thus born and grown

de ce voldroie estre crēuz.

of this I-would-wish to-be believed

Fors de la porte ot une lande,

Outside of the gate there-was a heath

qui l'assamblee mout amande,

which the-encounter much improves

2680

2685

2690

ou la bataille estre devoit.

where the battle to-be was-to

Tantost con li uns l'autre voit

As-soon as the one the-other sees

2695 point li uns vers l'autre a bandon,

spurs the one toward the-other at full-tilt

si s'antreviennent de randon

so each-other-they-come-at with rush

et des lances teus cos se donent

and with-the lances such blows themselves they-give

que eles ploient et arçonent

that they bend and arch

et anbedeus an pieces volent;

and both-of-them into pieces fly

2700 as espees les escuz dolent

with-the swords the shields they-bew

et les hiaumes et les haubers:

and the helms and the hauberks

tranche li fuz et ront li fers,

cuts the wood and breaks the iron

si que an plusors leus se plaient.

so that in several places themselves they-wound

Par ire teus cos s'antrepaient

Through anger such blows each-other-they-repay

2705 con s'il fussent fet a covant.

as if-they were made on covenant

Mes les espees mout sovant

But the swords very often

jusqu'as cropes des chevaux colent,

down-to-the cruppers of-the horses slide

del sanc s'aboivrent et saolent
with-the blood themselves-they-drench and glut

que jusques es flans les anbatent,
so-that as-far-as into-the flanks them they-drive

si qu'anbedeus morz les abatent.
so that-both-of-them dead them they-fell

2710

Et quant il sont chëu a terre,
And when they are fallen to earth

li uns vet l'autre a pié requerre;
the one goes the-other on foot to-assail

et s'il de mort s'antrehäissent,
and if-they to death each-other-hated

ja por voir ne s'antranväissent
ever for truth not each-other-they-would-attack

as espees plus crüelmant.
with-the swords more cruelly

2715

Plus se fierent menüemant
More themselves they-strike thick-and-fast

que cil qui met deniers an mine,
than he who puts pennies into mine

qui de joer onques ne fine
who from playing ever not ceases

a totes failles deus et deus;
at every failure two and two

mes mout estoit autre cist jeus,
but very was other this game

2720

que il n'i avoit nule faille,
for it not-there was any failure

mes cos et mout fiere bataille,
but blows and a-very fierce battle

mout felenesse et mout crüel.

very savage and very cruel

Tuit furent issu de l'ostel:

All were come-out from the-lodging

2725 sire, dame, filles et fil,

lord lady daughters and son

qu'il n'i remest cele ne cil,

so-that not-there remained she nor he

ne li privé ne li estrange,

neither the familiar nor the strange

ainz estoient trestuit an range

rather they-were quite-all in a-row

venu por veoir la meslee

come to see the mêlée

2730 an la lande qui mout fu lee.

in the heath which very was broad

Li chevaliers de la charrete

The knight of the cart

de mauvestié se blasme et rete

of cowardice himself blames and accuses

quant son oste voit qui l'esgarde;

when his host he-sees who him-watches

et des autres se reprant garde,

and of-the others himself takes-again heed

2735 qui l'esgardoient tuit ansamble.

who him-were-watching all together

D'ire trestoz li cuers li tranble;

With-anger quite-all the heart to-him trembles

qu'il dëust, ce li est a vis,

for-he ought this to-him is to seeming

avoir mout grant piece a conquis

to-have a-very great while ago conquered

celui a cui il se combat.

that-one with whom he himself fights

Lors le fiert si qu'il li anbat

Then him he-strikes so that-he to-him drives

2740

l'espee mout pres de la teste,

the-sword very near to the head

si l'anväist come tanpeste;

and him-assails like a-tempest

car si l'anchauce et si l'argue

for so him-be-presses and so him-harries

tant que place li a tolue,

so-far that place to-him he-has taken-away

si li tot terre et si le mainne

so to-him he-takes-away ground and so him he-drives

2745

tant que bien pres li faut l'alainne,

so-far that well nearly to-him fails the-breath

s'a an lui mout po de deffanse.

and-has in him very little of defense

Et lors li chevaliers s'apanse

And then the knight himself-bethinks

que il li avoit mout vilmant

that he to-him had very basely

la charrete mise devant,

the cart put before

2750

si li passe et tel le conroie

so to-him he-goes-over and so him he-handles

qu'il n'i remaint laz ne corroie

that-there not-there remains lace nor thong

qu'il ne ronpe antor le coler,

that-he not break about the collar

si li fet le hiaume voler

so to-him he-makes the helm fly

2755 del chief et cheoir la vantaille.

from-the head and fall the visor

Tant le painne et tant le travaille

So-much him he-pains and so-much him he-labors

que a merci venir l'estuet,

that to mercy to-come him-it-behooves

come l'aloie qui ne puet

like the-lark which not can

devant l'esmerillon durer,

before the-merlin endure

2760 ne ne s'a ou assëurer

nor not herself-has where to-take-refuge

puis que il la passe et sormonte:

after that he her passes and overtops

aussi cil a tote sa honte

just-so he with all his shame

li vet requerre et demander

him goes to-seek and to-ask

merci, qu'il nel puet amander.

mercy for-he not-it can amend

Et quant il ot que cil requiert

And when he hears that he asks

merci, si nel toche ne fiert,

mercy so not-him he-touches nor strikes

ainz dit: "Viaus tu merci avoir?"

rather says Wishest thou mercy to-have

"Mout avez or dit grant savoir",

Much you-have now said great wisdom

fet cil; "ce devroit dire fos.

says he this ought to-say a-fool

Onques rien nule tant ne vos

Ever a-thing any so-much not I-wished

con je faz merci or androit."

as I do mercy right now

Et cil dit: "Il te covandroit

And he says It thee would-behoove

sor une charrete monter.

on a cart to-mount

A neant porroies conter,

To nothing thou-couldst count

quant tu dire me savroies,

whatever thou to-say to-me shouldst-know-how

s'an la charrete ne montoies

if-into the cart not thou-mountedst

por ce que tant fole boche as,

for this that so-much a-foolish mouth thou-hast

que vilmant la me reprochas."

that basely it to-me thou-reproachedst

Et li chevaliers li respont:

And the knight to-him answers

2765

2770

2775

2780 “Ja Deu ne place que j’i mont!”

Ever to-God not may-it-please that I-there mount

“Non?” fet cil, “et vos i morroiz.”

Not says he and you there will-die

“Sire, bien feire le porroiz,

Lord well to-do it you-will-be-able

mes por Deu vos quier et demant

but for God’s-sake of-you I-seek and ask

merci fors que tant solemant

mercy save that so-much only

2785 an charrete monter ne doive.

into a-cart to-mount not I-should

Nus plez n’est que je n’an reçoive

Any plea not-is that I not-thereof receive

fors cestui, tant soit griés ne forz.

except this-one however it-be grievous nor hard

Miauz voldroie estre çant foiz morz

Better I-would-wish to-be a-hundred times dead

que fet ëusse tel meschief.

than done I-should-have such a-mishap

2790 Ja nule autre chose si grief

Ever any other thing so grievous

ne me diroiz que je ne face

not to-me you-will-say that I not do

por merci et por vostre grace.”

for mercy and for your grace

Que que cil merci li demande,
While that he mercy of-him asks
 a tant ez vos parmi la lande
at that behold you through the heath
 une pucele l'anblëure 2795
a maiden at-the-amble
 venir sor une fauve mure,
come on a tawny mule
 desafublee et desliiee;
unmantled and unbound
 et si tenoit une corgiee
and so she-held a whip
 don la mule feroit granz cos;
wherewith the mule she-was-striking great blows
 et nus chevaus les granz galos 2800
and any horse at-the great gallops
 por verité si tost n'alast,
in truth so fast not-would-go
 que la mule plus tost n'anblast.
but-that the mule more fast should-amble
 Au chevalier de la charrete
To-the knight of the cart
 dist la pucele: "Deus te mete,
said the maiden God thee put
 chevaliers, joie el cuer parfite 2805
knight joy in-the heart perfect
 de la rien qui plus te delite!"
from the thing which most thee delights

Cil qui volantiers l'ot öie

He who willingly it-had heard

li respont: "Deus vos benëie,

to-her answers God you bless

pucele, et doint joie et santé!"

maiden and give joy and health

2810 Lors dist cele sa volanté:

Then said she her will

"Chevaliers", fet ele, "de loing

Knight says she from afar

sui ça venue a grant besoiing

I-am hither come in great need

a toi, por demander un don

to thee for to-ask a boon

an merite et an guerredon

in reward and in guerdon

2815 si grant con je te porrai feire;

so great as I to-thee shall-be-able to-do

et tu avras ancor a feire

and thou wilt-have still to do

de m'äie si con je croi."

of my-help so as I believe

Et cil li respont: "Dites moi

And he to-her answers Tell to-me

que vos volez; et se je l'ai,

what you wish and if I it-have

2820 avoir le porroiz sanz delai,

to-have it you-will-be-able without delay

mes que ne soit chose trop griés."

provided that not be a-thing too grievous

Et cele dit: "Ce est li chiés

And she says This is the head

de cest chevalier que tu as

of this knight whom thou hast

conquis; et voir, ains ne trovas

overcome and truly ever not thou-foundest

si felon ne si desleal.

2825

so wicked nor so disloyal

Ja ne feras pechié ne mal,

Ever not thou-wilt-do sin nor ill

einçois sera aumosne et biens,

rather it-will-be alms and good

que c'est la plus desleaus riens

for this-is the most disloyal thing

qui onques fust ne ja mes soit."

which ever was nor ever more may-be

Et quant cil qui vaincuz estoit

2830

And when he who vanquished was

ot qu'ele viaut que il l'ocie,

heard that-she wishes that he him-kill

si li dist: "Ne la creez mie,

then to-him he-said Not her believe at-all

qu'ele me het; mes je vos pri

for-she me hates but I you pray

que vos aiiez de moi merci

that you have of me mercy

por cel Deu qui est fiz et pere,

2835

by that God who is son and father

et qui de celi fist sa mere,

and who of her made his mother

qui estoit sa fille et s'ancele!"

who was his daughter and his-handmaid

"Ha! chevaliers", fet la pucele,

Ab knight says the maiden

"ne croire pas cel trāitor!

not believe at-all that traitor

2840 Que Deus te doint joie et enor

May God to-thee give joy and honor

si grant con tu puez covoitier,

so great as thou canst covet

et si te doint bien exploitier

and so to-thee give well to-prosper

de ce que tu as antrepris!"

in this which thou hast undertaken

Or est li chevaliers si pris

Now is the knight so caught

2845 qu'el panser demore et areste,

that-in-the thinking he-stays and stops

savoir s'il an donra la teste

to-know if-he thereof will-give the head

celi qui li rueve tranchier,

to-her who to-him bids to-cut

ou s'il avra celui tant chier

or if-he will-have that-one so dear

qu'il li praingne pitiez de lui.

that-it to-him take pity of him

2850 Et a cesti et a celui

And to this-one and to that-one

viaut feire ce qu'il li demandent:

he-wishes to-do this which-they of-him ask

largesce et pitiez li comandent

largesse and pity to-him command

que lor buens face a anbedeus;

that their pleasure he-do to both

qu'il estoit larges et piteus.

for-he was generous and pitying

Mes se cele la teste an porte,

But if she the head thence carries

donc est pitiez vaincue et morte;

then is pity vanquished and dead

et s'ele ne l'an porte quite,

and if-she not it-thence carries quit

donc est largesce desconfite.

then is largesse undone

An tel prison, an tel destresce

In such a-prison in such distress

le tienent pitiez et largesce,

him hold pity and largesse

que chascune l'angoisse et point.

so-that each him-torments and pricks

La teste viaut que il li doint

The head she-wishes that he to-her give

la pucele qui li demande,

the maiden who of-him asks

et d'autre part li recomande...

and on-other side to-him he-commends-again

et sor pitié et sor franchise.

both on pity and on nobleness

2855

2860

2865

Et des que il li a requise

And since that he to-him has asked

merci, ne l'avra il adonques?

mercy not it-will-have he then

Öil! ce ne li avint onques

Yes this not to-him befell ever

que nus, tant fust ses anemis,

that anyone however were his enemy

2870 des que il l'ot au dessoz mis

since that he him-had at-the below put

et merci crïer li covint...

and mercy to-cry to-him it-behooved

onques ancor ne li avint

ever yet not to-him befell

qu'une foiz merci li veast,

that-one time mercy to-him he-refused

mes au surplus ja mar beast.

but at-the beyond never ill let-him-gape

2875 Donc ne la veera il mie

Then not it will-refuse he at-all

cestui qui li requiert et prie

to-this-one who of-him asks and prays

des que ainsi feire le siaut.

since that thus to-do it he-is-wont

Et cele qui la teste viaut

And she who the head wishes

avra la ele? Öil, s'il puet.

will-have it she Yes if-he can

“Chevaliers”, fet il, “il t'estuet

2880

Knight says he it thee-behooves

combatre de rechief a moi,

to-fight of again with me

et tel merci avrai de toi,

and such mercy I-shall-have of thee

se tu viaus ta teste deffandre,

if thou wishest thy head to-defend

que je te laisserai reprendre

that I thee shall-let take-again

ton hiaume et armer de rechief

2885

thy helm and to-arm of again

a leisir ton cors et ton chief

at leisure thy body and thy head

a tot le miauz que tu porras.

at all the best that thou wilt-be-able

Mes saches que tu i morras

But know that thou there wilt-die

se a ceste foiz te conquer.”

if at this time thee I-overcome

Et cil respont: “Ja miauz ne quier,

2890

And he answers Ever better not I-seek

n'autre merci ne te demant.”

nor-other mercy not of-thee I-ask

“Et ancor assez t'i amant”,

And still by-far to-thee-there I-grant

fet cil, “que je me combatrai

says he that I myself shall-fight

a toi que ja ne me movrai

with thee so-that ever not myself I-shall-move

2895 d’ensi con je sui ci elués.”

from-thus as I am here in-this-place

Cil s’atorne et reviennent lués

He himself-makes-ready and they-come-again at-once

a la bataille com angrés;

to the battle like eager

mes plus le reconquist après

but more him he-overcame-again afterward

li chevaliers delivremant

the knight readily

2900 qu’il n’avoit fet premieremant.

than-he had done at-first

Et la pucele eneslepas

And the maiden straightway

crie: “Ne l’espargnier tu pas,

cries Not him-spare thou at-all

chevaliers, por rien qu’il te die!

knight for anything that-he to-thee say

Certes qu’il ne t’espargnast mie

Certainly for-he not thee-would-spare at-all

2905 s’il t’eüst conquis une foiz.

if-he thee-had overcome one time

Bien saches tu, se tu le croiz,

Well know thou if thou him believest

il t’angignera de rechief.

he thee-will-beguile of again

Tranche au plus desleal le chief

Cut from-the most disloyal the head

de l'anpire et de la corone,

of the-empire and of the crown

frans chevaliers, si le me done!

noble knight and it to-me give

Por ce le me doiz bien doner

Because of-this it to-me thou-oughtest well to-give

que jel te cuit guerredoner.

for I-it thee think to-repay

Mout bien ancor teus jorz sera,

Very well still such a-day will-be

s'il puet, il te rangignera

if-he can he thee will-beguile-again

de sa parole autre foiee."

with his speech another time

Cil qui voit sa mort aprochiee

He who sees his death drawn-near

li crie merci mout an haut;

to-him cries mercy very on high

mes ses criers rien ne li vaut,

but his crying anything not to-him avails

ne chose que dire li sache;

nor a-thing that to-say to-him he-knows-how

car cil par le hiaume le sache,

for he by the helm him drags

si que trestoz les laz an tranche:

so that quite-all the laces thereof he-cuts

2910

2915

2920

la vantaille et la coife blanche

the ventail and the coif white

li abat de la teste jus.

to-him he-strikes from the head down

Et cil recrie et plus et plus:

And he cries-again and more and more

2925 “Merci, por Deu! merci, vassaus!”

Mercy for God mercy vassal

Cil respont: “Se je soie saus,

He answers So I may-be saved

ja mes de toi n’avrai pitié

ever more of thee not-I-shall-have pity

puis qu’une foiz t’ai respitié.”

after that-one time thee-I-have reprieved

“Ha!”, fet il, “pechié feriez

Ab says he sin you-would-do

2930 se m’anemie crëiez

if my-enemy you-believed

de moi an tel maniere ocirre.”

about me in such a-manner to-kill

Et cele qui sa mort desirre

And she who his death desires

de l’autre part li amoneste

on the-other side to-him urges

qu’isnelemant li transt la teste,

that-swiftly to-him he-cut the head

2935 ne plus ne croie sa parole.

nor more not he-believe his speech

Cil fiert et la teste li vole

He strikes and the head to-him flies

anmi la lande et li cors chiet:

amid the heath and the body falls

a la pucele plect et siet.

to the maiden it-pleases and suits

Li chevaliers la teste prant

The knight the head takes

par les chevos, puis si la tant

by the hairs then so it be-holds-out

a celi qui grant joie an fet,

to her who great joy thereof makes

et dit: "Tes cuers si grant joie et

and says Thy heart so great joy have

de la rien que il plus voldroit,

of the thing which it most would-wish

con li miens cuers a or androit

as the my heart has now presently

de la rien que je plus voloie.

of the thing which I most wished

De nule rien ne me doloie

Of any thing not myself I-grieved

fors de ce que il vivoit tant.

except of this that he lived so-long

Uns guerredons de moi t'atant

A guerdon from me thee-awaits

qui mout te vandra an buen leu.

which much to-thee will-come in good place

An cest servise avras grant preu,

In this service thou-wilt-have great profit

2940

2945

2950

que tu m'as fet, ce t'acreant.

which thou to-me-hast done this to-thee-I-grant

Or m'an irai, si te comant

Now myself-thence I-shall-go so thee I-commend

a Deu, qui d'anconbrier te gart."

to God who from-hindrance thee guard

Tantost la pucele s'an part,

At-once the maiden herself-thence parts

2955 et li uns l'autre a Deu comande.

and the one the-other to God commends

Mes a toz ces qui an la lande

But to all those who in the beath

orent la bataille vëue,

had the battle seen

an est mout granz joie crëue,

thereof is very great joy grown

si desarment tot maintenant

so they-disarm right at-once

2960 le chevalier joie menant,

the knight joy making

si l'enorent de quanqu'il sevent.

and him-they-honor with whatever-they know

Tot maintenant lor mains relevent,

Right at-once their hands they-wash-again

que au mangier rasseoir vuelent.

for at-the meal to-sit-again they-wish

Or sont plus lié que il ne suelent,

Now are more glad than they — are-wont

2965 si manjüent mout lieemant.

and they-eat very gladly

Quant mangié orent longuemant,

When eaten they-had a-long-while

li vavasors dist a son oste

the vavasour said to his guest

qui delez lui seoit an coste:

who beside him sat at side

“Sire, nos venimes pieç’a

Lord we came a-while-ago

del reaume de Logres ça.

2970

from-the realm of Logres hither

Ne an somes, si voldriens

Born in-it we-are so we-would-wish

que enors vos venist et biens

that honor to-you should-come and good

et joie an cest päis; que nos

and joy in this land for we

i avriiens preu avuec vos,

there should-have profit with you

et a maint autre preuz seroit

2975

and to many another profit it-would-be

s’enors et biens vos avenoit

if-honor and good to-you happened

an ceste terre, an ceste voie.”

in this land on this journey

Et cil respont: “Deus vos an oie!”

And he answers God you thereof hear

The Sword Bridge

XI

His host's son gives him the best horse in the stable, and toward vespers they come to the bridge. The water under it is black and roaring, and the bridge is a burnished sword two lances long, nailed at both ends, with what look like two lions chained on the far bank. His companions weep and beg him to turn back. He bares his hands and feet and crosses on the blade, cutting hands, knees, and feet; on the far side there are no lions at all. From a tower window King Bademagu watches gladly, his disloyal son Meleagant in anger.

Quant li vavasors ot leissée

When the vavasour had left-off

2980 sa parole et sa voiz beissée,

his speech and his voice lowered

si l'a uns de ses fiz reprise

then it-has one of his sons taken-up

et dist: "Sire, an vostre servise

and said Lord in your service

devriens toz noz pooirs metre

we-ought all our powers to-put

et doner einçois que prometre:

and to-give sooner than to-promise

2985 se mestier aviez del prandre,

if need you-had of-the taking

nos ne devriens mie atandre

we not ought at-all to-wait

tant que vos demandé l'aiez.

until that you asked it-have

Sire, ja ne vos esmaïiez

Lord ever not yourself dismay

de vostre cheval s'il est morz.

about your horse if-it is dead

Ceanz a chevaus buens et forz:

Herein there-are horses good and strong

tant vuel que vos aiiez del nostre,

so-much I-wish that you have of-the ours

tot le meillor an leu del vostre

quite the best in place of-the yours

an manroiz, qu'il vos est mestiers."

thence you-will-lead for-it to-you is needful

Et cil respont: "Mout volantiers."

And he answers Very willingly

A tant font les liz atorner,

At that they-have the beds made-ready

si se couchent; a l'ajorner

then themselves they-lie-down at the-dawning

lievent matin et si s'atornent:

they-rise early and so themselves-make-ready

atorné sont, puis si s'an torment.

made-ready they-are then so themselves-thence they-turn

Au departir rien ne mesprannent:

At-the parting anything not they-neglect

a la dame et au seignor prannent

of the lady and of-the lord they-take

et a toz les autres congié.

and of all the others leave

2990

2995

3000

Mes une chose vos cont gié

But one thing to-you tell I

por ce que rien ne vos trespas,

for this that anything not to-you I-pass-over

que li chevaliers ne vost pas

that the knight not wished at-all

3005 monter sor le cheval presté

to-mount on the horse lent

qu'an li ot a l'uis aptesté;

which-one to-him had at the-door made-ready

ainz i fist, ce vos vuel conter,

rather there he-made this to-you I-wish to-tell

un des deus chevaliers monter,

one of-the two knights to-mount

qui venu ierent avuec lui.

who come were with him

3010 Et il sor le cheval celui

And he on the horse of-that-one

monte, qu'einsi li plot et sist.

mounts for-thus to-him it-pleased and suited

Quant chascuns sor son cheval sist,

When each on his horse sat

si s'acheminèrent tuit troi

then themselves-they-set-out all three

par le congié et par l'otroi

by the leave and by the-grant

3015 lor oste, qui serviz les ot

of-their host who served them had

et enorez de quanqu'il pot.

and honored with whatever-be could

Lor droit chemin vont cheminant,

Their straight road they-go journeying

tant que li jorz vet declinant,

until that the day goes declining

et viennent au pont de l'espee

and they-come to-the bridge of the-sword

après none vers la vespree.

3020

after nones toward the evening

Au pié del pont, qui mout est maus,

At-the foot of-the bridge which very is bad

sont desçandu de lor chevaux,

they-are dismounted from their horses

et voient l'eve felenesse,

and they-see the-water savage

roide et bruiant, noire et espesse,

swift and roaring black and thick

si leide et si espoantable

3025

so hideous and so dreadful

con se fust li fluns au deable,

as if it-were the river to-the devil

et tant perilleuse et parfonde

and so perilous and deep

qu'il n'est riens nule an tot le monde,

that-there not-is a-thing any in all the world

s'ele i cheoit, ne fust alec

if-it there fell not would-be gone

aussi com an la mer salec.

3030

just as into the sea salt

Et li ponz qui est an travers

And the bridge which is in crosswise

estoit de toz autres divers;

was from all others different

qu'ains teus ne fu ne ja mes n'iert.

for-ever such not was nor ever more not-will-be

Ains ne fu, qui voir m'an requiert,

Ever not was who truth of-me asks

3035 si maus ponz ne si male planche:

so bad a-bridge nor so evil a-plank

d'une espee forbie et blanche

of-a sword burnished and white

estoit li ponz sor l'eve froide;

was the bridge over the-water cold

mes l'espee estoit forz et roide,

but the-sword was strong and stiff

et avoit deus lances de lonc.

and had two lances of length

3040 De chascune part ot un tronc,

On each side there-was a trunk

ou l'espee estoit clofichiee.

where the-sword was nailed

Ja nus ne dot que il i chiee

Ever anyone not fear that he there fall

por ce que ele brist ne ploït;

for this that it break nor bend

que tant i avoit il d'esloit

for so-much there had it of-strength

3045 qu'ele pooit grant fes porter.

that-it could a-great burden bear

Mes ce fet mout desconforter

But this makes much to-dishearten

les deus chevaliers qui estoient

the two knights who were

avuec le tierz, que il cuidoient

with the third that they thought

que dui lion ou dui liepart

that two lions or two leopards

au chief del pont de l'autre part

3050

at-the end of-the bridge on the-other side

fussent liié a un perron.

were bound to a block

L'eve et li ponz et li lion

The-water and the bridge and the lions

les metent an itel freor

them put into such terror

qu'il tranblent andui de peor

that-they tremble both with fear

et dient: "Biaus sire, creez

3055

and say Fair lord believe

consoil de ce que vos veez,

counsel about this which you see

qu'il vos est mestiers et besoinz.

for-it to-you is needful and necessary

Mauveisemant est fez et joinz

Badly is made and joined

cist ponz, et mal fu charpantez.

this bridge and ill it-was carpentered

Se a tans ne vos repantez,

3060

If in time not yourself you-repent

au repantir vandroiz a tart.

at-the repenting you-will-come too late

Il covient feire par esgart

It behooves to-do with judgment

de teus choses i a assez.

of such things there are enough

Or soit qu'outre soiez passez: —

Now be-it that-over you-be passed

3065 ne por rien ne puet avenir,

nor for anything not can happen

ne qu'an porroit les vanz tenir

any-more than-one could the winds hold

et deffandre qu'il ne vantassent,

and forbid that-they not should-blow

et as oisiaus qu'il ne chantassent

and to-the birds that-they not should-sing

si qu'il n'osassent mes chanter,

so that-they not-should-dare more to-sing

3070 neant plus qu'an porroit rantrer

any more than-one could to-re-enter

el vandre sa mere et renestre;

into-the womb of-his mother and to-be-born-again

mes ce seroit qui ne puet estre,

but that would-be which not can be

ne qu'an porroit la mer voidier —

any-more than-one could the sea to-empty

poez vos panser et cuidier

can you think and imagine

3075 que cil dui lion forsené,

that those two lions maddened

qui de la sont anchaené,

who on yonder-side are chained

qu'il ne vos ocient et sucent

that-they not you kill and suck

le sanc des vainnes et manjucent

the blood of-the veins and devour

la char et puis rungent les os?

the flesh and then gnaw the bones

Mout sui hardiz quant je les os

Very I-am bold when I them dare

veoir et quant je les esgart.

to-see and when I them look-at

Se de vos ne prenez regart,

If of yourself not you-take heed

il vos ocirront, ce sachiez:

they you will-kill this know

mout tost ronpuz et arachiez

very soon torn and ripped-off

les manbres del cors vos avront,

the limbs from-the body to-you they-will-have

que merci avoir n'an savront.

for mercy to-have not-thereof they-will-know

Mes or aiiez pitié de vos,

But now have pity of yourself

si remenez ansamble o nos!

and remain together with us

3080

3085

De vos mēismes avroiz tort

Of you yourself you-will-have wrong

3090 s'an si certain peril de mort

if-in so certain a-peril of death

vos metiiez a esciant."

you put on purpose

Et cil lor respont an riant:

And he to-them answers in laughing

"Seignor, merciz et grez aiiez

Lords thanks and gratitude have

quant por moi si vos esmaïiez:

since for me so you are-dismayed

3095 d'amor vos vient et de franchise.

from-love to-you it-comes and from nobleness

Bien sai que vos an nule guise

Well I-know that you in any wise

ne voldriiez ma mescheance;

not would-wish my mishap

mes j'ai tel foi et tel creance

but I-have such faith and such belief

an Deu qu'il me garra par tot.

in God that-he me will-protect through all

3100 Cest pont ne ceste eve ne dot

This bridge nor this water not I-fear

ne plus que ceste terre dure,

any more than this land hard

ainz me vuel metre an avanture

rather myself I-wish to-put into adventure

de passer outre et atornier.

of to-pass over and to-make-ready

Miauz vuel morir que retorner.”

Better I-wish to-die than to-turn-back

Cil ne li sevent plus que dire,

They not to-him know more what to-say

mes de pitié plore et sospire

but from pity weeps and sighs

li uns et li autre mout fort.

the one and the other very hard

Et cil de trespasser le gort

And he for to-cross the whirlpool

au miauz que il set s'aparoille,

at-the best that he knows himself-prepares

et fet mout estrange mervouille,

and does a-very strange marvel

que ses piez desarme et ses mains.

for his feet he-unarms and his hands

N'iert mie toz antiers ne sains

Not-he-will-be at-all quite whole nor sound

quant de l'autre part iert venuz.

when on the-other side he-will-be come

Bien s'iert sor l'espee tenuz,

Well himself-he-will-have on the-sword held

qui plus estoit tranchanz que fauz,

which more was cutting than a-scythe

as mains nues et toz deschauz;

with-the hands bare and quite unsbod

que il n'avoit leissié an pié

for he not-had left on foot

soller ne chauce n'avanpié.

shoe nor hose nor-front-of-foot

3105

3110

3115

De ce gueires ne s'esmaioit

Of this much not himself-he-was-dismaying

3120 s'es mains et es piez se plaioit;

if-on-the hands and on-the feet himself he-wounded

miauz se voloit il maheignier

better himself wished he to-maim

que cheoir del pont et beignier

than to-fall from-the bridge and to-bathe

an l'eve don ja mes n'issist.

in the-water whence ever more not-he-should-issue

A grant dolor si con li sist

With great pain so as to-him it-fell

3125 s'an passe outre et a grant destresce:

himself-thence he-passes over and with great distress

mains et genouz et piez se blesce;

hands and knees and feet himself he-wounds

mes tot le rassoage et sainne

but quite him soothes and heals

Amors qui le conduit et mainne,

Love who him conducts and leads

si li est tot a sofrir douz.

so to-him it-is all to endure sweet

3130 As mains, as piez et as genouz

With-the hands with-the feet and with-the knees

fet tant que de l'autre part vient.

he-does so-much that to the-other side he-comes

Lors li remanbrë et sovient

Then to-him comes-to-mind and remembers

des deus lions qu'il i cuidoit

of-the two lions that-he there thought

avoir vëüz quant il estoit

to-have seen when he was

de l'autre part, et si esgarde

on the-other side and so he-looks

et n'i voit nes une leisarde,

and not-there sees not-even one lizard

ne rien nule qui mal li face.

nor thing any which harm to-him do

Il met sa main devant sa face,

He puts his hand before his face

s'esgarde son anel et prueve,

and-looks-at his ring and proves

quant nul des deus lions n'i trueve

when any of-the two lions not-there he-finds

qu'il i cuidoit avoir vëüz,

which-he there thought to-have seen

qu'anchantez fu et decëüz;

that-enchanted he-was and deceived

car il n'i avoit rien qui vive.

for there not-there was anything which lives

Et cil qui sont a l'autre rive,

And they who are on the-other bank

de ce qu'einsi passé le voient

of this that-thus passed him they-see

font tel joie com il devoient;

make such joy as they ought

3135

3140

3145

mes ne sevent pas son mehaing.

but not they-know at-all his hurt

Et cil le tient a grant gueaing

And he it holds for a-great gain

quant il n'i a plus mal sofert.

since he not-there has more harm suffered

3150 Le sanc jus de ses plaies tert

The blood down from his wounds he-wipes

a sa chemise tot an tor;

on his shirt all in circle

et voit devant lui une tor

and sees before him a tower

si fort, qu'onques de sa vëue

so strong that-ever of his sight

n'avoit nule si fort vëue:

not-he-had any so strong seen

3155 la torz miaudre ne pooit estre.

the tower better not could be

Apoiiez a une fenestre

Leaning at a window

s'estoit li rois Bademaguz,

himself-was the king Bademagu

qui mout iert soutis et aguz

who very was subtle and keen

an tote enor et an tot bien,

in all honor and in all good

3160 et leauté sor tote rien

and loyalty above every thing

voloit par tot garder et feire;

he-wished through all to-keep and to-do

et ses fiz, qui tot le contreire

and his son who quite the contrary

a son pooir toz jorz feisoit,

to his power all days was-doing

(car desleautez li pleisoit,

for disloyalty to-him pleased

n'onques de feire vilenie

nor-ever of to-do villainy

et träison et felenie

and treason and felony

ne fu lassez ne enuiiez)

not was wearied nor irked

s'estoit delez lui apuiiez;

and-was beside him leaning

s'orent vëu de la a mont

and-they-had seen from there to above

le chevalier passer le pont

the knight cross the bridge

a grant painne et a grant dolor.

with great pain and with great sorrow

D'ire et de mautalant color

With-anger and with ill-will color

an a Meleaganz changiee;

thereof has Meleagant changed

3165

3170

bien set qu'or li iert chalangiee
well he-knows that-now to-him will-be challenged

3175 la rëine; mes il estoit
the queen but he was

teus chevaliers qu'il ne dotoit
such a-knight that-he not feared

nul home, tant fust forz ne fiers.
any man however he-were strong nor fierce

Nus ne fust miaudre chevaliers,
Anyone not would-be a-better knight

se fel et desleaus ne fust;
if cruel and disloyal not he-were

3180 mes il avoit un cuer de fust
but he had a heart of wood

tot sanz douçor et sanz pitié.
quite without sweetness and without pity

Ce fet le roi joiant et lié,
This makes the king joyful and glad

don ses fiz ire et duel avoit.
whereof his son anger and grief had

Li rois certainneman savoit
The king certainly knew

3185 que cil qui iert au pont passez
that he who was at-the bridge passed

estoit miaudre que nus assez;
was better than any by-far

que ja nus passer n'i osast,
for ever anyone to-cross not-there would-dare

an cui dormist et reposast

in whom should-sleep and should-rest

mauvestiez qui fet honte as suens

cowardice which does shame to-the its-own

plus que proesce enor as buens.

more than prowess honor to-the good

Donc ne puet mie tant proesce

Then not can at-all so-much prowess

con fet mauvestiez et peresce:

as does cowardice and sloth

voirs est, n'an dotez ja de rien,

true it-is not-thereof doubt ever of anything

qu'an puet plus feire mal que bien.

that-one can more to-do ill than good

3190

Bademagu and His Son

XII

The king schools his son at the window: give the queen up before she is asked for, since honor done to a worthy man is honor had. Meleagant would sooner become the stranger's vassal than hand her over, and says so. His father offers the stranger truce and safe conduct from himself and all his men, arms, a horse, and the ointment of the three Marys, and tells him he need fear nobody but Meleagant. The stranger answers that he is losing time he does not wish to lose, and will wait until tomorrow and no longer.

De cez deus choses vos dëisse

Of these two things to-you I-would-say

mout, se demore n'i fëisse;

much if delay not-there I-should-make

3195

mes a autre chose m'ator,

but to another thing myself-I-turn

qu'a ma matiere m'an retor,

for-to my matter myself-thence I-return

s'orroiz comant tient a escole

so-you-will-hear how holds at school

3200 li rois son fil qu'il aparole:

the king his son whom-he addresses

"Fiz", fet il, "aventure fu

Son says he a-chance it-was

quant ci venimes, gié et tu,

when hither we-came I and thou

a ceste fenestre apoier,

at this window to-lean

s'an avons ëu tel loier

and-thereof we-have had such a-reward

3205 que nos avons apertemant

that we have openly

vëu le plus grant hardemant

seen the most great boldness

qui onques fust mes nes pansez.

that ever was before nor-even thought-of

Or me di se buen gré ne sez

Now to-me tell if good thanks not thou-knowest

celui qui tel mervoile a faite?

to-him who such a-marvel has done

3210 Car t'acorde a lui et afeite,

Now thyself-accord with him and compose

si li rant quite la rëine!

and to-him render quit the queen

Ja n'avras preu an l'aatine,

Ever not-thou-wilt-have profit in the-contest

ainz i puez avoir grant damage.

rather thereat thou-canst have great harm

Car te fai or tenir por sage

Now thee make now to-be-held for wise

et por cortois, si li anvoie

and for courteous and to-him send

la rëine einçois qu'il te voie.

the queen before that-be thee see

Fai li tel enor an ta terre,

Do to-him such honor in thy land

que ce que il est venuz querre

that this which he is come to-see

li dones ainz qu'il le demant.

to-him thou-give before that-be it ask

Ce sez tu bien certainnement

This knowest thou well certainly

qu'il quiert la rëine Ganievre.

that-be seeks the queen Guinevere

Ne te fai tenir por anrievre

Not thee make to-be-held for stubborn

ne por fol ne por orgueilleus.

nor for a-fool nor for proud

Se cist est an ta terre seus,

If this-one is in thy land alone

si li doiz conpeignie feire;

so to-him thou-oughtest company to-make

3215

3220

3225

que prodom doit prodome atreire
for a-worthy-man ought a-worthy-man to-draw-to-himself

et enorer et losangier,
and to-honor and to-flatter

nel doit pas de lui estrangier.
not-him he-ought at-all from him to-estrangle

Qui fet enor, l'enors est soe:
Whoever does honor the-honor is his

3230 bien saches que l'enors iert toe
well know that the-honor will-be thine

se tu fez enor et servise
if thou doest honor and service

a cestui qui est a devise
to this-one who is at will

li miaudre chevaliers del monde."
the best knight of-the world

Et cil respont: "Deus me confonde,
And he answers God me confound

3235 s'aussi buen ou meillor n'i al!"
if-as good or better not-there is

Mal fist quant lui i oblia,
Ill he-did when himself there he-forgot

qu'il ne se prise mie mains.
for-he not himself prizes at-all less

Et dit: "Joinz piez et jointes mains
And says With-joined feet and joined bands

volez espoir que je devaingne
wish-you perhaps that I become

3240 ses hom et de lui terre taingne?
his man and of him land hold

Si m'ait Deus, ainz devandroie

So me-help God sooner I-would-become

ses hon, que je ne li randroie

his man than I — to-him should-render

la rëine! Deus m'an deffande

the queen God me-thereof defend

que j'an tel guise la li rande!

that I-in such wise her to-him should-render

Ja certes n'iert par moi randue,

Ever certainly not-she-will-be by me rendered

mes contredite et deffandue

but denied and defended

vers toz ces qui tant fol seront

against all those who so foolish will-be

que venir querre l'oseront."

that to-come to-seek her-they-will-dare

Lors de rechief li dit li rois:

Then of again to-him says the king

"Fiz, mout feroies que cortois

Son much thou-wouldst-do as courteous

se ceste anreidie leissoies.

if this obstinacy thou-shouldst-leave

Je te lo et pri qu'an pes soies.

I thee counsel and pray that-in peace thou-be

Ce sez tu bien que enors iert

This knowest thou well that honor it-will-be

au chevalier se il conquiert

to-the knight if he wins

vers toi la rëine an bataille.

against thee the queen in battle

3245

3250

3255

Il la viaut miauz avoir sanz faille

He her wishes better to-have without fail

par bataille que par bonté

by battle than by kindness

por ce qu'a pris li iert conté.

for this that-to praise to-him it-will-be counted

Mien esciant il n'an quiert point

My knowledge he not-thereof seeks a-whit

3260 por ce que l'an an pes li doint,

for this that one in peace to-him give

ainz la viaut par bataille avoir.

rather her he-wishes by battle to-have

Por ce feroies tu savoir

For this wouldst-do thou wisely

se la bataille li toloies.

if the battle to-him thou-shouldst-take-away

Mout me poise quant tu foloies:

Much to-me it-grieves when thou playest-the-fool

3265 mes se tu mon consoil despis,

but if thou my counsel despisest

maus t'an vandra, si t'an iert pis

ill to-thee-thereof will-come so to-thee-thereof will-be worse

et tost mesavenir t'an puet;

and soon to-fare-ill to-thee-thereof can

que rien au chevalier n'estuet

for anything to-the knight not-it-behooves

doter fors solemant de toi.

to-fear except only of thee

De toz mes homes et de moi

3270

From all my men and from me

li doing triues et s'eürté:

to-him I-give truce and safety

onques ne fis desleauté

ever not I-did disloyalty

ne träison ne felenie,

nor treason nor felony

ne je ne comancerai mie

nor I not shall-begin at-all

por toi ne que por un estrange.

3275

for thee any-more than for a stranger

Ja ne t'an quier dire losange,

Ever not thee-thereof I-seek to-say flattery

ainz promet bien au chevalier

rather I-promise well to-the knight

qu'il n'avra ja de rien mestier,

that-be not-will-have ever of anything need

d'armes ne de cheval, qu'il n'et,

of-arms nor of horse that-be not-have

des qu'il tel hardemant a fet

3280

since that-be such boldness has done

que il est jusque ci venuz.

that he is as-far-as here come

Bien iert gardez et maintenuz

Well he-will-be guarded and maintained

vers trestoz homes sauvemant

against quite-all men safely

fors que vers ton cors solemant.

except that against thy body only

- 3285 Ice te vuel je bien aprendre,
This-thing to-thee wish I well to-teach
 que s'il vers toi se puet deffandre,
that if-be against thee himself can defend
 ne li covient d'autrui doter."
not to-him it-behooves of-another to-fear
 "Assez me loist ore escoter",
Enough to-me it-is-allowed now to-listen
 fet Meleaganz, "et teisir,
says Meleagant and to-be-silent
 3290 et vos diroiz vostre pleisir.
and you will-say your pleasure
 Mes po m'est de quanque vos dites:
But little to-me-is of whatever you say
 je ne sui mie si hermites,
I not am at-all so a-hermit
 si piteus ne si charitables,
so pitying nor so charitable
 ne tant ne vuel estre enorables
nor so-much not I-wish to-be honorable
 3295 que la rien que plus aim li doingne.
that the thing which most I-love to-him I-give
 N'iert mie feite sa besoigne
Not-will-be at-all done his business
 si tost ne si delivremant,
so soon nor so readily
 einçois ira tot autremant
rather it-will-go quite otherwise
 qu'antre vos et lui ne cuidiez.
than-between you and him — you-think

Ja se contre moi li eidiez,

Ever if against me to-him you-help

por ce ne nos correceromes.

for this not we shall-quarrel

Se de vos et de toz voz homes

If from you and from all your men

a pes et triues, moi que chaut?

be-has peace and truce to-me what matters

Onques por ce cuers ne me faut,

Ever for this heart not to-me fails

ainz me plest mout, se Deus me gart,

rather to-me it-pleases much so God me guard

que il n'et fors de moi regart;

that he not-have except of me regard

ne je ne vos quier por moi feire

nor I not from-you seek for me to-do

rien nule, ou l'an puisse reatreire

a-thing any where one may retrace

desleauté ne träison.

disloyalty nor treason

Tant con vos plest, soiez plus hon,

As-much as you it-pleases be a-pious man

et moi leissiez estre crüel."

and me let to-be cruel

"Comant? N'an feroies tu el?"

How Not-thereof wouldst-do thou otherwise

"Nenil", fet il. — "Et je m'an tes.

No says he And I myself-thereof am-silent

Or fai ton miauz, que je te les,

Now do thy best for I thee leave

3300

3305

3310

- 3315 s'irai au chevalier parler.
and-I-shall-go to-the knight to-speak
 Ofrir li vuel et presanter
To-offer to-him I-wish and to-present
 m'äie et mon consoil del tot;
my-help and my counsel of-the all
 car je me taing a lui de bot."
for I myself hold to him from outright
 Lors desçandi li rois a val
Then dismounted the king to below
- 3320 et fet amener son cheval.
and has-caused to-bring his horse
 L'an li amainne un grant destrier,
One to-him brings a great charger
 et il i monte par l'estrier,
and he there mounts by the-stirrup
 et mainne avuec lui de ses janz:
and leads with him of his folk
 trois chevaliers et deus serjanz
three knights and two sergeants
- 3325 sanz plus fist avuec lui aler.
without more he-made with him to-go
 Ainz ne finerent d'avalier
Ever not they-ceased from-descending
 tant que il vindrent a la planche,
until that they came to the plank
 et voient celui qui estanche
and see that-one who staunches
 ses plaies et le sanc an oste.
his wounds and the blood thereof takes-away

Lonc tans le cuide avoir a oste

3330

A-long time him he-thinks to-have as guest

li rois por ses plaies garir,

the king for his wounds to-heal

mes a la mer feire tarir

but to the sea to-make dry-up

porroit autressi bien antandre.

he-could just-as well attend

Li rois se haste del desçandre,

The king himself hastens of-the dismounting

et cil qui mout estoit bleciez

3335

and he who very was wounded

s'est lués ancontre lui dreciez,

himself-is at-once toward him raised

non pas por ce qu'il le conoisse,

not at-all for this that-he him know

ne ne set sanblant de l'angoisse

nor not shows semblance of the-anguish

qu'il avoit es piez et es mains

which-he had in-the feet and in-the hands

ne plus que se il fust toz sains.

3340

no more than if he were quite sound

Li rois le voit esvertüer,

The king him sees to-exert-himself

si le cort mout tost salüer

so him he-runs very quickly to-greet

et dit: "Sire, mout m'esbäis

and says Lord much I-am-amazed

de ce que vos an cest päis

at this that you into this land

3345 vos estes anbatuz sor nos.

yourself are thrust upon us

Mes bien veignanz i soiez vos,

But well come there be you

que ja mes nus ce n'anprandra,

for ever more anyone this not-will-undertake

n'ains mes n'avint ne n'avandra

nor-ever before not-it-happened nor not-will-happen

que nus tel hardemant feïst

that anyone such boldness should-do

3350 que an tel peril se mëist.

that in such peril himself should-put

Et sachiez, mout vos an aim plus

And know much you thereof I-love the-more

quant vos avez ce fet que nus

since you have this done which anyone

n'osast panser anteimes feire.

not-would-dare to-think much-less to-do

Mout me troveroiz deboneire

Much me you-will-find gracious

3355 vers vos et leal et cortois.

toward you and loyal and courteous

Je sui de ceste terre rois,

I am of this land king

si vos ofre tot a devise
and to-you I-offer quite at will
 tot mon conseil et mon service;
all my counsel and my service
 et je vois mout bien esperant
and I go very well guessing
 quel chose vos alez querant:

3360

la rëine, ce croi, querez.”
the queen this I-believe you-seek

“Sire”, fet il, “bien esperez:
Lord says he well you-guess

autre besoinz ça ne m’amainne.”
another need hitber not me-brings

“Amis, il i covandroit painne”,
Friend it there would-need pains

fet li rois, “ainz que vos l’aïiez.
says the king before that you her-have

3365

Et vos estes mout fort plaïiez,
And you are very sorely wounded

je voi les plaies et le sanc.
I see the wounds and the blood

Ne troveroiz mie si franc
Not you-will-find at-all so generous

celui qui ça l’a amenee,
him who hitber her-has brought

qu’il la vos rande sanz meslee;
that-be her to-you render without a-mêlée

3370

mes il vos covient sejourner

but it you behooves to-tarry

et voz plaies feire atorner

and your wounds to-have tended

tant qu'eles soient bien garies.

until that-they be well healed

De l'oignemant as trois Maries

Of the-ointment of-the three Marys

3375 et de meillor, s'an le trovoit,

and of better if-one it found

vos donrai gié; car mout covoit

to-you shall-give I for much I-covet

vostre eise et vostre garison.

your ease and your healing

Et la rëine a tel prison

And the queen has such a-prison

que nus de char a li n'adoise,

that anyone of flesb to her not-touches

3380 nëis mes fiz cui mout an poise,

not-even my son to-whom much thereof it-grieves

qui avuec lui ça l'amena:

who with him hither her-brought

onques hon si ne forsena

ever a-man so not raged

com il s'an forsanne et anrage.

as he himself-thereat rages-mad and goes-frantic

Et j'ai vers vos mout buen corage,

And I-have toward you very good heart

3385 si vos donrai, se Deus me saut,

so to-you I-shall-give if God me save

mout volantiers quanqu'il vos faut.

very willingly whatever-it to-you lacks

Ja si buenes armes n'avra

Ever such good arms not-will-have

mes fiz, qui mal gre m'an savra,

my son who ill will to-me-thereof will-know

qu'autressi buenes ne vos doingne,

that-as-well good not to-you I-give

et cheval tel con vos besoingne.

and a-horse such as you need

Et si vos praing, cui qu'il enuit,

And so you I-take to-whom that-it irk

vers trestoz homes an conduit.

against quite-all men in conduct

Ja mar doteroiz de nelui,

Never ill you-will-fear of anyone

fors que solemant de celui

except that only of that-one

qui la rëine amena ça.

who the queen brought hither

Onques hon si ne menaça

Ever a-man so not threatened

autre con je l'ai menacié,

another as I him-have threatened

et par po je ne l'ai chacié

and by little I — him-have driven

de ma terre par mautalant

from my land through ill-will

por ce que il ne la vos rant;

for this that he not her to-you renders

3390

3395

3400

s'est il mes fiz: mes ne vos chaille,
and-is he my son but not you let-it-trouble

car s'il ne vos vaint an bataille,
for if-he not you vanquishes in battle

ja ne vos porra sor mon pois
ever not you be-will-be-able against my weight

d'enui feire vaillant un pois."
of-harm to-do worth a pea

3405 "Sire", fet il, "vostre merci!

Lord says he by-your leave

Mes je gast le tans et pert ci,
But I waste the time and lose here

que perdre ne gaster ne vuel.
which to-lose nor to-waste not I-wish

De nule chose ne me duel,
Of any thing not myself I-grieve

ne je n'ai plaie qui me nuise.
nor I not-have a-wound which me hinder

3410 Menez moi tant que je le truisse;

Lead me so-far that I him find

car a teus armes con je port
for with such arms as I bear

sui prez qu'or androit me deport
I-am ready that-right now myself I-disport

a cos doner et a reprandre."
at blows to-give and at to-take-back

"Amis, miauz vos vandroit atandre
Friend better to-you it-would-be-worth to-wait

3415 ou quinze jorz ou trois semaines,

either fifteen days or three weeks

tant que voz plaies fussent saines;

until that your wounds were sound

car buens vos seroit li sejourz

for good to-you would-be the stay

tot au mains jusqu'a quinze jorz,

quite at least until fifteen days

et je por rien ne soferroie

and I for anything not would-suffer

ne esgarder ne le porroie

nor to-look-on not it I-could

qu'a teus armes n'a tel conroi

that-with such arms nor-with such gear

vos conbatissiez devant moi."

you should-fight before me

Et cil respont: "S'il vos plëust,

And he answers If-it you pleased

ja autres armes n'i ëust,

ever other arms not-there there-would-be

que volantiers a cez fëisse

for willingly with these I-should-do

la bataille, ne ne quëisse

the battle nor not I-should-seek

qu'il i ëust ne pas ne ore

that-it there were neither a-step nor an-hour

respit ne terme ne demore.

respite nor term nor delay

Mes por vos ore tant ferai

But for you now so-much I-shall-do

que jusqu'a demain atandrai;

that until tomorrow I-shall-wait

3420

3425

3430

et ja mar an parleroit nus,
and never ill thereof would-speak anyone

que je n'i atandroie plus.”
for I not-there would-wait more

Lors a li rois acreanté
Then has the king granted

qu'il iert tot a sa volanté,
that-it will-be quite at his will

3435 puis le fet a l'ostel mener,
then him he-has to the-lodging led

et prie et comande pener
and prays and commands to-take-pains

de lui servir ces qui l'an mainnent,
of him to-serve those who him-thence lead

et il del tot an s'an painnent.
and they of-the all in themselves-thereof take-pains

Et li rois, qui la pes quëist
And the king who the peace would-seek

3440 mout volantiers se il pöist,
very willingly if he could

s'an vint de rechief a son fil,
himself-thence came of again to his son

si l'aparoie come cil
so him-addresses like he

qui vossist la pes et l'acorde,
who would-wish the peace and the-accord

si li dit: “Biaus fiz, car t'acorde
so to-him he-says Fair son now thyself-accord

3445 a cest chevalier sanz combatre!
with this knight without fighting

N'est pas ça venuz por esbatre

Not-be-is at-all hither come for to-disport-himself

ne por berser ne por chacier,

nor for to-shoot nor for to-hunt

ainz vient por enor porchacier

rather be-comes for honor to-pursue

et son pris croistre et aloser,

and his prize to-increase and to-praise

s'ëust mestier de reposer

and-be-would-have need of to-rest

mout grant si con je l'ai vëu.

very great so as I him-have seen

Se mon consoil ëust crëu,

If my counsel he-had believed

de cest mois ne de l'autre après

of this month nor of the-other after

ne fust de la bataille angrés

not he-would-be for the battle eager

don il est or mout desirranz.

whereof he is now very desirous

Se tu la rëine li ranz,

If thou the queen to-him renderest

criens i tu avoir desenor?

fearest thereat thou to-have dishonor

De ce n'aies tu ja peor,

Of this not-have thou ever fear

qu'il ne t'an puet blasmes venir;

for-it not to-thee-thereof can blame come

3450

3455

- 3460 ainz est pechiez del retenir
rather is a-sin of-the retaining
 chose, ou an n'a reison ne droit.
a-thing where one not-has reason nor right
 La bataille tot or androit
The battle quite right now
 eüst faite mout volantiers,
he-would-have made very willingly
 si n'a il mains ne piez antiers,
and-yet not-has he hands nor feet whole
- 3465 ainz les a fanduz et plaïiez.”
rather them he-has split and wounded
 “De folie vos esmaïiez”,
Of folly you are-dismayed
 fet Meleaganz a son pere;
says Meleagant to his father
 “Ja par la foi que doi saint Pere
Ever by the faith that I-owe saint Peter
 ne vos crerrai de cest afeire.
not you I-shall-believe about this matter
- 3470 Certes, l'an me devroit detreire
Certainly one me ought to-drag
 a chevaus se je vos creioie.
at horses if I you believed
 S'il quiert s'enor, et je la moie,
If-he seeks his-honor and I the mine
 s'il quiert son pris, et je le mien,
if-he seeks his prize and I the mine
 et s'il viaut la bataille bien,
and if-he wishes the battle well

ancor la vuel je plus çant tanz.”

still it wish I more a-hundred times

“Bien voi que a folie antanz”,

Well I-see that to folly thou-attendest

fet li rois, “si la troveras.

says the king so it thou-wilt-find

Demain ta force esproveras

Tomorrow thy strength thou-wilt-prove

au chevalier quant tu le viaus.”

against-the knight since thou it wishest

“Ja ne me vaingne plus granz diaus”,

Ever not to-me come more great grief

fet Meleaganz, “de cestui!

says Meleagant of this-one

Miauz vossisse qu’ele fust hui

Better I-should-wish that-it were today

assez que je ne faz demain.

much than I — do tomorrow

Veez or con je m’an demain

See now how I myself-thereof bear

plus matemant que je ne suel.

more downcast than I — am-wont

Mout m’an sont or troblé li oel,

Much to-me-thereof are now troubled the eyes

mout an ai or la chiere mate.

much thereof I-have now the countenance dull

3475

3480

3485

Ja mes tant que je me conbate

Ever more until that I myself fight

n'avrai joie ne bien ne eise,

not-I-shall-have joy nor good nor ease

3490 ne chose nule qui me pleise."

nor thing any which me please

The Battle Before the Tower

XIII

The whole country rides in overnight, and by daybreak nobody can turn a foot in the press before the tower. The captive maidens of Logres have fasted three days and gone barefoot in wool. Lances shatter and saddlebows go, and the two fight on foot until his cut hands begin to tell and those who hold with him murmur. A clever maiden at the window reasons that he can only be fighting for the queen, and asks the queen his name. Lancelot of the Lake, she says; and the maiden calls it out so the whole field hears.

Li rois ot qu'an nule maniere

The king hears that-in any manner

n'i vaut rien consauz ne proiere,

not-there avails anything counsel nor prayer

si l'a leissié tot mal gre suen,

so him-he-bas left quite ill will his

et prant cheval mout fort et buen

and takes a-horse very strong and good

3495 et beles armes, ses anvoie

and fair arms and-them he-sends

celui an cui bien les anploie,

to-that-one in whom well them he-employs

et avuec un chirurgien,

and with a surgeon

leal home et buen crestien;

a-loyal man and a-good Christian

qu'el monde plus leal n'avoit,

for-in-the world more loyal not-there-was

et de plaies garir savoit

and of wounds to-heal he-knew

plus que tuit cil de Monpeslier.

more than all those of Montpellier

Cil fist la nuit au chevalier

He did the night to-the knight

tant de bien con feire li pot;

as-much of good as to-do to-him he-could

car li rois comandé li ot.

for the king commanded to-him had

Et ja savoient les noveles

And already knew the news

li chevalier et les puceles

the knights and the maidens

et les dames et li baron

and the ladies and the barons

de tot le päis environ,

of all the land around

3500

3505

si vindrent d'une grant jornee

so they-came from-a great day's-journey

3510 tot environ de la contree

quite around from the country

et li estrange et li privé

both the strangers and the familiar

et chevauchierent abrivé

and they-rode spurring

tote la nuit jusqu'au cler jor.

all the night until-the bright day

D'uns et d'autres devant la tor

Of-some and of-others before the tower

3515 ot si grant presse a l'ajorner

there-was so great a-press at the-dawning

qu'an n'i pöist son pié torner.

that-one not-there could his foot turn

Et li rois par matin se lieve,

And the king by morning himself rises

cui de la bataille mout grieve,

whom about the battle much it-grieves

si vient a son fil de rechief,

so he-comes to his son of again

3520 qui ja avoit le hiaume el chief

who already had the helm on-the head

lacié, qui fu fez a Peitiers.

laced which was made at Poitiers

N'i puet estre li respitiers

Not-there can be the respiting

ne n'i puet estre la pes mise,

nor not-there can be the peace made

si li a mout li rois requise,

though to-him has much the king asked-it

mes ne puet estre qu'il la face.

but not it-can be that-he it do

Devant la tor anmi la place,

Before the tower amid the place

ou tote la janz s'est atreite,

where all the folk itself-is drawn

la sera la bataille feite,

there will-be the battle made

que li rois le viaut et comande.

for the king it wishes and commands

Le chevalier estrange mande

The knight stranger summons

li rois tantost, et l'an li mainne

the king at-once and one him leads

an la place qui estoit plainne

into the place which was full

des janz del reaume de Logres;

of-the folk of-the realm of Logres

qu'aussi con por öir les ogres

for-just as for to-hear the organs

vont au mostier a feste anvel,

go to-the church at feast yearly

a Pantecoste ou a Noel,

at Pentecost or at Christmas

les janz acostumeemant,

the folk customarily

3525

3530

3535

tot autressi comunemant

quite just-so in-common

estoient la tuit äuné.

they-were there all assembled

3540 Trois jorz avoient jëuné

Three days they-had fasted

et alé nuz piez et an langes

and gone bare feet and in woolens

totes les puceles estranges

all the maidens strangers

del reaume le roi Artu,

of-the realm of-the king Arthur

por ce que Deus force et vertu

for this that God strength and power

3545 donast contre son averseire

should-give against his adversary

au chevalier qui devoit feire

to-the knight who was-to do

la bataille por les cheitis.

the battle for the captives

Et autressi cil del päis

And likewise those of-the land

reproient por lor seignor,

were-praying-also for their lord

3550 que Deus la victoire et l'enor

that God the victory and the-honor

de la bataille li donast.

of the battle to-him should-give

Bien main ainz que prime sonast

Well early before that prime should-sound

les ot an andeus amenez

them had one both brought

anmi la place toz armez

amid the place all armed

sor deus chevaus de fer coverz.

on two horses with iron covered

3555

Mout estoit janx et bien aperz

Very was comely and well ready

Meleaganz et bien tailliez,

Melegant and well shaped

et li haubers menu mailliez,

and the hauberk finely meshed

et li hiaumes et li escuz,

and the helm and the shield

qui li estoit au col panduz,

which to-him was at-the neck hung

3560

trop bien et bel li avenoient.

exceedingly well and fairly to-him became

Mes a l'autre tuit se tenoient,

But to the-other all themselves held

nes cil qui vossissent sa honte,

even those who would-wish his shame

et dient tuit que riens ne monte

and say all that anything not amounts

de Meleagant avers lui.

of Melegant beside him

3565

Maintenant qu'il furent andui

At-once that-they were both

anmi la place, et li rois vient,

amid the place and the king comes

qui tant com il puet les detient,

who as-much as he can them detains

si se painne de la pes feire,

and himself takes-pains of the peace to-make

3570 mes il n'i puet son fil atreire;

but he not-there can his son to-draw

et il lor dit: "Tenez voz frains

and he to-them says Hold your reins

et voz chevaus a tot le mains

and your horses at quite the least

tant qu'an la tor soie montez.

until that-into the tower I-be mounted

Ce n'iert mie mout granz bontez

This not-will-be at-all a-very great kindness

3575 se por moi tant vos delaïiez."

if for me so-much you delay

Lors se part d'eus mout esmaïiez,

Then himself he-parts from-them very dismayed

et vient droit la ou il savoit

and comes straight there where he knew

la rëine qui li avoit

the queen who to-him had

la nuit proiïé qu'il la mëist

the night prayed that-he her should-put

an tel leu que ele vëist

in such a-place that she might-see

la bataille tot a bandon;

the battle quite at will

et il l'an otroia le don,

and he to-her-thereof granted the boon

si l'ala querre et amener;

so her-be-went to-seek and to-bring

car il se voloit mout pener

for he himself wished much to-take-pains

de s'enor et de son servise.

for her-honor and for her service

A une fenestre l'a mise,

At a window her-be-has put

et il fu delez li a destre

and he was beside her at right

couchiez sor une autre fenestre,

leaning on an other window

si ot avuec eus deus assez

and there-were with them two plenty

et d'uns et d'autres amassez

both of-some and of-others gathered

chevaliers et dames senees,

knight and ladies wise

3580

3585

3590

et puceles del päis nees;

and maidens of-the land born

et mout i avoit de cheitives,

and many there were of captive-women

qui mout estoient antantives

who much were intent

3595 an orisons et an proïieres.

on prayers and on petitions

Li prison et les prisonieres

The prisoners and the prisoner-women

trestuit por lor seignor prioient,

quite-all for their lord were-praying

qu'an Deu et an lui se fioient

for-in God and in him themselves they-trusted

de secors et de delivrance.

for succor and for deliverance

3600 Et cil font lors sanz demorance

And they make then without delay

arriere treire les janz totes,

back to-draw the folk all

et hurtent les escuz des cotes,

and they-strike the shields with-the elbows

s'ont les enarmes anbraciees

and-have the shield-straps embraced

et poignent si que deus braciees

and spur so that two arm-lengths

parmi les escuz s'antranbatent

through the shields each-other-they-drive

des lances, si qu'eles esclatent

of-the lances so that-they shatter

et esmient come brandon.

and splinter like a-firebrand

Et li cheval de tel randon

And the horses with such a-rush

s'antreviennent tot front a front

each-other-they-meet quite front to front

et piz a piz hurté se font,

and breast to breast struck themselves they-make

et li escu hurtent ansanble

and the shields strike together

et li hiaume, si qu'il ressanble

and the helms so that-it seems

de l'escrois que il ont doné,

from the-crash which they have given

que il eüst mout fort toné,

that it had very loud thundered

qu'il n'i remest peitraus ne çangle,

so-that-there not-there remained breast-strap nor girth

3605

3610

3615

estriers ne resne ne sorçangle

stirrups nor rein nor over-girth

a ronpre, et des seles peçoient

to break and of-the saddles shatter

li arçon, qui mout fort estoient;

the saddle-bows which very strong were

ne n'i ont pas grant honte ëu

nor not-there have at-all great shame had

3620 se il sont a terre chëu

if they are to earth fallen

des que trestot ce lor failli;

since that quite-all this to-them failed

mes tost resont an piez sailli,

but quickly they-are-again on feet leapt

si s'antrevient sanz jangler

so each-other-they-meet without chattering

plus fieremant que dui sangler,

more fiercely than two boars

3625 et se fierent sanz menacier

and themselves they-strike without menacing

granz cos des espees d'acier

great blows with-the swords of-steel

come cil qui mout s'antreheent.

like those who much each-other-they-hate

Sovant si aspremant se reent

Often so sharply themselves they-shave

les hiaumes et les haubers blans

the helms and the hauberts white

3630 qu'après le fer an saut li sans.

that-after the iron thereof leaps the blood

La bataille mout bien fornissent,

The battle very well they-furnish

qu'il s'estoutoient et leidissent

for-they themselves-batter and disfigure

des pesanz cos et des felons.

with-the heavy blows and with-the cruel

Mainz estorz fiers et durs et lons

Many combats fierce and hard and long

s'antredonerent par igal,

each-other-they-gave in equal-measure

qu'onques ne del bien ne del mal

so-that-ever neither of-the good nor of-the ill

ne se sorent au quel tenir.

not themselves they-knew at-the which to-hold

Mes ne pooit pas avenir

But not it-could at-all happen

que cil qui iert au pont passez

that he who was at-the bridge passed

ne fust afebloiez assez

not were weakened much

des mains que il avoit plaïiees.

by-the hands which he had wounded

Mout an sont les janz esmaïiees,

Much thereof are the folk dismayed

celes qui a lui se tenoient,

those who to him themselves held

car ses cos afebloier voient,

for his blows to-weaken they-see

si criement qu'il ne l'an soit pis;

so they-fear that-it — to-him-thereof be worse

3635

3640

3645

et il lor estoit ja a vis
and it to-them was already in mind
 que il an avoit le peor
that he thereof had the worse
 et Meleaganz le meillor,
and Meleagant the better
 s'an murmuroient tot an tor.
and-thereof they-murmured all in circle

3650 Mes as fenestres de la tor
But at-the windows of the tower
 ot une pucele mout sage,
there-was a maiden very wise
 qui panse et dit an son corage,
who thinks and says in her heart
 que li chevaliers n'avoit mie
that the knight not-had at-all
 por li la bataille arramie,
for her the battle undertaken

3655 ne por cele autre jant menue
nor for that other folk small
 qui an la place estoit venue,
which into the place was come
 ne ja anprise ne l'ëust
nor ever undertaken not it-would-have
 se por la reïne ne fust;
if for the queen not it-were
 et panse se il la savoit
and thinks if he her knew

3660 a la fenestre ou ele estoit,
at the window where she was

qu'ele l'esgardast ne vëist,

that-she him-should-watch or should-see

force et hardemant an präist.

strength and boldness thereof he-would-take

Et se ele son non sëust

And if she his name knew

mout volantiers dit li ëust

very willingly said to-him she-would-have

qu'il se regardast un petit.

that-he himself should-look a little

3665

Lors vint a la rëine et dit:

Then she-came to the queen and says

“Dame, por Deu et por le vostre

Lady for God's-sake and for the your

preu vos requier et por le nostre,

profit you I-ask and for the ours

que le non a cel chevalier,

that the name of that knight

por ce que il li doie eidier,

for this that it to-him should help

3670

me dites, se vos le savez.”

to-me tell if you it know

“Tel chose requise m'avez,

Such a-thing asked to-me-you-have

dameisele”, fet la rëine,

damsel says the queen

“ou je n'antant nule häine

in-which I not-perceive any hatred

ne felenie, se bien non:

nor felony except good not

3675

Lanceloz del Lac a a non

Lancelot of-the Lake has for name

li chevaliers mien esciant.”

the knight my knowledge

“Deus, com or ai le cuer riant

God how now I-have the heart laughing

et lié et sain!” fet la pucele.

and glad and sound says the maiden

3680 Lors saut avant et si l’apele,

Then she-leaps forward and so him-calls

si haut que toz li pueples l’ot,

so loud that all the people it-heard

a mout haute voiz: “Lancelot!

with very high voice Lancelot

Trestorne toi et si esgarde

Turn-about thee and so look

qui est qui de toi se prant garde!”

who is who of thee herself takes heed

Lancelot Named

XIV

At his name he turns, sees the queen in the gallery, and will not look away again — he fights backward, over his own shoulder, and is nearly beaten for it. The maiden shames him a second time. He puts Meleagant between himself and the tower and drives him wherever he likes, like a blind man or a cripple. Bademagu begs the queen to stop it and she does, and Lancelot's hands fall at the word. The peace is that the queen and the prisoners go free, and that the two fight again at Arthur's court a year after Meleagant summons him.

Quant Lanceloz s'öi nomer,

3685

When Lancelot himself-beard name

ne mist gueires a soi torner:

not he-took much at himself to-turn

trestorne soi et voit a mont

he-turns-about himself and sees to above

la chose de trestot le mont,

the thing of quite-all the world

que plus desirroit a veoir,

which most he-desired to see

as loges de la tor seoir.

3690

at-the galleries of the tower sitting

Ne puis l'ore qu'il l'aparçut

Nor since the-hour that-he her-perceived

ne se torna ne ne se mut

not himself he-turned nor not himself moved

devers li ses iauz ne sa chiere,

toward her his eyes nor his face

ainz se deffandoit par derriere.

rather himself be-defended from behind

- 3695 Et Meleaganz l'anchauçoit
And Meleagant him-pursued
 totes voies plus qu'il pooit,
all the-same more than-he could
 si est si liez con cil qui panse
so is so glad as he who thinks
 qu'or n'et il mes vers lui deffanse;
that-now not-have he more against him defense
 s'an sont cil del päis mout lié,
and-thereof are those of-the land very glad
 3700 et li estrange si irié
and the strangers so grieved
 qu'il ne se pueent sostenir,
that-they not themselves can sustain
 ainz an i estuet mainz venir
rather thereof there it-bebooves many to-come
 jusqu'a terre toz esperduz
down-to earth quite bewildered
 ou as genouz ou estanduz:
either on-the knees or stretched-out
 3705 einsi et joie et duel i a.
thus both joy and grief there is
 Et lors de rechief s'escria
And then of again herself-cried-out
 la pucele de la fenestre:
the maiden from the window
 "Ha! Lanceloz, ce que puet estre
Ah Lancelot this what can be
 que si folemant te contiens?
that so foolishly thyself thou-bearest

Ja soloit estre toz li biens

3710

Once was-wont to-be all the good

et tote la proesce an toi,

and all the prowess in thee

ne je ne pans mie ne croi

nor I not think at-all nor believe

qu'onques Deus feïst chevalier

that-ever God made a-knight

qui se pöist apareillier

who himself might match

a ta valor ne a ton pris.

3715

with thy worth nor with thy prize

Or te veons si antrepris

Now thee we-see so hampered

qu'arriere main gietes tes cos,

that-behind hand thou-castest thy blows

si te conbaz derrier ton dos.

so thyself thou-fightest behind thy back

Torne toi si que de ça soies

Turn thyself so that from this-side thou-be

et que adés ceste tor voies,

3720

and that always this tower thou-see

que buen veoir et bel la fet."

for good to-see and fair it it-is

Ce tient a honte et a grant let

This he-bolds for shame and for a-great injury

Lanceloz tant que il s'an het

Lancelot so-far that he himself-thereof bates

qu'une grant piece a, bien le set,

for-a great while ago well it he-knows

- 3725 le pis de la bataille ëü,
the worse of the battle had
 si l'ont tuit et totes vëü.
and it-have all and all-the-women seen
 Lors saut arriere et fet son tor
Then he-leaps back and makes his turn
 et met antre lui et la tor
and puts between him and the tower
 Meleagant trestot a force.
Meleagant quite-all by force
- 3730 Et Meleaganz mout s'esforce
And Meleagant much himself-exerts
 que de l'autre part se retort;
that from the-other side himself he-turn-again
 mes Lanceloz sore li cort,
but Lancelot upon him runs
 sel hurte de si grant vertu
and-him strikes with so great force
 de tot le cors a tot l'escu,
with all the body with all the-shield
- 3735 quant d'autre part se vost torner,
when from-other side himself he-wished to-turn
 que il le fet tot trestorner
that he him makes quite turn-about
 deus foiz ou plus, mes bien li poist;
two times or more but well to-him it-grieves
 et force et hardemanz li croist,
and strength and boldness to-him grows

qu'amors li fet mout grant äie

for-love to-him makes very great help

et ce que il n'avoit häie

and this that he not-had hated

rien nule tant come celui

thing any so-much as that-one

qui se combat ancontre lui.

who himself fights against him

Amors et häine morteus,

Love and hatred mortal

si granz qu'ains ne fu ancor teus,

so great that-ever not was yet such

le font si fier et corageus

him make so fierce and courageous

que de neant nel tient a jeux

that for anything not-it holds for a-game

Meleaganz, ainz le crient mout,

Meleagant rather it he-fears much

qu'onques chevalier si estout

that-ever a-knight so bold

n'acointa mes ne ne conut,

not-he-met before nor not knew

ne tant ne li greva ne nut

nor so-much not to-him grieved nor harmed

nus chevaliers mes, con cil fet.

any knight ever as this-one does

Volantiers loing de lui se tret,

Willingly far from him himself be-draws

si li ganchist et se rëuse,

so to-him he-gives-way and himself withdraws

3740

3745

3750

que ses cos het et ses refuse.

for his blows he-hates and them refuses

3755 Et Lanceloz pas nel menace,

And Lancelot at-all not-him menaces

mes ferant vers la tor le chace,

but striking toward the tower him he-drives

ou la rëine iert apoiee;

where the queen was leaning

devant l'a servie et loiee

before her-be-has served and praised

de tant que si pres li venoit

of so-much that so near to-her he-came

3760 qu'a remenoir li covenoit

that-to to-stop to-him it-behooved

por ce qu'il ne la vëist pas

for this that-he not her should-see at-all

se il alast avant un pas.

if he should-go forward one step

Einsi Lanceloz mout sovant

Thus Lancelot very often

le menoit arriers et avant

him led backward and forward

3765 par tot la ou buen li estoit,

through all there where good to-him it-was

et totes voies s'arestoit

and all the-same himself-he-stopped

devant la rëine sa dame,

before the queen his lady

qui li a mise el cors la flame,

who to-him has put in-the body the flame

por qu'il la va si regardant;

for which-be her goes so beholding

et cele flame si ardant

and that flame so burning

vers Meleagant le feisoit,

against Meleagant him made

que par tot la ou li pleisoit

that through all there where to-him it-pleased

le pooit mener et chacier.

him be-could lead and drive

Come avugle et come eschacier

Like a-blind-man and like a-cripple

le mainne, mal gre an et il.

him be-leads ill will thereof have be

Li rois voit si ataint son fil,

The king sees so overcome his son

qu'il ne s'äie ne deffant,

that-be not himself-helps nor defends

si l'an poise et pitiez l'an prant,

so to-him-thereof it-grieves and pity him-thereof takes

s'i metra consoil se il puet;

and-there be-will-put counsel if be can

mes la rëine l'an estuet

but the queen it-thereof it-bebooves

proier se il le viaut bien feire.

to-pray if be it wishes well to-do

Lors li comança a retreire:

Then to-her be-began to recount

3770

3775

3780

“Dame, je vos ai mout amee

Lady I you have much loved

et mout servie et enoree

and much served and honored

3785 puis que an mon pooir vos oi.

since that in my power you I-had

Onques chose feire ne soi

Ever a-thing to-do not I-knew

que volantiers ne la fëisse,

that willingly not it I-should-do

mes que vostre enor i vëisse:

provided that your honor thereat I-saw

or m'an randez le guerredon.

now to-me-thereof render the guerdon

3790 Car demander vos vuel un don

For to-ask you I-wish a boon

que doner ne me devriiez

which to-give not to-me you-ought

se par amor nel feisiiez.

if through love not-it you-did

Bien voi que de ceste bataille

Well I-see that of this battle

a mes fiz le peor sanz faille,

has my son the worse without fail

3795 ne por ce ne le di je mie

nor for this not it say I at-all

qu'il m'an poist, mes que ne l'ocie

that-it to-me-thereof grieve but that not him-kill

Lanceloz qui an a pooir.

Lancelot who thereof has the-power

Ne vos nel devez pas vouloir,

Nor you not-it ought at-all to-wish

non pas por ce que il ne l'et

not at-all for this that he not it-have

bien vers vos et vers lui messet,

well toward you and toward him done-amiss

mes por moi qui mout vos an pri

but for me who much you thereof pray

li dites, la vostre merci,

to-him say by-the your leave

qu'il se taingne de lui ferir.

that-be himself hold from him to-strike

Einsi me porriiez merir

Thus me you-could repay

mon servise se buen vos iere."

my service if good to-you it-were

"Biaus sire, por vostre proiere

Fair lord for your prayer

le vuel je bien", fet la rëine;

it wish I well says the queen

"se j'avoie mortel häine

if I-had a-mortal hatred

vers vostre fil cui je n'aim mie,

toward your son whom I not-love at-all

si m'avez vos si bien servie,

yet me-have you so well served

que por ce que a gre vos vaingne

that for this that to pleasure to-you it-come

vuel je mout bien que il se taingne."

wish I very well that he himself hold

3800

3805

3810

Ceste parole ne fu mie

This speech not was at-all

dite a conseil, ainz l'ont öie

said in counsel rather it-have heard

3815 Lanceloz et Meleaganz.

Lancelot and Meleagant

Mout est qui aime obëissanz

Very is he-who loves obedient

et mout fet tost et volantiers,

and much does quickly and willingly

la ou il est amis antiers,

there where he is a-friend entire

ce que s'amie doie pleire:

that which to-bis-friend ought to-please

3820 donc le dut Lanceloz bien feire,

then it ought Lancelot well to-do

qui plus ama que Piramus,

who more loved than Pyramus

s'onques nus hon pot amer plus.

if-ever any man could to-love more

La parole öi Lanceloz,

The speech heard Lancelot

ne puis que li darriens moz

nor since that the last word

3825 li fu de la boche colez,

to-him was from the mouth slipped

puis qu'ele ot dit: "Quant vos volez

after that-she had said Since you wish

que il se taingne, jel vuel bien",

that he himself hold I-it wish well

puis Lanceloz por nule rien

thereafter Lancelot for any thing

nel tocast ne ne se mëust,

not-him would-touch nor not himself would-move

se cil ocirre le dëust.

if he to-kill him should

Il nel toche ne ne se muet:

He not-him touches nor not himself moves

et cil fiert lui tant com il puet

and he strikes him as-much as he can

d'ire et de honte forsenez,

with-anger and with shame out-of-his-senses

quant ot qu'il est a ce menez

when he-hears that-he is to this brought

que il covient por lui prier.

that it behooves for him to-pray

Et li rois por lui chastier

And the king for him to-chastise

est jus de la tor avalez,

is down from the tower descended

an la bataille an est alez

into the battle thence is gone

et dist a son fil maintenant:

and said to his son at-once

“Comant? Est or ce avenant,

How Is now this seemly

qu'il ne te toche et tu le fiers?

that-he not thee touches and thou him strikest

Trop par ies or crüeus et fiers,

Too much thou-art now cruel and fierce

3830

3835

3840

trop ies or preuz a mal ëur!

too thou-art now valiant at ill hour

Et nos savons tot de sœur

And we know quite of certainty

3845 qu'il est au dessore de toi."

that-he is at-the above of thee

Lors dit Meleaganz au roi,

Then says Meleagant to-the king

qui de honte fu desjulez:

who with shame was flouted

"Espoir vos estes avuglez!

Perhaps you are blinded

Mien esciant ne veez gote.

My knowledge not you-see a-jot

3850 Avuglez est qui de ce dote

Blinded is he-who of this doubts

que au dessor de lui ne soie."

that at-the above of him not I-be

"Or quier", fet li rois, "qui te croie!

Now seek says the king who thee believe

Que bien sevent totes cez janz

For well know all these folk

se tu dis voir ou se tu manz.

if thou sayest truth or if thou liest

3855 La verité bien an savons."

The truth well thereof we-know

Lors dit li rois a ses barons

Then says the king to his barons

que son fil arriere li traient.

that his son back to-him they-draw

Et cil de rien ne se delaient,

And they in anything not themselves delay

tost ont son comandement fet:

quickly they-have his commandment done

Meleagant ont arriers tret.

3860

Meleagant they-have backward drawn

Mes a Lancelot arriers treire

But at Lancelot backward to-draw

n'estut mie grant force feire,

not-it-behooved at-all great force to-do

car mout li pöist grant enui

for much to-him could great trouble

cil feire einçois qu'il tocast lui.

he to-do before that-he should-touch him

Et lors dit li rois a son fil:

3865

And then says the king to his son

“Si m'äit Deus, or t'estuet il

So me-help God now thee-behooves it

pes feire et randre la rëine.

peace to-make and to-render the queen

Tote la querele anterine

All the quarrel entire

t'estuet leissier et clamer quite.”

thee-behooves to-leave and to-declare quit

“Mout grant oiseuse avez or dite!

3870

Very great idleness you-have now said

Mout vos oi de neant debatre!

Much you I-hear about nothing to-argue

Fuiez! si nos leissiez combatre,

Flee and us leave to-fight

et si ne vos an meslez ja!"

and so not yourself thereof meddle ever

Et li rois dit que si fera,

And the king says that so he-will-do

3875 que bien set que cil l'ocirroit

for well he-knows that he him-would-kill

qui combatre les laisseroit.

whoever to-fight them would-let

"Il m'ocirroit? Ainz ocirroie

He me-would-kill Rather I-would-kill

je lui mout tost et conquerroie

I him very soon and I-would-conquer

se vos ne nos destorbiiez

if you not us hindered

3880 et combatre nos leissiiez."

and to-fight us let

Lors dit li rois: "Se Deus me saut,

Then says the king So God me save

quunque tu dis rien ne te vaut."

whatever thou sayest anything not to-thee avails

"Por quoi?" fet il. — "Car je ne vuel.

For what says he For I not wish

Ta folie ne ton orguel

Thy folly nor thy pride

3885 ne crerrai pas por toi ocirre.

not I-shall-believe at-all for thee to-kill

Mout est fos qui sa mort desirre

Very is a-fool who his death desires

si con tu fes, et tu nel sez.

so as thou doest and thou not-it knowest

Et je sai bien que tu me hez

And I know well that thou me hatest

por ce que je te vuel garder.

for this that I thee wish to-guard

Ta mort veoir ne esgarder

Thy death to-see nor to-behold

ne me leira ja Deus mon vuel,

not me will-let ever God my will

car trop an avroie grant duel.”

for too-much thereof I-should-have great grief

Tant li dit et tant le chastie

So-much to-him he-says and so-much him he-chastises

que pes et acorde ont bastie.

that peace and accord they-have built

La pes est teus que cil li rant

The peace is such that he to-him renders

la rëine par tel covant,

the queen on such a-covenant

que Lanceloz sanz nule aloingne,

that Lancelot without any delay

quel ore que cil l'an semoingne,

whatever hour that he him-thereto summon

des le jor que semons l'avra,

from the day that summoned him-will-have

au chief de l'an se combatra

at-the end of the-year himself will-fight

a Meleagant de rechief:

with Meleagant of again

ce n'est mie Lancelot grief.

this not-is at-all to-Lancelot grievous

3890

3895

3900

A la pes toz li pueples cort

To the peace all the people runs

et devisent que a la cort

and they-appoint that at the court

3905 le roi Artu iert la bataille,

of-the king Artbur will-be the battle

qui tient Bretaingne et Cornoaille:

who holds Britain and Cornwall

la devisent que ele soit;

there they-appoint that it be

s'estuet que la rëine otroit

and-it-behooves that the queen grant

et que Lanceloz acreant

and that Lancelot agree

3910 que, se cil le fet recreant,

that if he him makes recreant

qu'ele avuec lui s'an revandra,

that-she with him herself-thence will-come-again

ne ja nus ne la retandra.

nor ever anyone not her will-retain

La rëine ainsi le creante

The queen thus it grants

et Lancelot vient a creante,

and to-Lancelot comes to agreement

3915 si les ont ainsi acordez

so them they-have thus reconciled

et departiz et desarmez.

and parted and disarmed

Tel costume el päis avoit,

Such a-custom in-the land there-was

que puis que li uns s'an issoit,
that after that the one himself-thence issued

que tuit li autre s'an issoient.
that all the others themselves-thence issued

Lancelot tuit benëissoient:

3920

Lancelot all were-blessing

et ce poez vos bien savoir

and this can you well know

que lors i dut grant joie avoir,
that then there ought great joy to-be

et si ot il sanz nule dote.
and so there-was it without any doubt

La janz estrange assamble tote,

The folk strange assembles all

qui de Lancelot font grant joie,
who of Lancelot make great joy

3925

et dient tuit por ce qu'il l'oie:
and say all for this that-be it-bear

“Sire, voir, mout nos esjöïmes
Lord truly much ourselves we-rejoiced

tantost con nomer vos öïmes,
as-soon as to-name you we-beard

que sëür fumes a delivre
for sure we-were at liberty

qu'or seriïens nos tuit delivre.”
that-now should-be we all free

3930

A cele joie ot mout grant presse,
At that joy there-was very great press

que chascuns se painne et angresse

for each himself takes-pains and strives

comant il puisse a lui tochiez.

how he may at him to-touch

Cil qui plus s'an puet aprochier

He who most himself-thereat can approach

3935 an fu plus liez que ne pot dire.

thereof was more glad than — he-could say

Assez ot la et joie et ire,

Enough there-was there both joy and anger

que cil qui sont desprisoné

for those who are freed-from-prison

sont tuit a joie abandoné;

are all to joy given-over

mes Meleaganz et li suen

but Meleagant and the his

3940 n'ont nule chose de lor buen,

not-have any thing of their pleasure

ainz sont pansif et mat et morne.

rather are pensive and downcast and gloomy

Li rois de la place s'an torne,

The king from the place himself-thence turns

mes Lancelot n'i leisse mie,

but Lancelot not-there he-leaves at-all

einçois l'an mainne; et cil li prie

rather him-thence he-leads and he to-him prays

3945 que a la rëine le maint.

that to the queen him he-lead

“An moi”, fet li rois, “ne remaint;

On me says the king not it-rests

que bien a feire me ressanble;

for well to do to-me it-seems

et Queu le seneschal ansanble

and Kay the seneschal together

vos mosterrai je s'il vos siet."

to-you shall-show I if-it you suits

A po que as piez ne l'an chiet

At little that at-the feet — to-him-thereof falls

Lanceloz, si grant joie an a.

Lancelot so great joy thereof he-has

Li rois maintenant l'an mena

The king at-once him-thence led

an la sale, ou venue estoit

into the hall where come was

la rëine qui l'atandoit.

the queen who him-awaited

3950

The Queen's Coldness

xv

The king leads Lancelot to the queen by the finger, and she turns her face away and will not give him one word. No one can guess the offense. Kay, still bedridden, tells how Meleagant's physicians came with salves meant to kill and how the king kept the queen better guarded than any tower since Noah's ark. Lancelot takes leave to look for Gawain, and the men of the country seize him on the road with his armor off. Word reaches the queen that he is dead, and she names her look and her silence as the two blows that killed him.

3955 Quant la rëine voit le roi,
When the queen sees the king
qui tient Lancelot par le doi,
who holds Lancelot by the finger
si s'est contre le roi dreciee
then herself-she-is toward the king raised
et fet sanblant de correciee,
and makes semblance of angered
si s'anbruncha et ne dist mot.
so herself-she-cast-down and not said a-word

3960 "Dame, veez ci Lancelot",
Lady see here Lancelot
fet li rois, "qui vos vient veoir:
says the king who you comes to-see
ce vos doit mout pleire et seoir."
this to-you ought much to-please and to-suit
"Moi, sire? Moi ne puet il pleire:
Me lord Me not can it to-please
de son veoir n'ai je que feire."
of his seeing not-have I what to-do

“Avoi! dame”, ce dit li rois,

Come-now lady this says the king

qui mout estoit frans et cortois,

who very was noble and courteous

“Ou avez vos or cest cuer pris?

Where have you now this heart taken

Certes vos avez trop mespris

Certainly you have too-much done-amiss

d’ome qui tant vos a servie

toward-a-man who so-much you has served

qu’an cest oirre a sovant sa vie

that-on this journey has often his life

por vos mise an mortel peril,

for you put in mortal peril

et de Meleagant mon fil

and from Meleagant my son

vos a rescosse et deffandue,

you has rescued and defended

qui mout iriez vos a randue.”

who very angry you has rendered

“Sire, voir, mal l’a anploié:

Lord truly ill it-be-has employed

ja par moi ne sera noiié

ever by me not will-be denied

que je ne l’an sai point de gre.”

that I not to-him-thereof know a-whit of thanks

Ez vos Lancelot trespansé,

Behold you Lancelot quite-dumbfounded

3965

3970

3975

si li respont mout humblemant

so to-her answers very humbly

3980 a maniere de fin amant:

in manner of a-perfect lover

“Dame, certes, ce poise moi,

Lady certainly this grieves me

ne je n’os demander por quoi.”

nor I not-dare to-ask for what

Lanceloz mout se demantast

Lancelot much himself would-have-lamented

se la rëine l’escoutast;

if the queen him-had-listened

3985 mes por lui grever et confondre

but for him to-grieve and to-confound

ne li viaut un seul mot respondre,

not to-him she-wishes one single word to-answer

ainz est an une chanbre antree.

rather is into a chamber entered

Et Lanceloz jusqu’a l’antree

And Lancelot as-far-as the-entry

des iauz et del cuer la convoie,

with-the eyes and with-the heart her escorts

3990 mes as iauz fu corte la voie,

but for-the eyes was short the way

que trop estoit la chanbre pres;

for too-much was the chamber near

et il fussent antré après

and they would-have entered after

mout volantiers s’il pöist estre.

very willingly if-it could be

Li cuers qui plus est sire et mestre

The heart which more is lord and master

et de plus grant pooir asseiz

and of more great power by-far

s'an est outre après li passez

himself-thence is beyond after her passed

et li oel sont remés defors

and the eyes are remained outside

plain de lermes avuec le cors.

full of tears with the body

Et li rois a privé consoil

And the king in private counsel

dist: "Lanceloz, mout me mervoil

said Lancelot much me I-marvel

que ce puet estre et don ce muet

what this can be and whence this stirs

que la rëine ne vos puet

that the queen not you can

veoir n'aresnier ne vos viaut.

to-see nor-to-address not you wishes

S'ele onques a vos parler siaut,

If-she ever with you to-speak is-wont

n'an dëust or feire dangier

not-thereof she-ought now to-make difficulty

ne voz paroles estrangier

nor your words to-estrangle

a ce que por li fet avez.

at this that for her done you-have

Or me dites, se vos savez,

Now to-me tell if you know

3995

4000

4005

por quel chose, por quel messet

for what thing for what misdeed

4010 ele vos a tel sanblant fet?”

she to-you has such a-semblance made

“Sire, or androit ne m’an gardoie;

Lord right now not myself-thereof I-was-guarding

mes ne li plect qu’ele me voie

but not to-her it-pleases that-she me see

ne qu’ele ma parole escout:

nor that-she my speech hear

il m’an enuie et poise mout.”

it me-thereof irks and grieves much

4015 “Certes”, fet li rois, “ele a tort,

Certainly says the king she has wrong

que vos vos estes jusqu’a mort

for you yourself are unto death

por li an aventure mis.

for her in adventure put

Or an venez, biaux douz amis,

Now thence come fair sweet friend

s’irons au seneschal parler.”

and-we-shall-go to-the seneschal to-speak

4020 “La vuel je mout”, fet il, “aler.”

There wish I much says he to-go

Au seneschal an vont andui.

To-the seneschal thence go both

Quant Lanceloz vint devant lui,

When Lancelot came before him

si a dit au premerain mot

then has said at-the first word

li seneschaus a Lancelot:

the seneschal to Lancelot

“Con m’as honi!” — “Et je de quoi?”,

4025

How me-thou-hast shamed And I in what

fet Lanceloz, “dites le moi,

says Lancelot tell it to-me

quel honte vos ai je donc faite?”

what shame to-you have I then done

“Mout grant, que tu as a chief treite

Very great for thou hast to end drawn

la chose que je n’i poi treire,

the thing which I not-there could draw

s’as fet ce que je ne poi feire.”

4030

and-thou-hast done this which I not could to-do

A tant li rois les leisse andeus,

At that the king them leaves both

de la chanbre s’an ist toz seus;

from the chamber himself-thence goes quite alone

et Lanceloz au seneschal

and Lancelot to-the seneschal

anquiert s’il a ëu grant mal.

inquires if-he has had great harm

“Öil”, fet il, “et ai ancor:

4035

Yes says he and I-have still

ains n’oi plus mal que je ai or;

ever not-I-had more harm than I have now

et je fusse morz grant piece a,

and I should-be dead a-great while ago

ne fust li rois qui de ci va,

not were the king who from here goes

qui m'a montré par sa pitié

who to-me-has shown by his pity

4040 tant de douçor et d'amistié,

so-much of sweetness and of-friendship

qu'onques la ou il le s'eüst

that-ever there where he it might-know

riens nule qui mestier m'eüst

a-thing any which need to-me-had

ne me failli nule foïee,

not me failed any time

que ne me fust apareilliee

that not to-me it-were made-ready

4045 maintenant que il me pleisoit.

at-once as it me pleased

Mes contre un bien qu'il me feisoit...

But against one good which-he to-me did

et Meleaganz d'autre part,

and Meleagant on-other side

ses fiz, qui plains est de male art,

his son who full is of evil art

par traison a lui mandoit

by treason to him sent

4050 les mires, si lor comandoit

the physicians and to-them commanded

que sor mes plaies me m'eüssent

that on my wounds to-me they-should-put

teus oignemanz qui m'oc'eüssent.

such ointments which me-should-kill

Einsi pere avoie et parrastre;

Thus a-father I-had and a-step-father

que quant li rois un buen anplastre

for when the king a good plaster

me feisoit sor mes plaies metre,

to-me had on my wounds to-put

qui mout se vossist antremetre

who much himself would-wish to-occupy

que j'ëusse tost garison,

that I-should-have soon healing

et ses fiz par sa träison,

and his son by his treason

porce qu'il me voloit tüer,

because that-he me wished to-kill

le m'an feisoit tost remüer

it to-me-thereof had quickly to-remove

et metre un mauvés oignemant.

and to-put a bad ointment

Mes je sai bien certainnement

But I know well certainly

que li rois ne le savoit mie:

that the king not it knew at-all

tel murtre ne tel felenie

such a-murder nor such a-felony

ne sofrist il an nule guise.

not would-suffer he in any wise

Mes ne savez pas la franchise

But not you-know at-all the nobleness

que il a a ma dame faite:

which he has to my lady done

4055

4060

4065

onques ne fu par nule gueite

ever not was by any watch

si bien gardee torz an marche

so well guarded a-tower on a-march

4070 des le tans que Noés fist l'arche,

since the time that Noah made the-ark

que il miauz gardee ne l'et,

that he better guarded not it-has

que n'ëis veoir ne la let

so-that even to-see not her he-lets

son fil, qui mout an est dolanz,

his son who much thereof is grieving

fors devant le comun des janz

except before the commonalty of-the folk

4075 ou devant le suen cors demainne.

or before the his body own

A si grant enor la demainne

With so great honor her he-treats

et demenee a jusque ci

and treated her-has as-far-as here

li frans rois la soe merci,

the noble king by-the his leave

com ele deviser le sot.

as she to-appoint it knew

4080 Onques deviseor n'i ot

Ever an-appointer not-there was

fors li, qu'einsi le devisa;

except her who-thus it appointed

et li rois mout plus l'an pris

and the king much more her-thereof prized

por la leauté qu'an li vit.

for the loyalty which-in her he-saw

Mes est ce voirs que l'an m'a dit,

But is this true which one to-me-has said

qu'ele a vers vos si grant corroz,

that-she has toward you so great anger

qu'ele sa parole oiant toz

that-she her speech bearing all

vos a vee et escondite?"

to-you has forbidden and refused

"Verité vos an a l'an dite",

Truth to-you thereof has one told

fet Lanceloz, "tot a estros.

says Lancelot quite at outright

Mes por Deu, savriez me vos

But for God's-sake would-know-how to-me you

dire por quoi ele me het?"

to-say for what she me hates

Cil li respont que il ne set,

He to-him answers that he not knows

ainz s'an mervoille estrangement.

rather himself-thereat he-marvels strangely

"Or soit a son comandement",

Now be-it at her commandment

fet Lanceloz qui miauz ne puet.

says Lancelot who better not can

Et dit: "Congié prandre m'estuet,

And says Leave to-take me-bebooves

4085

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4095

s'irai mon seignor Gauvain querre,
and-I-shall-go my lord Gawain to-see

qui est antrez an ceste terre,
who is entered into this land

et covant m'ot que il vandroit
and a-covenant to-me-he-had that he would-come

4100 au pont dessoz eve tot droit."
to-the bridge under water quite straight

A tant est de la chanbre issuz,
At that he-is from the chamber issued

devant le roi an est venuz
before the king thence is come

et prant congié de cele voie.
and takes leave for that journey

Li rois volantiers li otroie;
The king willingly to-him grants-it

4105 mes cil qu'il avoit delivrez
but those whom-he had delivered

et de prison desprisonez
and from prison freed-from-prison

li demandent que il feront.
of-him ask what they will-do

Et il dit: "Avuec moi vdront
And he says With me will-come

tuit cil qui i voldront venir;
all those who thither will-wish to-come

4110 et cil qui se voldront tenir
and those who themselves will-wish to-hold

lez la rëine, si s'i taingnent:
beside the queen so themselves-there let-them-bold

n'est pas droiz que avuec moi vaingnent."

not-is at-all right that with me they-come

Avuec lui vont tuit cil qui vuelent

With him go all those who wish

lié et joiant plus qu'il ne suelent.

glad and joyful more than-they — are-wont

Avuec la rëine remainnent

4115

With the queen remain

puceles qui joie demainnent,

maidens who joy show

et dames et chevalier maint;

and ladies and knights many

mes uns toz seus n'an i remaint,

but one quite alone not-thereof there remains

qui miauz n'amast a retorner

who better not-would-love to return

an son päis que sejourner.

4120

into his land than to-sojourn

Mes la rëine les retient

But the queen them retains

por mon seignor Gauvain qui vient,

for my lord Gawain who comes

et dit qu'ele ne se movra

and says that-she not herself will-move

tant que noveles an savra.

until that news thereof she-will-know

Par tot est la novele dite

4125

Through all is the news told

que la rëine est tote quite,

that the queen is quite quit

et delivré tuit li prison,

and delivered all the prisoners

si s'an iront sanz mesprison

so themselves-thence they-will-go without wrong

quant eus pleira et buen lor iert.

when to-them it-will-please and good to-them it-will-be

4130 Li uns l'autre le voir an quiert,

The one of-the-other the truth thereof seeks

n'onques d'el parole ne tienent

nor-ever of-aught-else speech not they-hold

les janz la ou ansamble viennent.

the folk there where together they-come

Et de ce sont mout correcié

And of this are much angered

que li mal pas sont despecié,

that the ill passages are broken-up

4135 si va et vient qui onques viaut:

so goes and comes whoever ever wishes

n'est pas einsi com estre siaut.

not-is at-all thus as to-be it-is-wont

Mes quant les janz del päis forent,

But when the folk of-the land learned

qui a la bataille esté n'orent,

who at the battle been not-had

comant Lanceloz l'avoit fet,

how Lancelot it-had done

4140 si se sont tuit cele part tret,

then themselves are all that way drawn

ou il sorent que il aloit;

where they knew that he was-going

car il cuident qu'au roi bel soit

for they think that-to-the king fair it-be

se pris et mené li avoient

if taken and led to-him they-bad

Lancelot. Et li suen estoient

Lancelot And the his were

tuit de lor armes desgarni,

all of their arms stripped

et por ce furent escharni,

and because of-this they-were mocked

que cil del päis armé vindrent.

for those of-the land armed came

Ne fu pas mervoille s'il prindrent

Not it-was at-all a-marvel if-they took

Lancelot, qui desarmez iere.

Lancelot who disarmed was

Tot pris le ramainnent arriere,

Quite taken him they-bring-back backward

les piez liiez soz son cheval.

the feet bound under his horse

Et cil dient: "Vos feites mal,

And they say You do ill

seignor, car li rois nos conduit.

lords for the king us conducts

Nos somes an sa garde tuit."

We are in his keeping all

Et cil dient: "Nos ne savons,

And they say We not know

4145

4150

4155

mes einsi con pris vos avons

but thus as taken you we-have

vos covandra venir a cort.”

you it-will-behoove to-come to court

Novele qui tost vole et cort

News which quickly flies and runs

vient au roi, que ses janz ont pris

comes to-the king that his folk have taken

4160 Lancelot et si l'ont ocis.

Lancelot and so him-have killed

Quant li rois l'ot, mout l'an est grief,

When the king it-heard much to-him-thereof is grievous

et jure assez plus que son chief,

and swears by-far more than his head

que cil qui l'ont mort an morront,

that those who him-have killed thereof will-die

ja deffandre ne s'an porront;

ever to-defend not themselves-thereof will-be-able

4165 que s'il les puet tenir ou prandre,

for if-be them can bold or take

ja n'i avra mes que del pandre

ever not-there will-be more than of-the hanging

ou de l'ardoir ou del noier.

or of the-burning or of-the drowning

Et se il le vuelent noier,

And if they it wish to-deny

ja nes an crerra a nul fuer,

ever not-them thereof he-will-believe at any price

que trop li ont mis an son cuer

4170

for too-much to-him they-have put in his heart

grant duel, et si grant honte faite,

great grief and so great shame done

qui li devoit estre reiteite

which to-him ought to-be cast-up

s'il n'an estoit prise vanjance;

if-it not-thereof were taken vengeance

mes il la prandra sanz dotance.

but he it will-take without doubting

Ceste novele par tot va

4175

This news through all goes

tant que la rëine trova,

until that the queen it-found

qui au mangier estoit assise.

who at-the meal was seated

A po qu'ele ne s'est ocise

At little that-she — herself-is killed

maintenant que de Lancelot

at-once when of Lancelot

la mançonge et la novele ot;

4180

the lie and the news she-beard

mes ele la cuide veraie

but she it thinks true

et tant durement s'an esmaie

and so sorely herself-thereof she-dismays

qu'a po la parole ne pert;

that-at little the speech — she-loses

mes por les janx dit an apert:

but for the folk she-says in open

- 4185 “Voir, mout me poise de sa mort;
Truly much to-me it-grieves of his death
 et s’il m’an poise, n’ai pas tort;
and if-it to-me-thereof grieves not-I-have at-all wrong
 qu’il vint an cest päis por moi,
for-he came into this land for me
 por ce pesance avoir an doi.”
because of-this sorrow to-have thereof I-ought
 Puis dit a li mēisme an bas,
Then she-says to her self in low
- 4190 por ce que l’an ne l’öist pas,
for this that one not it-should-hear at-all
 que de boivre ne de mangier
that of to-drink nor of to-eat
 ne la covient ja mes proier
not her it-behooves ever more to-pray
 se ce est voirs que cil morz soit,
if this is true that he dead be
 por la cui vie ele vivoit.
for the whose life she was-living
- 4195 Tantost se lieve mout dolante
At-once herself she-rises very grieving
 de la table, si se demante,
from the table and herself she-laments
 si que nus ne l’ot ne escoute.
so that anyone not it-hears nor listens
 De li ocirre est si estoute
Of her to-kill she-is so resolved
 que sovant se prant a la gole;
that often herself she-takes at the throat

mes ainz se confesse a li sole,

but first herself she-confesses to her alone

si se repant et bat sa coupe,

and herself she-repents and beats her fault

et mout se blasme et mout s'ancoue

and much herself she-blames and much herself-she-accuses

del pechié qu'ele fet avoit

of-the sin which-she done had

vers celui don ele savoit

toward that-one whereof she knew

qui suens avoit esté toz dis,

that hers he-had been all days

et fust ancor se il fust vis.

and would-be still if he were alive

Tel duel a de sa cruauté,

Such grief she-has of her cruelty

que mout an pert de sa biauté.

that much thereof she-loses of her beauty

Sa cruauté, sa felenie

Her cruelty her felony

l'ont plus atainte et plus blesmie,

her-have more marred and more paled

que ce qu'ele voille et gëune.

than this that-she keeps-vigil and fasts

Toz ses messez ansamble äune

All her misdeeds together she-gathers

et tuit li revient devant,

and all to-her come-back before

toz les recorde et dit sovant:

all them she-recounts and says often

4200

4205

4210

- 4215 "Ha! lasse, de quoi me sovint,
Ab wretched of what to-me came-to-mind
quant mes amis devant moi vint,
when my friend before me came
et jel dëusse conjöir,
and I-it should-have made-welcome
que je nel vos nëis öir!
that I not-it wished even to-hear
Quant mon esgart et ma parole
When my look and my speech
4220 li veai, ne fis je que fole?
to-him I-refused not did I as a-fool
Que fole? Ainz fis, si m'äit Deus,
As a-fool Rather I-did so me-help God
que felenesse et que crüeus.
as a-savage-woman and as a-cruel-one
Et sel cuidai je feire a gas,
And so-it thought I to-do in jest
mes einsi nel cuida il pas,
but thus not-it thought he at-all
4225 si nel m'a mie pardoné.
so not-it to-me-he-has at-all pardoned
Nus fors moi ne li a doné
Anyone except me not to-him has given
le mortel cop mien esciant.
the mortal blow my knowledge

Quant il vint devant moi riant

When he came before me laughing

et cuida que je le vëisse

and thought that I him should-see

mout liee et que je li fëisse

4230

very glad and that I to-him should-make

grant joie, et veoir ne le vos,

great joy and to-see not him I-wished

ne li fu ce uns morteus cos?

not to-him was this a mortal blow

Quant ma parole li veai,

When my speech to-him I-refused

adonc sanz faille le preai

then without fail him I-robbed

del cuer et de la vie ansamble.

4235

of-the heart and of the life together

Cil dui cop l'ont mort, ce me sanble:

These two blows him-have killed this to-me seems

ne l'ont mort autre Breibançon.

not him-have killed other Brabanters

Deus! avrai je ja reançon

God shall-have I ever ransom

de cest murtre, de cest pechié?

of this murder of this sin

Nenil voir, ainz seront sechié

4240

No truly rather will-be dried-up

tuit li fleuve et la mers tarie!

all the rivers and the sea dried

Ha! lasse, con fusse garie,

Ah wretched how I-should-be healed

et come fust granz reconforz

and how would-be a-great comfort

se une foiz ainz qu'il fust morz

if one time before that-be were dead

4245 l'ëusse antre mes braz tenu.

him-I-had between my arms held

Comant? Certes, tot nu a nu,

How Certainly quite naked to naked

por ce que plus an fusse a eise.

for this that more thereof I-should-be at ease

Quant il est morz, mout sui mauveise,

Since he is dead very I-am wicked

que je ne faz tant que je muire.

that I not do so-much that I die

4250 Por quoi? Doit dons mon ami nuire

For what Ought then my friend to-harm

se je sui vive après sa mort,

if I am alive after his death

quant je a rien ne me deport

when I in anything not myself take-pleasure

s'a maus non que je trai por lui?

except-in ills not which I endure for him

Quant après sa mort m'i dedui,

Since after his death myself-therein I-delight

4255 mout me fussent douz a sa vie

much to-me would-be sweet in his life

li mal don je ai ore anvie.

the ills whereof I have now desire

Malveise est qui miauz viaut morir,

Wicked is she-who better wishes to-die

que mal por son ami sofrir.

than ill for her friend to-suffer

Moi certes est il mout pleisant

To-me certainly is it very pleasing

que j'an aille lonc duel faisant.

that I-thence go a-long grief making

Miauz vuel vivre et sofrir les cos

Better I-wish to-live and to-suffer the blows

que morir por avoir repos.”

than to-die for to-have rest

4260

Each Mourning the Other Dead

XVI

She keeps two days without food, and the news that reaches Lancelot is that she is dead. He knots his belt into a noose, ties the end to his saddlebow, and lets himself fall; his men cut him down with his throat nearly crushed. He reasons out that it is the cart she holds against him — and that nothing love commands can be a reproach. Then word comes that she lives. She tells him the fault herself: the two steps he waited. She pardons him, and shows him a window with her eye and not her finger.

La rëine an tel duel estut

The queen in such grief stood

deus jorz que ne manja ne but,

two days that not she-ate nor drank

tant qu'an cuida qu'ele fust morte.

so-far that-one thought that-she were dead

4265

Assez est qui novele porte

Enough there-is who news carries

einçois la leide que la bele.

sooner the ugly than the fair

A Lancelot vient la novele

To Lancelot comes the news

que morte est sa dame et s'amie.

that dead is his lady and his-friend

4270 S'il l'an pesa, n'an dotez mie;

If-it to-him-thereof grieved not-thereof doubt at-all

bien pueent savoir totes janz

well can know all folk

qu'il fu mout iriez et dolanz.

that-he was very angered and grieving

Por voir il fu si adolez,

For truth he was so pained

s'oïr et savoir le volez,

if-to-hear and to-know it you-wish

4275 que sa vie an ot an despit.

that his life thereof he-had in contempt

Ocirre se vost sanz respit;

To-kill himself he-wished without delay

mes ainz fist une brief complainte.

but first he-made a brief lament

D'une ceinture qu'il ot çainte

Of-a belt which-he had girt

noe un des chiés a laz corant,

he-knots one of-the ends with a-noose running

4280 et dit a lui seul an plorant:

and says to him alone in weeping

“Ha! morz, con m’as or agueitié,

Ab death how me-thou-hast now waylaid

que tot sain me fes desheitié!

that quite sound me thou-makest sick

Desheitez sui, et mal ne sant

Sick I-am and harm not I-feel

fors de duel qu’au cuer me desçant.

except of grief which-at-the heart to-me descends

Cist diaus est maus, voire morteus.

This grief is an-ill truly mortal

Ce vuel je bien que il soit teus,

This wish I well that it be such

et se Deu plest, je an morrai.

and if to-God it-please I thereof shall-die

Comant? N’autremant ne porrai

How Not-otherwise not I-shall-be-able

morir se Damedeu ne plest?

to-die if to-the-Lord-God not it-please

Si ferai, mes que il me lest

Indeed I-shall provided that he me let

cest laz antor ma gole estraindre,

this noose about my throat to-tighten

einsi cuit bien la mort destraindre

thus I-think well the death to-constrain

tant que mal gre suen m’ocirra.

so-far that ill will her she-me-will-kill

4285

4290

Morz qui onques ne desirra

Death who ever not desired

4295 se ceus non qui de li n'ont cure

except those not who of her not-have care

ne viaut venir, mes ma ceinture

not wishes to-come but my belt

la m'amanra trestote prise,

her to-me-will-bring quite-all taken

et des qu'ele iert an ma justise,

and since that-she will-be in my justice

donc fera ele mon talant.

then will-do she my desire

4300 Voire, mes trop i vandra lant,

Truly but too there she-will-come slow

tant sui desirranz que je l'aie!"

so-much I-am desirous that I her-have

Lors ne demore ne delaie,

Then not he-lingers nor delays

ainz met parmi le laz sa teste,

rather he-puts through the noose his head

tant qu'antor le col li areste;

until that-about the neck to-him it-stops

4305 et por ce que il mal se face,

and for this that he harm himself do

le chief de la ceinture lace

the end of the belt he-laces

a l'arçon de sa sele estroit,

to the-saddle-bow of his saddle tight

einsi que nus ne l'aparçoit;

thus that anyone not it-perceives

puis se let vers terre cliner,
then himself he-lets toward earth to-bend

si se vost feire trâiner

so himself he-wished to-make to-be-dragged

a son cheval tant qu'il l'estaingne:

by his horse until that-it him-put-out

une ore plus vivre ne daingne.

one hour more to-live not he-deigns

Quant a terre chëu le voient

When to earth fallen him they-see

cil qui avuec lui chevauchoient,

those who with him were-riding

si cudent que pasmez se soit,

then they-think that swooned himself he-be

que nus del laz ne s'aparçoit,

for anyone of-the noose not himself-perceives

qu'antor son col avoit lacié.

which-about his neck he-had laced

Tot maintenant l'ont anbracié,

Right at-once him-they-have embraced

sel relievant antre lor braz,

and-him they-lift-up between their arms

et lors si ont trové le laz,

and then so they-have found the noose

don il estoit ses anemis,

whereby he was his-own enemy

qu'anviron son col avoit mis;

which-around his neck he-had put

sel tranchent mout isnelemant;

and-it they-cut very swiftly

4310

4315

4320

mes la gorge si duremant

but the throat so hard

4325 li laz justisiee li ot,

the noose constrained to-him it-had

que de piece parler ne pot;

that for a-while to-speak not he-could

qu'a po ne sont les vainnes rotes

for-at little — are the veins broken

del col et de la gorge totes;

of-the neck and of the throat all

n'onques puis s'il le vossist bien

nor-ever thereafter if-he it had-wished well

4330 ne se pot mal feire de rien.

not himself he-could harm to-do in anything

Ce poise lui qu'an le gardoit,

This grieves him that-one him was-guarding

a po que il de duel n'ardoit,

at little that he from grief not-burned

que mout volantiers s'ocëist

for-that very willingly himself-be-would-have-killed

se nus garde ne s'an prëist.

if anyone heed not himself-thereof had-taken

4335 Et quant il mal ne se puet feire,

And when he harm not himself can do

si dit: "Ha! vis morz deputeire,

then he-says Ah vile death base-one

morz! por Deu, don n'avoies tu

death for God's-sake then not-hadst thou

tant de pooir ne de vertu

so-much of power nor of strength

qu'ainz que ma dame m'ocëisses!

that-before that my lady me-thou-shouldst-kill

Espoir por ce que bien fëisses,

Perhaps for this that well thou-shouldst-do

nel vossis feire ne deignas!

not-it thou-wouldst to-do nor deignedst

Par felenie m'espargnas,

Through felony me-thou-sparedst

que ja ne t'iert a el conté.

which ever not to-thee-will-be as other counted

Ha! quel servise et quel bonté!

Ah what a-service and what a-kindness

Con l'as or an buen leu assise!

How it-thou-hast now in a-good place bestowed

Dahez et qui de cest servise

Cursed be whoever for this service

te mercie et qui gre t'an set.

thee thanks and who thanks thee-thereof knows

Je ne sai li queus plus me het,

I not know the which more me hates

ou la vie qui me desirre

either the life which me desires

ou morz qui ne me viaut ocirre.

or death which not me wishes to-kill

Einsi l'une et l'autre m'ocit;

Thus the-one and the-other me-kills

4340

4345

4350

mes c'est a droit, se Deus m'äit,

but this-is by right so God me-help

que maleoit gre mien sui vis;

that cursed will mine I-am alive

que je me dëusse estre ocis

for I myself should to-be killed

4355 des que ma dame la rëine

since that my lady the queen

me mostra sanblant de häïne,

to-me showed semblance of hatred

ne ne le fist pas sanz reison,

nor not it she-did at-all without reason

ainz i ot mout droite acheison,

rather thereat there-was a-very right occasion

mes je ne sai queus ele fu.

but I not know what it was

4360 Et se je l'ëusse sëu,

And if I it-had known

ainz que s'ame alast devant De,

before that her-soul should-go before God

ja l'ëusse je amandé

indeed it-I-should-have I amended

si richemant con li plëust,

so richly as to-her it-should-please

mes que de moi merci ëust.

provided that of me mercy she-had

4365 Deus! cist forpez queus estre pot?

God this misdeed what to-be could

Bien cuit que espoir ele sot

Well I-think that perhaps she knew

que je montai sor la charrete.

that I mounted on the cart

Ne sai quel blasme ele me mete

Not I-know what blame she to-me put

se cestui non. Cist m'a trāi.

except this-one not This-one me-has betrayed

S'ele por cestui m'a häi,

If-she for this-one me-has hated

Deus! cist forpez por quoi me nut?

God this misdeed for what me harmed

Onques amor bien ne conut,

Ever love well not knew

qui ce me torna a reproche;

whoever this to-me turned to reproach

qu'an ne porroit dire de boche

for-one not could to-say with mouth

rien qui de par amors venist,

anything which from the-part-of love should-come

que a reproche apartenist;

that to reproach should-belong

ainz est amors et corteisie

rather is love and courtesy

quanqu'an puet feire por s'amie.

whatever-one can to-do for his-friend

Por m'‘amie’ nel fis je pas.

For my-friend not-it did I at-all

Ne sai comant je die, las!

Not I-know how I should-say alas

4370

4375

4380

Ne sai se die 'amie' ou non;

Not I-know if I-should-say friend or not

je ne li os metre cest non.

I not to-her dare to-put this name

Mes tant cuit je d'amor savoir,

But so-much think I of-love to-know

que ne me dëüst mie avoir

that not me she-ought at-all to-have

4385 por ce plus vil, s'ele m'amast,

for this more vile if-she me-loved

mes ami vrai me clamast,

but a-friend true me she-should-call

quant por li me sanbloit enors

since for her to-me seemed an-honor

a feire quanque viaut amors,

to do whatever wishes love

nëis sor charrete monter.

even on a-cart to-mount

4390 Ce dëüst ele amor conter;

This ought she love to-count

et c'est la provance veraie,

and this-is the proof true

qu'amors einsi les suens essaie,

for-love thus the its-own tests

einsi conoist ele les suens.

thus knows she the its-own

Mes ma dame ne fu pas buens

But to-my lady not was at-all good

cist servises. Bien le provai

this service Well it I-proved

au sanblant que an li trovai.

by-the semblance which in her I-found

Et totes voies ses amis

And all the-same her friend

fist ce don maint li ont amis

did this whereof many-a-one to-her have brought

por li honte et reproche et blasme;

for her shame and reproach and blame

s'ont fet ce jeu don an me blasme,

and-they-have made this game whereof one me blames

et de ma douçor amertume.

and of my sweetness bitterness

Par foi, que teus est la costume

By faith for such is the custom

a ces qui d'amor rien ne sevent,

to those who of-love anything not know

que nes enor an honte levent;

that even honor into shame they-wash

mes qui enor an honte moille

but whoever honor into shame wets

ne la leve pas, ainz la soille.

not it washes at-all rather it be-soils

Or sont cil d'amor non sachant

Now are those of-love not knowing

qui einsi la vont desachant,

who thus it go dragging-down

4395

4400

4405

et mout an sus de li se bote,
and much thereof away from her himself thrusts

4410 qui son comandement ne dote.
whoever her commandment not fears

Car sanz faille mout an amande
For without fail much thereby he-mends
 qui fet ce qu'amors li comande,
whoever does this which-love to-him commands
 et tot est pardonable chose;
and all is a-pardonable thing

s'est failliz qui feire ne l'ose."
and-is failed whoever to-do not it-dares

4415 Einsi Lanceloz se demante,
Thus Lancelot himself laments

et sa sanz est lez lui dolante,
and his folk is beside him grieving
 qui le gardent et qui le tienent.
who him guard and who him hold

Et antre tant noveles viennent
And amid that-much news comes
 que la rëine n'est pas morte.
that the queen not-is at-all dead

4420 Tantost Lanceloz se conforte,
At-once Lancelot himself comforts

et s'il avoit fet de la mort
and if-be had made about the death
 devant grant duel et fier et fort,
before great grief and fierce and strong

ancor fu bien çant mile tanz

still was well a-hundred thousand times

la joie de la vie granz.

the joy of the life great

Et quant il vindrent del recet

4425

And when they came from-the strongbold

pres a sis liues ou a set,

near at six leagues or at seven

ou li rois Bademaguz iere,

where the king Bademagu was

novele que il ot mout chiere

news which he had very dear

li fu de Lancelot contee,

to-him was of Lancelot told

si l'a volantiers escoutee,

4430

so it-be-has willingly listened-to

qu'il vit et vient sains et heitiez.

that-be lives and comes sound and glad

Mout an fist que bien afeitiez,

Much thereof he-did as well bred

que la rëine l'ala dire.

for-that the queen he-went-it to-tell

Et ele li respont: "Biaus sire,

And she to-him answers Fair lord

quant vos le dites, bien le croi;

4435

since you it say well it I-believe

mes s'il fust morz, bien vos otroi,

but if-be had-been dead well to-you I-grant

que je ne fusse ja mes liee.

that I not should-be ever more glad

Trop me fust ma joie esloignee

Too-far to-me would-be my joy removed

s'uns chevaliers an mon servise

if-a knight in my service

4440 eüst mort recëue et prise.”

had death received and taken

A tant li rois de li se part —

At that the king from her himself parts

et mout est la rëine tart

and much is to-the queen long

que sa joie et ses amis vaingne.

until-that her joy and her friend come

N'a mes talant que vers lui taingne

Not-she-has more desire that against him she-hold

4445 aatine de nule chose.

contest about any thing

Mes novele qui ne repose,

But news which not rests

ainz cort toz jorz, qu'ele ne fine,

rather runs all days for-it not ceases

vient de rechief a la rëine,

comes of again to the queen

que Lanceloz ocis se fust

that Lancelot killed himself had

4450 por li, se feire li lëust.

for her if to-do to-him had-been-permitted

Ele an est liee et sel croit bien,

She thereof is glad and and-it she-believes well

mes ele nel vossist por rien;

but she not-it would-wish for anything

que trop li fust mesavenu.

for too-much to-him it-would-be badly-befallen

Et antre tant ez vos venu

And amid that-much behold you come

Lancelot qui mout se hastoit.

Lancelot who much himself hastened

Maintenant que li rois le voit,

At-once that the king him sees

sel cort beisier et acoler.

and-him he-runs to-kiss and to-embrace

Vis li est qu'il doie voler,

Seeming to-him it-is that-he ought to-fly

tant le fet sa joie legier.

so-much him makes his joy light

Mes la joie font abregier

But the joy make to-shorten

cil qui le liierent et prindrent,

those who him bound and took

et li rois dist que mar i vindrent,

and the king says that in-ill-hour there they-came

que tuit sont mort et confondu.

for-that all are dead and confounded

Et il li ont tant respondu

And they to-him have so-much answered

qu'il cuidoient qu'il le vossist.

that-they thought that-he it wished

“Moi desplest il, mes il vos sist”,

To-me it-displeases it but it to-you suited

fet li rois, “n’a lui rien ne monte.

says the king not-to him anything not it-amounts

4455

4460

4465

Lui n'avez vos fet nule honte,

To-him not-have you done any shame

se moi non qui le conduisoie;

except to-me not who him was-conducting

4470 comant qu'il soit la honte est moie.

however that-it be the shame is mine

Mes ja ne vos an gaberoiz

But ever not you thereof will-laugh

quant vos de moi eschaperoiz."

when you from me will-escape

Quant Lanceloz l'ot correcier,

When Lancelot him-bears to-grow-angry

de la pes feire et adrecier

of the peace to-make and to-set-right

4475 au plus qu'il onques puet se painne

at-the most that-he ever can himself be-takes-pains

tant qu'il l'a faite, et lors l'an mainne

until that-he it-has made and then him-thence leads

li rois la rëine veoir.

the king the queen to-see

Lors ne leissa mie cheoir

Then not let at-all to-fall

la rëine ses iauz vers terre,

the queen her eyes toward earth

4480 ainz l'ala lieemant requerre,

rather him-she-went gladly to-meet

si l'enora de son pooir,

and him-she-honored with her power

et sel fist delez li seoir.

and and-him made beside her to-sit

Puis parlerent a grant loisir

Then they-spoke at great leisure

de quanque lor vint a pleisir,

of whatever to-them came to pleasure

ne matiere ne lor failloit,

nor matter not to-them was-lacking

qu'amors assez lor an bailloit.

for-love enough to-them thereof furnished

Et quant Lanceloz voit son eise,

And when Lancelot sees his ease

qu'il ne dit rien qui mout ne pleise

that-be not says anything which much not please

la rëine, lors a consoil

the queen then in counsel

li dit: "Dame, mout me mervoil

to-her be-says Lady much myself I-marvel

por quoi tel sanblant me fëistes

for what such a-semblance to-me you-made

avant hier quant vos me vëistes,

before yesterday when you me saw

n'onques un mot ne me sonastes:

nor-ever one word not to-me you-sounded

a po la mort ne me donastes,

at little the death — to-me you-gave

ne je n'oi tant de hardemant

nor I not-had so-much of boldness

que tant com or vos an demant

that as-much as now you thereof I-ask

vos an osasse demander.

you thereof I-should-dare to-ask

4485

4490

4495

Dame, or sui prez de l'amander,

Lady now I-am ready of the-amending

mes que le forfet dit m'aiiez

provided that the misdeed told to-me-you-have

4500 don j'ai esté mout esmaiez.”

whereof I-have been much dismayed

Et la rëine li recontre:

And the queen to-him recounts

“Comant? Don n'ëustes vos honte

How Then not-bad you shame

de la charrete et si dotastes?

of the cart and so you-feared

Mout a grant anviz i montastes

Very with great unwillingness there you-mounted

4505 quant vos demorastes deus pas.

when you delayed two steps

Por ce, voir, ne vos vos je pas

Because of-this truly not you wished I at-all

ne aresnier ne esgarder.”

neither to-address nor to-look-at

“Autre foiz me doint Deus garder”,

Another time to-me give God to-guard

fet Lanceloz, “de tel messet,

says Lancelot from such a-misdeed

4510 et ja Deus de moi merci n'et

and ever God of me mercy not-have

se vos n'ëustes mout grant droit.

if you not-bad a-very great right

Dame, por Deu, tot or androit
Lady for God's-sake quite now presently
 de moi l'amande an recevez,
from me the-amends thereof receive
 et se vos ja le me devez
and if you ever it to-me ought
 pardonner, por Deu, sel me dites.”

4515

to-pardon for God's-sake so-it to-me tell
 “Amis, vos an estes toz quites”,
Friend you thereof are quite quit
 fet la rëine, “outreemant:
says the queen outright
 jel vos pardoing mout buenemant.”

I-it to-you pardon very readily
 “Dame”, fet il, “vostre merci;
Lady says he by-your leave

mes je ne vos puis mie ci
but I not you can at-all here
 tot dire quanque je voldroie;
all to-say whatever I would-wish
 volantiers a vos parleroie
willingly with you I-would-speak
 plus a loisir s'il pooit estre.”
more at leisure if-it could be

4520

Et la rëine une fenestre
And the queen a window
 li mostre a l'uel, non mie au doi,
to-him shows with the-eye not at-all with-the finger

4525

et dit: "Venez parler a moi
and says Come to-speak with me
 a cele fenestre anquenuit
at that window tonight
 quant par ceanz dormiront tuit,
when through herein will-sleep all
 et si vandroiz par un vergier.
and so you-will-come through a garden

4530 Ceanz antrer ne herbergier
Herein to-enter nor to-lodge
 ne porroiz mie vostre cors:
not you-will-be-able at-all your body
 je serai anz et vos de fors;
I shall-be within and you from outside
 que ceanz ne porroiz venir.
for-that herein not you-will-be-able to-come
 Ne je ne porrai avenir
Nor I not shall-be-able to-reach

4535 a vos fors de boche ou de main;
to you except with mouth or with hand
 mes s'il vos plect jusqu'a demain
but if-it you pleases until tomorrow
 i serai por amor de vos.
there I-shall-be for love of you
 Assanbler ne porriens nos,
To-come-together not could we

qu'an ma chanbre devant moi gist

for-in my chamber before me lies

Keus li seneschaus qui languist

Kay the seneschal who languishes

des plaies don il est coverz.

from-the wounds wherewith he is covered

Et li huis ne rest mie overz,

And the door not also-is at-all open

ainz est bien fers et bien gardez.

rather it-is well barred and well guarded

Quant vos vandroiz, si vos gardez

When you will-come so yourself guard

que nule espie ne vos truisse.”

that any spy not you find

“Dame”, fet il, “la ou je puisse

Lady says he there where I may

ne me verra ja nule espie

not me will-see ever any spy

qui mal i panst ne mal an die.”

who ill there think nor ill thereof say

Einsi ont pris lor parlemant,

Thus they-have taken their parley

si departent mout lieemant.

so they-part very gladly

4540

4545

4550

The Window

XVII

The day will not end. He feigns weariness, rises again in the dark, finds a breach in the garden wall, and waits at the barred window until she comes to it in her shift. They hold hands through the iron and blame the iron. Then he bends the bars out of their sockets, splitting one finger to the sinew and taking the first joint off another, and feels none of it. He passes Kay asleep and kneels at her bed as at a shrine. Of the joy that followed, the tale keeps silent. At dawn he sets the bars back, his blood left on her sheets.

Lanceloz ist fors de la chanbre

Lancelot goes out of the chamber

si liez que il ne li remanbre

so glad that it not to-him comes-to-mind

de nul de trestoz ses enuiz.

of any of quite-all his troubles

Mes trop li demore la nuiz,

But too-much to-him lingers the night

4555 et li jorz li a plus duré

and the day to-him has more lasted

a ce qu'il i a anduré

at this which-be there has endured

que çant autre ou qu'uns anz antiers.

than a-hundred others or than-a year entire

Au parlemant mout volantiers

To-the parley very willingly

s'an alast s'il fust anuitié.

himself-thence he-would-go if-it were grown-dark

Tant a au jor vaintre luitié

4560

So-much he-has with-the day to-vanquish struggled

que la nuiz mout noire et obscure

that the night very black and dark

l'ot mis dessoz sa couverture

him-had put beneath her covering

et dessoz sa chape afublé.

and beneath her cloak wrapped

Quant il vit le jor enublé,

When he saw the day clouded

si se fet las et traveillié,

4565

then himself he-makes weary and labored

et dit que mout avoit veillié,

and says that much he-had kept-vigil

s'avoit mestier de reposer.

and-had need of to-rest

Bien poez antandre et gloser,

Well you-can understand and gloss

vos qui avez fet autretel,

you who have done the-like

que por la jant de son ostel

4570

that for the folk of his lodging

se fet las et se fet couchier;

himself he-makes weary and himself he-makes to-lie-down

mes n'ot mie son lit mout chier,

but not-he-had at-all his bed very dear

que por rien il n'i reposast,

for-that for anything he not-there would-rest

n'il ne pöist ne il n'osast,

nor-he not could nor be not-dared

- 4575 ne il n'an vossist pas avoir
nor he not-thereof would-wish at-all to-have
 le hardemant ne le pooir.
the boldness nor the power
 Mout tost et soef s'an leva,
Very quickly and softly himself-thence he-rose
 ne ce mie ne li greva
nor this at-all not to-him grieved
 qu'il ne luisoit lune n'estoile,
that-it not shone moon nor-star
 4580 n'an la meison n'avoit chandoile,
nor-in the house not-there-was a-candle
 ne lanpe ne lanterne ardant.
nor lamp nor lantern burning
 Einsi s'an ala regardant,
Thus himself-thence he-went looking-about
 qu'onques nus garde ne s'an prist,
so-that-ever anyone heed not himself-thereof took
 ainz cuidoient qu'il se dormist
rather they-thought that-he himself were-sleeping
 4585 an son lit trestote la nuit.
in his bed quite-all the night
 Sanz conpeignie et sanz conduit
Without company and without escort
 mout tost vers le vergier s'an va,
very quickly toward the garden himself-thence he-goes
 qu'onques nul home n'ancontra,
so-that-ever any man not-be-met

et de ce li est bien chëu

and of this to-him it-is well fallen

qu'une piece del mur chëu

that-a piece of-the wall fallen

ot el vergier novelemant.

bad in-the garden newly

Par cele freite isnelemant

Through that breach swiftly

s'an passe et vet tant que il vient

himself-thence he-passes and goes so-far that he comes

a la fenestre et la se tient

to the window and there himself holds

si coiz qu'il ne tost n'esternue,

so still that-he not coughs nor-sneezes

tant que la rëine est venue

until that the queen is come

an une mout blanche chemise;

in a very white shift

n'ot sus bliaut ne cote mise,

not-she-had over-it bliaut nor cote put

mes un cort mantel ot dessus

but a short mantle she-had above

d'escarlade et de cisemus.

of-scarlet and of miniver

Quant Lanceloz voit la rëine

When Lancelot sees the queen

qui a la fenestre s'acline,

who at the window herself-leans

qui de gros fer estoit ferree,

which of thick iron was barred

4590

4595

4600

d'un douz salu l'a enerree.

with-a sweet greeting her-he-has honored

4605 Et ele un autre tost li rant;

And she an other quickly to-him renders

car mout estoient desirrant

for much they-were desirous

cil de li et cele de lui.

he of her and she of him

De vilenie ne d'enui

Of baseness nor of-trouble

ne tinent parlemant ne plet.

not they-hold parley nor plea

4610 Li uns pres de l'autre se tret

The one near of the-other himself draws

tant que main a main s'antretient.

until that hand in hand each-other-they-bold

De ce qu'ansamble ne parvienent

Of this that-together not they-come

lor poise tant a desmesure,

to-them it-grieves so-much beyond measure

qu'il an blasment la ferrière.

that-they thereat blame the iron-work

4615 Mes de ce Lanceloz se vante

But of this Lancelot himself boasts

que se la rëine atalante

that if to-the queen it-pleases

avuec li leanz anterra:

with her therein he-will-enter

ja por les fers ne remandra.

ever for the irons not it-will-be-hindered

Et la rëine li respont:

And the queen to-him answers

“Ne veez vos con cist fer sont

4620

Not see you how these irons are

roit a ploier et fort a fraindre?

stiff to bend and hard to break

Ja tant nes porriiez destraindre

Ever so-much not-them you-could wrench

ne tirer a vos ne sachier

nor to-pull to you nor to-drag

qu’un an pössiez esrachier.”

that-one thereof you-could tear-out

“Dame”, fet il, “or ne vos chaille!

4625

Lady says he now not you let-it-trouble

Ja ne cuit que fers rien i vaille.

Ever not I-think that iron anything there avail

Rien fors vos ne me puet tenir

Anything except you not me can bold

que bien ne puisse a vos venir.

that well not I-may to you come

Se vostre congiez le m’otroie,

If your leave it to-me-grants

tote m’est delivre la voie;

4630

quite to-me-is free the way

mes se il bien ne vos agree,

but if it well not you pleases

donc m’est ele si anconbree

then to-me-is it so hindered

que n’i passeroie por rien.”

that not-there I-should-pass for anything

“Certes”, fet ele, “jel vuel bien:

Certainly says she I-it wish well

4635 mes voloires pas ne vos detient;

my will at-all not you detains

mes tant atandre vos covient

but so-long to-wait you it-bebooves

qu’an mon lit soie recouchiee,

that-in my bed I-be lain-down-again

que de noise ne vos meschiee;

so-that from noise not to-you it-befall-ill

qu’il n’i avroit jeu ne deport

for-it not-there would-be game nor sport

4640 se li seneschaus, qui ci dort,

if the seneschal who here sleeps

se resveilloit por vostre noise.

himself should-wake for your noise

Por c’est bien droiz que je m’an voise,

For this-is well right that I myself-thence go

qu’il n’i porroit nul bien noter

for-he not-there could any good note

s’il me veoit ici ester.”

if-he me saw here to-stand

4645 “Dame”, fet il, “or alez donques,

Lady says he now go then

mes de ce ne dotez vos onques

but of this not fear you ever

que je i doie noise feire.

that I there ought noise to-make

Si soef an cuit les fers treire

So gently thereof I-think the irons to-draw

que ja ne m'i travaillerai

that ever not myself-there I-shall-strain

ne nelui n'i esveillerai.”

4650

nor anyone not-there I-shall-wake

A tant la rëine s'an torne,

At that the queen herself-thence turns

et cil s'aparoille et atorne

and he himself-prepares and makes-ready

de la fenestre desconfire.

of the window to-undo

As fers se prant et sache et tire

At-the irons himself he-takes and drags and pulls

si que trestoz ploier les fet

4655

so that quite-all to-bend them he-makes

et que fors de lor leus les tret.

and that out of their places them he-draws

Mes si estoit tranchanz li fers

But so was cutting the iron

que del doi mame jusqu'as ners

that from-the finger little as-far-as-the sineus

la premiere once se creva

the first joint himself be-burst

et de l'autre doi se trancha

4660

and of the-other finger himself be-cut

la premerainne jointe tote;

the foremost joint quite

mes del sanc qui jus an degote

but of-the blood which down thereof drips

ne des plaies nule ne sant

nor of-the wounds any not feels

cil qui a autre chose antant.

he who to another thing attends

4665 La fenestre n'est mie basse:

The window not-is at-all low

neporquant Lanceloz i passe

nevertheless Lancelot there passes

mout tost et mout delivremant.

very quickly and very nimbly

An son lit trueve Ke dormant

In his bed he-finds Kay sleeping

et puis vint au lit la rëine,

and then he-came to-the bed of-the queen

4670 si l'aore et si li ancline;

and her-he-adores and so to-her he-bows

car an nul cors saint ne croit tant.

for in any body holy not he-believes so-much

Et la rëine li estant

And the queen to-him stretches

ses braz ancontre, si l'anbrace,

her arms to-meet so bim-she-embraces

estroit pres de son piz le lace,

tight near to her breast him she-clasps

4675 si l'a lez li an son lit tret,

so bim-she-has beside her into her bed drawn

et le plus bel sanblant li fet
and the most fair semblance to-him she-makes
 que ele onques feire li puet;
that she ever to-make to-him can
 que d'amor et del cuer li muet.
for from-love and from-the heart to-her it-stirs
 D'amor vient qu'ele le conjot;
From-love it-comes that-she him welcomes
 et s'ele a lui grant amor ot,
and if-she toward him great love had
 et il çant mile tanz a li;
and he a-hundred thousand times toward her
 car a toz autres cuers failli
for toward all other hearts failed
 Amors avers qu'au suen ne fist;
Love beside that-at-the his — did
 mes an son cuer tote reprist
but in his heart quite she-took-again
 Amors et fu si anterine
Love and was so entire
 qu'a toz autres cuers fu frarine.
that-toward all other hearts she-was meager
 Or a Lanceloz quanqu'il viaut
Now has Lancelot whatever-be wishes
 quant la rëine an gre requiaut
when the queen in favor accepts
 sa conpeignie et son solaz,
his company and his solace

4680

4685

- 4690 quant il la tient antre ses braz
when he her holds between his arms
 et ele lui antre les suens.
and she him between the hers
 Tant li est ses jeux douz et buens
So-much to-him is his play sweet and good
 et del beisier et del santir,
both of-the kissing and of-the feeling
 que il lor avint sanz mantir
that there to-them befell without lying
 4695 une joie et une mervoille
a joy and a marvel
 tel qu'onques ancor sa paroille
such that-ever yet its like
 ne fu öie ne sëue;
not was heard nor known
 mes toz jorz iert par moi tëue,
but all days it-will-be by me kept-silent
 qu'an conte ne doit estre dite.
for-in a-tale not it-ought to-be told
 4700 Des joies fu la plus eslite
Of-the joys was the most choice
 et la plus delitable cele
and the most delightful that-one
 que li contes nos test et cele.
which the tale to-us keeps-silent and conceals
 Mout ot de joie et de deduit
Much he-had of joy and of delight
 Lanceloz tote cele nuit.
Lancelot all that night

Mes li jorz vient, qui mout li grieve,

4705

But the day comes which much to-him grieves

quant de lez s'amie se lieve.

when from beside his-friend himself he-rises

Au lever fu il droiz martirs,

At-the rising was he a-right martyr

tant li greva li departirs,

so-much to-him grieved the parting

car mout i sofri grant martire.

for much there he-suffered great martyrdom

Ses cuers adés cele part tire

4710

His heart still that way draws

ou la rëine se remaint.

where the queen herself remains

N'a pooir que il l'an remaint,

Not-he-has power that he it-thence take-away

que la rëine tant li plest

for the queen so-much to-him pleases

qu'il n'a talant que il la lest:

that-he not-has desire that he her leave

li cors s'an vet, li cuers sejourne.

4715

the body itself-thence goes the heart stays

Droit vers la fenestre s'an torne;

Straight toward the window himself-thence he-turns

mes de son cors tant i remaint

but of his body so-much there remains

que li drap sont tachié et taint

that the sheets are stained and dyed

del sanc qui li chëi des doiz.

with-the blood which to-him fell from-the fingers

- 4720 Mout s'an part Lanceloz destroiz,
Much himself-thence parts Lancelot distressed
 plains de sospirs et plains de lermes.
full of sighs and full of tears
 Del rassanbler n'est pris nus termes,
Of-the coming-together-again not-is taken any term
 ce poise lui, mes ne puet estre.
this grieves him but not it-can be
 A anviz passe a la fenestre,
With unwillingness he-passes at the window
 4725 s'i antra il mout volantiers.
and-there entered he very willingly
 N'avoit mie les doiz antiers,
Not-he-had at-all the fingers whole
 que mout fort i estoit bleciez;
for very sorely there he-was wounded
 et s'a il les fers redreciez
and so-has he the irons straightened
 et remis an lor leus arriere,
and put-back in their places back
 4730 si que ne devant ne derriere
so that neither before nor behind
 n'an l'un ne an l'autre costé
nor-on the-one nor on the-other side
 ne pert que l'an eüst osté
not it-appears that one had taken-away
 nul des fers ne tret ne ploiié.
any of-the irons nor drawn nor bent

Au departir a soploiié

At-the parting he-has bowed

a la chanbre et fet tot autel

toward the chamber and done quite the-like

con s'il fust devant un autel;

as if-he were before an altar

puis s'an part a mout grant angoisse,

then himself-thence he-parts with very great anguish

n'ancontre home qui le conoisse,

nor-he-meets a-man who him know

tant qu'a son ostel est venuz.

until that-at his lodging he-is come

An son lit se couche toz nuz,

In his bed himself he-lies quite naked

si qu'onques nelui n'i esvoille,

so that-ever anyone not-there he-wakes

et lors a primes se mervaille

and then for the-first-time himself he-marvels

de ses doiz qu'il trueve plaïiez;

at his fingers which-he finds wounded

mes de rien n'an est esmaïiez

but at anything not-thereof he-is dismayed

por ce qu'il set tot de sœur

for this that-he knows quite of certainty

que au treire les fers del mur

that at-the drawing the irons from-the wall

de la fenestre se bleça.

of the window himself he-wounded

Por ce pas ne s'an correça;

For this at-all not himself-thereof he-angered

4735

4740

4745

car il se vossist miauz del cors
for he himself would-wish rather from-the body
 4750 andeus les braz avoir trez fors
both the arms to-have drawn out
 que il ne fust outre passez;
that he not were beyond passed
 mes s'il se fust aillors quassez
but if-he himself had elsewhere bruised
 et si leidemant anpiriez,
and so shamefully damaged
 mout an fust dolanz et iriez.
much thereof he-would-be grieving and angered

The Blood on the Sheets

XVIII

Meleagant finds the queen's sheets and Kay's both spotted with fresh blood, nudges his companions to see it, and charges the guards to leave the beds untouched until he returns. The queen says her nose bled in the night, and believes it. Kay, who can hardly stand, offers to fight for her and himself. She has sent secretly for Lancelot, who arrives with a hall of knights and takes the battle on. The oaths are sworn on relics: Meleagant that Kay lay with her, Lancelot that Kay neither lay there nor touched her, and that he will show Meleagant no mercy.

4755 La rëine la matinee
The queen the morning
 dedanz sa chanbre ancortinee
within her chamber curtained
 se fu mout soef andormie;
herself was very softly fallen-asleep

de ses dras ne se gardoit mie

of her sheets not herself took-beed at-all

que il fussent tachié de sanc,

that they were stained with blood

ainz cuidoit qu'il fussent mout blanc

rather she-thought that-they were very white

et mout bel et mout avenant.

and very fair and very comely

Et Meleaganz maintenant

And Meleagant at-once

qu'il fu vestuz et atornez

when-he was dressed and arrayed

s'an est vers la chanbre tornez,

himself-thence is toward the chamber turned

ou la rëine se gisoit.

where the queen herself was-lying

Veillant la trueve et les dras voit

Waking her be-finds and the sheets be-sees

de fres sanc tachiez et gotez,

with fresh blood stained and spotted

s'an a ses conpeignons botez,

so-thereat he-has his companions nudged

et com aparcevanz de mal

and as perceiving of evil

vers le lit Ke le seneschal

toward the bed (of-)Kay the seneschal

esgarde, et voit ses dras tachiez

he-looks and sees his sheets stained

de sanc, que la nuit, ce sachiez,

with blood for the night this know

4760

4765

4770

furent ses plaies escrevees;

were his wounds burst-open

et dist: "Dame, or ai je trovees

and he-said Lady now have I found

4775 teus ansaingnes con je voloie!

such tokens as I wished

Bien est voirs que mout se foloie

Well is true that much himself befools

qui de fame garder se painne:

who of a-woman to-guard himself troubles

son travail i pert et sa painne;

his labor thereat he-loses and his pains

que ainz la pert cil qui la garde

for sooner her loses he who her guards

4780 que cil qui ne s'an done garde.

than he who not himself-thereof gives heed

Mout a or bele garde faite

Much has now fine watch made

mes pere qui por moi vos gueite!

my father who for me you watches

De moi vos a il bien garde;

From me you has he well guarded

mes anuit vos a regardee

but tonight you has looked-upon

4785 Kes li seneschaus mal gre suen,

Kay the seneschal against will his

s'a de vos ëu tot son buen,

so-he-has of you had all his pleasure

et si sera mout bien prové."

and so it-will-be very well proved

“Comant?” fet ele. — “J’ai trové

How says she I-have found

sanc an voz dras, qui le tesmoingne,

blood in your sheets which it witnesses

puis que dire le me besoingne.

since that to-say it to-me behooves

Par ce le sai, par ce le pruis,

By this it I-know by this it I-prove

que an voz dras et es suens truis

that in your sheets and in-the his I-find

le sanc qui chëi de ses plaies:

the blood which fell from his wounds

ce sont ansaignes bien veraies.”

these are tokens quite true

Lors primes la rëine vit

Then first the queen saw

et an l’un et an l’autre lit

both in the-one and in the-other bed

les dras sanglanz, si se mervoille,

the sheets bloody so herself she-marvels

honte an ot, si devint vermoille

shame thereat she-had so she-became crimson

et dist: “Se Damedeus me gart,

and said So Lord-God me keep

cest sanc que an mes dras esgart,

this blood which in my sheets I-behold

onques ne l’i aporta Kes,

ever not it-thither brought Kay

ainz m’a anuit seignië li nes;

rather to-me-has tonight bled the nose

4790

4795

4800

de mon nes fu au mien espoir.”

from my nose it-was to-the my belief

Et ele cuide dire voir.

And she thinks to-say truth

4805 “Par mon chief”, fet Meleaganz,

By my head says Meleagant

“quanque vos dites est neanz.

whatever you say is nothing

N'i a mestier parole fainte,

Not-thereto has use speech feigned

que provee estes et atainte;

for proved you-are and convicted

et bien sera li voirs provez.”

and well will-be the truth proved

4810 Lors dist: “Seignor, ne vos movez”,

Then he-said Lords not you stir

as gardes qui iluec estoient,

to-the guards who there were

“Et gardez que osté ne soient

And see that removed not they-be

li drap del lit tant que je vaingne.

the sheets from-the bed until that I come

Je vuel que li rois droit me taingne

I wish that the king right me hold

4815 quant la chose vëue avra.”

when the thing seen he-will-have

Lors le quist tant qu'il le trova,

Then him he-sought so-much that-he him found

si se leisse a ses piez cheoir

and himself lets at his feet fall

et dit: "Sire, venez veoir

and says Lord come to-see

ce don garde ne vos prenez.

that whereof heed not you take

La rëine veoir venez,

The queen to-see come

si verroiz mervoilles provees

and you-will-see marvels proved

que j'ai vëues et trovees.

which I-have seen and found

Mes einçois que vos i ailliez

But before that you thither go

vos pri que vos ne me failiez

you I-pray that you not to-me fail

de justise ne de droiture.

of justice nor of right

Bien savez an quel avanture

Well you-know in what adventure

por la rëine ai mon cors mis,

for the queen I-have my body put

don vos estes mes anemis,

wherefore you are my enemy

que por moi la faites garder.

for because-of me her you-make guard

4820

4825

- 4830 Hui matin l'alai regarder
Today morning her-I-went to-look-at
 an son lit, et si ai vëu
in her bed and so I-have seen
 tant que j'i ai aparçëu
so-much that I-there have perceived
 qu'o li gist Kes chascune nuit.
that-with her lies Kay each night
 Sire, por Deu, ne vos enuit
Lord for God not you let-it-vex
- 4835 s'il m'an poise et se je m'an plaign,
if-it to-me-thereof grieves and if I myself-thereof complain
 car mout me vient a grant desdaing
for much to-me it-comes as great scorn
 quant ele me het et despist
when she me hates and despises
 et Kes charnelmant o li gist."
and Kay carnally with her lies
 "Tes!", fet li rois, "je nel croi pas."
Hush says the king I not-it believe at-all
- 4840 "Sire, or venez veoir les dras,
Lord now come to-see the sheets
 comant Kes les a conreez.
how Kay them has dressed
 Quant ma parole ne creez,
Since my word not you-believe
 einçois cuidiez que je vos mante,
rather you-think that I to-you lie

les dras et la coute sanglante

the sheets and the quilt bloody

des plaies Ke vos mosterrai.”

from-the wounds (of-)Kay to-you I-shall-show

“Or alons, et si le verrai”,

Now let-us-go and so it I-shall-see

fet li rois, “que veoir le vuel:

says the king for to-see it I-wish

le voir m’an aprandront mi oel.”

the truth to-me-thereof will-teach my eyes

Li rois tot maintenant s’an va

The king quite at-once himself-thence goes

jusqu’an la chanbre ou il trova

even-into the chamber where he found

la rëine qui se levoit.

the queen who herself was-rising

Les dras sanglanz an son lit voit

The sheets bloody in her bed he-sees

et el lit Ke tot ansemant,

and in-the bed (of-)Kay quite likewise

et dist: “Dame, or vet malemant

and said Lady now goes ill

se c’est voirs que mes fiz m’a dit.”

if this-is true which my son to-me-has said

Ele respont: “Se Deus m’ait,

She answers So God me-help

onques ne fu nëis de songe

ever not was even of a-dream

contee si male mançonge.

told so wicked a-lie

4845

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Je cuit que Kes li seneschaus

I think that Kay the seneschal

4860 est si cortois et si leaus

is so courteous and so loyal

que il n'an fet mie a mescroire;

that he not-thereof is at-all to be-suspected

ne je ne regiet mie an foire

nor I not cast at-all in fair

mon cors, ne n'an faz livreison.

my body nor not-thereof I-make delivery

Certes, Kes n'est mie teus hon

Certainly Kay not-is at-all such a-man

4865 qu'il me requëist tel outrage,

that-he of-me would-ask such outrage

ne je nen oi onques corage

nor I not had ever desire

del feire ne ja nen avrai."

of-the doing nor ever not I-shall-have

"Sire, mout buen gre vos savrai",

Lord much good thanks to-you I-shall-know

fet Meleaganz a son pere,

says Meleagant to his father

4870 "Se Kes son outrage conpere,

If Kay his outrage pays-for

si que la rëine i et honte.

so that the queen thereat have shame

A vos tient la justise et monte,

To you belongs the justice and pertains

et je vos an requier et pri.

and I you thereof require and pray

Le roi Artu a Kes trāi,

The king Arthur has Kay betrayed

son seignor, qui tant le creoit

his lord who so-much him trusted

que comandee li avoit

that entrusted to-him be-bad

la rien que il plus aime el monde.”

the thing which he most loves in-the world

“Sire, or sofrez que je responde”,

Lord now suffer that I answer

fet Kes, “et si m’escondirai.

says Kay and so I-shall-clear-myself

Ja Deus, quant de cest siegle irai,

Ever God when from this world I-shall-go

ne me face pardon a l’ame,

not me make pardon to the-soul

se onques jui avuec ma dame!

if ever I-lay with my lady

Certes, miauz voldroie estre morz

Certainly rather I-would-wish to-be dead

que teus leidure ne teus torz

than such foulness or such wrong

fust par moi quis vers mon seignor,

were by me sought toward my lord

ne ja mes Deus santé greignor

nor ever more God health greater

que j’ai or androit ne me doint,

than I-have now presently not to-me grant

ainz me praingne morz an cest point,

rather me take death at this moment

4875

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se je onques le me pansai.

if I ever it to-myself thought

4890 Mes de mes plaies itant sai

But of my wounds this-much I-know

qu'anuit m'ont seignié a planté,

that-tonight to-me-they-have bled in plenty

s'an sont mi drap ansanglanté.

so-thereby are my sheets bloodied

Por ce vostre fiz me mescroit,

For this your son me suspects

mes certes il n'i a nul droit."

but certainly he not-therein has any right

4895 Et Meleaganz li respont:

And Meleagant to-him answers

"Si m'äit Deus, träi vos ont

So me-help God betrayed you have

li deable et li vif maufé.

the devils and the living fiends

Trop fustes anuit eschaufé,

Too-much you-were tonight heated

et por ce que trop vos grevastes

and for this that too-much yourself you-strained

4900 voz plaies sanz dote escrevastes.

your wounds without doubt you-burst

Ne vos i vaut neant controeeve:

Not to-you thereto avails anything invention

li sans d'anbedeus parz le prueve;

the blood of-both sides it proves

bien le veons et bien i pert.

well it we-see and well thereat appears

Droiz est que son forfet conpert

Right is that his crime be-pay-for

qui si an est provez repris.

who so thereof is proved caught

Ains chevaliers de vostre pris

Ever knight of your worth

ne fist si grant descovenue,

not did so great an-unseemliness

si vos an est honte avenue.”

so to-you thereof is shame come

“Sire, sire”, fet Kes au roi,

Lord lord says Kay to-the king

“je deffandrai ma dame et moi

I shall-defend my lady and myself

de ce que vostre fiz m’amet;

from this which your son to-me-imputes

an painne et an travail me met,

in pain and in travail me be-puts

mes certes a tort me travaille.”

but certainly with wrong me be-torments

“Vos n’avez mestier de bataille”,

You not-have need of battle

fet li rois, “que trop vos dolez.”

says the king for too-much you suffer

“Sire, se sofrir le volez,

Lord if to-allow it you-wish

4905

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einsi malades con je sui

thus sick as I am

me conbatrai ancontre lui

myself I-shall-fight against him

et mosterrai que je n'ai coupe

and I-shall-show that I not-have fault

4920 an cest blasme don il m'ancoupe."

in this blame whereof he me-accuses

Mes la rëine mandé ot

But the queen summoned had

tot celeemant Lancelot,

quite secretly Lancelot

et dit au roi que ele avra

and says to-the king that she will-have

un chevalier qui deffandra

a knight who will-defend

4925 le seneschal de ceste chose

the seneschal from this matter

vers Meleagant, se il ose.

against Meleagant if he dares

Et Meleaganz dist tantost:

And Meleagant said at-once

"Nul chevalier ne vos an ost

Any knight not to-you thereof I-except

vers cui la bataille n'anpraingne

against whom the battle I-not-undertake

4930 tant que li uns vaincuz remaingne,

until that the one vanquished remain

nëis s'il estoit uns jeanz."

even if-be were a giant

A tant vint Lanceloz leanz,

At that came Lancelot in-there

s'ot de chevaliers si grant rote

and-be-had of knights so great a-company

que plainne an fu la sale tote.

that full thereof was the hall entire

Maintenant que il fu venuz,

As-soon as he was come

oiant toz, juenes et chenuz,

bearing all young and boary

la rëine la chose conte

the queen the thing tells

et dist: "Lanceloz, ceste honte

and said Lancelot this shame

m'a ci Meleaganz amise.

to-me-has here Meleagant laid

An mescreance m'an a mise

In suspicion me-thereby he-has put

vers trestoz ces qui l'öent dire

toward quite-all those who it-bear say

se vos ne l'an faites desdire.

if you not him-thereof make unsay

Anuit, ce dist, a Kes jëu

Tonight this he-says has Kay lain

o moi, por ce qu'il a vëu

with me for this that-be has seen

mes dras et les suens de sanc tainz;

my sheets and the his with blood stained

4935

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et dit que toz an est atainz
and says that wholly thereof he-is convicted
 se vers lui ne se puet deffandre
if against him not himself he-can defend
 ou se autre ne viaut anprendre
or if another not wishes to-undertake
 la bataille por lui eidier.”
the battle for him to-help

4950 “Ja ne vos an covient pleidier”,
Ever not to-you thereof behooves to-plead
 fet Lanceloz, “la ou je soie.
says Lancelot there where I am

Ja Deu ne place qu’an mescroie
Ever God not please that-one suspect
 ne vos ne lui de tel afeire!
neither you nor him of such a-matter
 Prez sui de la bataille feire,
Ready I-am of the battle to-do

4955 que il onques nel se pansa,
that he ever not-it to-himself thought
 se an moi point de deffanse a.
if in me a-while of defense there-is

A mon pooir l’an deffandrai,
To my power him-thereof I-shall-defend
 por lui la bataille anprendrai.”
for him the battle I-shall-undertake

Et Meleaganz avant saut
And Meleagant forward leaps

4960 et dist: “Se Damedeus me saut,
and said So Lord-God me save

ce vuel je bien et mout me siet:

this wish I well and much me pleases

ja ne panst nus que il me griet.”

ever not let-think anyone that it me grieves

Et Lanceloz dist: “Sire rois,

And Lancelot said Lord king

je sai de causes et de lois

I know of causes and of laws

et de plez et de jugemanz:

and of pleas and of judgments

ne doit estre sanz seiremanz

not ought to-be without oaths

bataille de tel mescreance.”

a-battle of such suspicion

Meleaganz sanz demorance

Meleagant without delay

li respont mout isnelemant:

to-him answers very swiftly

“Bien i soient li seiremant,

Well thereto let-be the oaths

et vaingnent li saint or androit,

and let-come the saints now presently

car je sai bien que je ai droit.”

for I know well that I have right

Et Lanceloz ancontre dit:

And Lancelot in-answer says

“Onques, se Damedeus m’äit,

Ever so Lord-God me-help

4965

4970

- 4975 Ke le seneschal ne conut
Kay the seneschal not knew
 qui de tel oevre le mescrut."
who of such a-work him suspected
 Maintenant lor chevaus demandent,
At-once their horses they-ask-for
 lor armes apporter comandent.
their arms to-bring they-command
 L'an lor aporte tost a mont;
One to-them brings soon to above
 4980 vaslet les arment: armé sont.
young-men them arm armed they-are
 Et ja resont li saint fors tret:
And now again-are the saints forth drawn
 Meleaganz avant se tret
Meleagant forward himself draws
 et Lanceloz dejoste lui,
and Lancelot beside him
 si s'agenoillent anbedui;
and themselves-they-kneel both
 4985 et Meleaganz tant sa main
and Meleagant stretches his hand
 as sainz et jure tot de plain:
to-the saints and swears quite in full
 "Einsi m'ait Deus et cist sainz,
So me-help God and these saints

Kes li seneschaus fu conpainz

Kay the seneschal was companion

anuit la rëine an son lit

tonight to-the queen in her bed

et ot de li tot son delit.”

and had of her all his delight

“Et je t’an lief come parjur”,

And I thee-thereof accuse as perjurer

fet Lanceloz, “et si rejur

says Lancelot and so I-swear-back

qu’il n’i jut ne ne la santi.

that-be not-there lay nor not her touched

Et de celui qui a manti

And of him who has lied

praingne Deus, se lui plect, vanjance

take God if to-him it-please vengeance

et face voire demonstrance.

and make true demonstration

Mes un autre ancor an ferai

But one other yet thereof I-shall-make

des seiremanz et jurerai,

of-the oaths and I-shall-swear

cui qu’il enuit ne cui qu’il poist,

whom that-it vex nor whom that-it grieve

que se il hui venir me loist

that if it today to-come to-me be-permitted

de Meleagant au dessus,

of Meleagant to-the above

tant m’ait Deus et non ja plus,

so me-help God and not ever more

4990

4995

5000

et cez reliques qui sont ci,

and these relics which are here

que ja de lui n'avrai merci."

that ever of him not-I-shall-have mercy

5005 Li rois de rien ne s'esjöi

The king of anything not himself-rejoiced

quant icest seiremant öi.

when this oath he-heard

The Dwarf's Treachery

XIX

They break both lances to the fists and go at each other with drawn swords until the king begs the queen to let them be parted. She consents, and Lancelot's arm stops in the air while Meleagant hacks on. Riding for the water bridge, Lancelot leaves his company on a dwarf's promise and is taken. The rest wait, then go on and find Gawain sunk in the river in his hauberk, surfacing and going under by turns; they hook him out half drowned. The king's messengers search the whole realm afterward and bring back nothing true.

Quant li seiremant furent fet,

When the oaths were made

lor cheval lor furent fors tret,

their horses to-them were forth drawn

bel et buen de totes bontez.

fair and good of all virtues

5010 Sor le suen est chascuns montez,

Upon the his is each mounted

et li uns contre l'autre muet

and the one against the-other moves

tant con chevaus porter le puet;

as-fast as horse to-carry him can

et el plus grant cors des chevaus

and in-the most great course of-the horses

fiert li uns l'autre des vasaus,

strikes the one the-other of-the vassals

si qu'il ne lor remeint nes poinz

so that-it not to-them remains not-even a-point

des deus lances jusqu'anz es poinz.

of-the two lances right-into in-the fists

Et li uns l'autre a terre porte,

And the one the-other to ground bears

mes ne font mie chiere morte,

but not they-make at-all countenance dead

que tot maintenant se relievant

for quite at-once themselves they-raise

et tant com il pueent se grievent

and as-much as they can each-other hurt

as tranchanz des espees nues.

with-the edges of-the swords naked

Les estanceles vers les nues

The sparks toward the clouds

totes ardanx des hiaumes saillent.

all burning from-the helms leap

5015

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Par si grant ire s'antrassailent

With so great wrath each-other-they-assail

5025 as espees que nues tienent

with-the swords which naked they-bold

que si com eles vont et vienent

that just as they go and come

s'antrancontrent et s'antrefierent,

each-other-they-meet and each-other-they-strike

ne tant reposer ne se quierent

nor so-much to-rest not themselves they-seek

qu'alainne rebrandre lor loise.

that-breath to-take-again to-them be-allowed

5030 Li rois cui mout an grieve et poise

The king whom much thereat grieves and weighs

an a la rëine apelee,

thereupon has the queen called

qui apoiier s'estoit alec

who to-lean herself-had gone

a mont as loges de la tor:

to above to-the galleries of the tower

por Deu, li dist, le criator,

for God to-her he-said the creator

5035 que ele departir les lest!

that she to-part them let

"Tot quanque vos an siet me plest",

All whatever to-you thereof suits to-me pleases

fet la rëine a buene foi;

says the queen in good faith

"Ja n'an feroiz rien contre moi."

Ever not-thereof you-will-do anything against me

Lanceloz a bien antandu

Lancelot has well heard

que la rëine a respondu

what the queen has answered

a ce que li rois li requist,

to this which the king of-her asked

ne puis conbatre ne se quist,

nor after to-fight not himself sought

ainz a tantost guerpi le chaple;

rather he-has at-once abandoned the bewing

et Meleaganz fiert et chaple

and Meleagant strikes and bews

sor lui, que reposer ne quiert;

upon him for to-rest not he-seeks

mes li rois antredeus se fiert

but the king between-the-two himself strikes

et tient son fil, qui dit et jure

and holds his son who says and swears

que il n'a de pes feire cure;

that he not-has of peace to-make care

bataille viaut, n'a soing de pes.

battle he-wants not-be-has care of peace

Et li rois li dit: "Car te tes

And the king to-him says Now thee be-still

et me croi, si feras que sages;

and me believe so thou-wilt-do as a-wise-man

ja certes honte ne damages

ever certainly shame nor harm

ne t'an vandra se tu me croiz,

not to-thee-thereof will-come if thou me believest

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si feras ce que feire doiz!

and thou-wilt-do that which to-do thou-oughtest

5055 Don ne te sovient il que tu

Then not thee recalls it that thou

as an la cort le roi Artu

hast in the court of-the king Arthur

contre lui bataille arramie?

against him a-battle pledged

Et de ce ne dotes tu mie

And of this not doubtest thou at-all

qu'il ne te fust plus granz enors,

that-it — to-thee were more great honor

5060 se la te venoit biens qu'aillors?"

if there to-thee came good than-elsewhere

Ce dit li rois por essayer

This says the king for to-try

se il le porroit apaiier,

if he him could appease

tant qu'il l'apeise et ses depart.

so-that that-he him-appeases and so-them parts

Et Lanceloz, cui mout fu tart

And Lancelot to-whom much was late

5065 de mon seignor Gauvain trover,

of my lord Gawain to-find

an vient congié querre et rover

thereupon comes leave to-seeking and to-ask

au roi et puis a la rëine.

of-the king and then of the queen

Par le congié d'eus s'achemine

By the leave of-them he-sets-out

vers le pont dessoz eve errant,

toward the bridge beneath water journeying

s'ot après lui rote mout grant

and-he-had after him a-company very great

de chevaliers qui le siuoient;

of knights who him followed

mes assez de teus i aloient,

but enough of such thither went

don bel li fust s'il remassissent.

whereof fair to-him were if-they stayed-behind

Lor jornees mout bien fornissent

Their day's-rides very well they-accomplish

tant que le pont soz eve aprochent,

until that the bridge under water they-approach

mes d'une liue ancor n'i tochent.

but by-a league yet not-thereto they-touch

Einçois que il si pres venissent

Before that they so near came

del pont que veoir le pöissent,

of-the bridge that to-see it they-could

uns nains a l'ancontre lor vint

a dwarf to the-meeting to-them came

sor un grant chaceor, et tint

upon a great hunter and held

une corgiee por chacier

a whip for to-drive

son chaceor et menacier.

his hunter and to-threaten

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Et maintenant a demandé

And at-once he-has asked

si com il li fu comandé:

just as it to-him was commanded

5085 “Li queus de vos est Lanceloz?

The which of you is Lancelot

Nel me celez, je sui des voz;

Not-it to-me hide I am of-the yours

mes dites le sëuremant,

but say it securely

que por voz granz biens le demant.”

for for your great good it I-ask

Lanceloz li respont por lui

Lancelot to-him answers for himself

5090 et dit: “Il mëismes je sui,

and says He himself I am

cil que tu demandes et quiers.”

he whom thou askest and seekest

“Ha!” fet li nains, “frans chevaliers,

Ab says the dwarf noble knight

leisse cez janx et si me croi:

leave these folk and so me believe

vien t’an toz seus ansamble o moi,

come thyself-thence quite alone together with me

5095 qu’an mout buen leu mener te vuel.

for-in very good place to-lead thee I-wish

Ja nus ne te siue por l’uel,

Ever anyone not thee follow for the-eye

ainz vos atendent ci androit,

rather you let-them-await here on-the-spot

que nos revandrons or androit.”

for we shall-return now presently

Cil qui de nul mal ne se dote

He who of any evil not himself fears

a fet remenoir sa jant tote

has made stay-behind his folk entire

et siut le nain qui trāi l'a.

and follows the dwarf who betrayed him-has

Et ses janz qui l'atendent la

And his folk who him-await there

le pueent longuemant atandre;

him they-may long await

que cil n'ont nul talant del randre,

for those not-have any desire of-the giving-back

qui l'ont pris et seisi an sont.

who him-have taken and seized thereof are

Et ses janz si grant duel an font

And his folk so great grief thereof make

quant il ne vient ne ne repeire,

when he not comes nor not returns

qu'il ne sevent qu'il puissent feire.

that-they not know what-they might do

Tuit dient que trāiz les a

All say that betrayed them has

li nains, et si lor an pesa.

the dwarf and so to-them thereof it-weighed

Oiseuse seroit de l'anquerre:

Idle it-would-be of the-asking

dolant le comacent a querre,

grieving him they-begin to seek

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5110

mes ne sevent ou il le truissent

but not they-know where they him may-find

ne de quel part querre le puissent;

nor in what direction to-seek him they-may

5115 s'an prannent consoil tuit ansanble.

so-thereof they-take counsel all together

A ce s'acordent, ce me sanble,

To this agree this to-me seems

li plus resnable et li plus sage,

the most reasonable and the most wise

qu'il an iront jusqu'au passage

that-they thence will-go as-far-as-the passage

del pont soz eve, qui est pres,

of-the bridge under water which is near

5120 et querront Lancelot après

and will-seek Lancelot after

par le los mon seignor Gauvain,

by the counsel of-my lord Gawain

s'il le truevent n'a bois n'a plain.

if-they him find nor-in wood nor-in plain

A cest consoil trestuit s'acordent

To this counsel quite-all agree

si bien que de rien n'i descordent.

so well that in anything not-therein they-disagree

5125 Vers le pont soz eve s'an vont,

Toward the bridge under water themselves-thence go

et tantost qu'il viennent au pont
and as-soon as-they come to-the bridge

ont mon seignor Gauvain vëu
they-have my lord Gawain seen

del pont trabuchié et chëu
from-the bridge toppled and fallen

an l'ëve qui mout est parfonde.
into the-water which very is deep

Une ore essort et autre afonde,
One hour he-surfaces and another he-sinks

or le voient et or le perdent.
now him they-see and now him they-lose

Tant tressaillent que il l'aerdent
So-much they-leap that they him-grasp

a rains, a perches et a cros.
with branches with poles and with hooks

N'avoit que le hauberc el dos
Not-he-had but the hauberk on-the back

et sor le chief le hiaume assis,
and upon the head the helm set

qui des autres valoit bien dis,
which of-the others was-worth fully ten

et les chauce de fer chauciees
and the bose of iron shod

de sa suor anröilliees;
with his sweat rusted

car mout avoit soferz travaux,
for much he-had suffered toils

5130

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- 5140 et mainz periz et mainz assauz
and many perils and many assaults
 avoit trespassez et vaincuz.
he-had passed-through and overcome
 Sa lance estoit et ses escuz
His lance was and his shield
 et ses chevaus a l'autre rive;
and his horse on the-other bank
 mes ne cuident pas que il vive
but not they-think at-all that he lives
 5145 cil qui l'ont tret de l'eve fors;
those who him-have drawn of the-water out
 car il an avoit mout el cors,
for he thereof had much in-the body
 ne jusque tant qu'il l'ot randue
nor until so-much that-he it-had given-back
 n'ont de lui parole antandue.
not-they-have of him word heard
 Mes quant sa parole et sa voiz
But when his speech and his voice
 5150 et del cuer delivre ot la doiz,
and of-the heart free he-had the spring
 qu'an le pot öir et antandre,
so-that-one him could hear and understand
 au plus tost que il se pot prendre
at-the most soon that he himself could take
 a la parole, si s'i prist:
to the speech so himself-thereto he-took

lués de la rēine requist

straightway of the queen he-asked

a ces qui devant lui estoient,

of those who before him were

se nule novele an savoient.

if any news thereof they-knew

Et cil qui li ont respondu,

And those who to-him have answered

d'avuec le roi Bademagu,

from-with the king Bademagu

dient, qu'ele ne part nule ore,

say that-she not departs any hour

qui mout la sert et mout l'enore.

who much her serves and much her-honors

"Vint la puis nus an ceste terre",

Came there since anyone into this land

fet mes sire Gauvains, "requerre?"

says my lord Gawain to-seek

Et il li respondent: "Öil".

And they to-him answer Yes

"Qui?" — "Lanceloz del Lac", font il,

Who Lancelot of-the Lake say they

"qui passa au pont de l'espee,

who passed at-the bridge of the-sword

si l'a rescosse et delivree,

and her-has rescued and delivered

et avuec li nos autres toz;

and with her us others all

mes trāiz nos an a uns goz,

but betrayed us thereof has a cur

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uns nains boçuz et rechigniez.

a dwarf humpbacked and scowling

5170 Leidemant nos a angigniez,

Foully us he-has tricked

qui Lancelot nos a fortret.

who Lancelot from-us has stolen

Nos ne savons qu'il an a fet."

We not know what-he thereof has done

"Et quant?" fet mes sire Gauvains.

And when says my lord Gawain

"Sire, hui nos a ce fet li nains

Lord today to-us has this done the dwarf

5175 mout pres de ci, quant il et nos

very near of here when he and we

veniiemes ancontre vos."

were-coming to-meet you

"Et comant s'est il contenuz

And how himself-has he borne

puis qu'an cest päis fu venuz?"

since that-into this land he-was come

Et cil li comacent a dire,

And they to-him begin to tell

5180 si li recontent tire a tire

and to-him recount point by point

si qu'un tot seul mot n'i oblient,

so that-a quite single word not-therein they-forget

et de la rëine li diënt,

and of the queen to-him they-say

qu'ele l'atant et dit por voir

that-she him-awaits and says for truth

que riens ne la feroit movoir

that anything not her would-make move

del päis tant qu'ele le voie

from-the land until that-she him see

ou novele oie qu'ele croie.

or news hear which-she believe

Mes sire Gauvains lor respont:

My lord Gawain to-them answers

“Quant nos partirons de cest pont,

When we shall-depart from this bridge

irons nos querre Lancelot.”

shall-go we to-seek Lancelot

N'i a un seul qui miauz ne lot

Not-there is a single-one who better not advises

qu'a la rëine aillent einçois,

that-to the queen they-go first

si le fera querre li rois;

and him will-make seek the king

car il cuident qu'an traïson

for they think that-in treason

l'et fet ses fiz metre an prison,

him-has made his son put in prison

Meleaganz, qui mout le het.

Meleagant who much him hates

Ja an leu, se li rois le set,

Ever in place if the king it knows

5185

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ne sera qu'il nel face randre:

not will-be that-he not-him make give-back

de sœur s'i pueent atandre.

of surety themselves-thereon they-may rely

A cest consoil tuit s'acorderent

To this counsel all agreed

5200 et tot maintenant s'aroterent

and quite at-once they-set-out

tant que vers la cort s'apochierent

until that toward the court they-drew-near

ou la rëine et li rois ierent,

where the queen and the king were

et Keus avuec, li seneschaus,

and Kay withal the seneschal

et s'i estoit li desleaus

and there-too was the disloyal-one

5205 de traison plains et conblez,

of treason full and heaped

qui mout leidemant a troblez

who very foully has troubled

por Lancelot toz ces qui vienent.

for Lancelot all those who come

Por mort et por trãi se tientent,

For dead and for betrayed themselves they-bold

s'an font grant duel, que mout lor poise.

so-thereof they-make great grief for much to-them it-grieves

5210 N'est pas la novele cortoise

Not-is at-all the news courteous

qui la rëine cest duel porte;

which to-the queen this grief carries

neporquant ele s'an deporte

nevertheless she herself-thereof bears-up

au plus belemant qu'ele puet.

in-the most fairly that-she can

Por mon seignor Gauvain l'estuet

For my lord Gawain it-bebooves

auques sofrir et si fet ele.

5215

somewhat to-endure and so does she

Et neporquant mie ne cele

And nevertheless at-all not she-hides

son duel que auques n'i apeire.

her grief that somewhat not-thereof appears

Et joie et duel li estuet feire:

Both joy and grief to-her it-bebooves to-make

por Lancelot a le cuer vain,

for Lancelot she-has the heart empty

et contre mon seignor Gauvain

5220

and toward my lord Gawain

mostre sanblant de passejoie.

she-shows semblance of surpassing-joy

N'i a nul qui la novele oie

Not-there is anyone who the news hears

de Lancelot, qui est perduz,

of Lancelot who is lost

n'an soit dolanz et esperduz.

not-thereat be grieving and dismayed

- 5225 De mon seignor Gauvain ěust
Of my lord Gawain would-have
 li rois joie et mout li plĕust
the king joy and much to-him would-have-pleased
 sa venue et sa conoissance;
his coming and his acquaintance
 mes tel duel a et tel pesance
but such grief he-has and such heaviness
 de Lancelot qui est trāiz,
for Lancelot who is betrayed
- 5230 que maz an est et esbāiz.
that dazed thereof he-is and bewildered
 Et la rĕine le semont
And the queen him urges
 et prie qu'a val et a mont
and prays that-to below and to above
 par sa terre querre le face
through his land to-seek him he-make
 tot sanz demore et sanz espace,
quite without delay and without interval
- 5235 et mes sire Gauvains et Kes:
and my lord Gawain and Kay
 un trestot seul n'i a remĕs
a quite single-one not-there has remained
 qui de ce nel prit et semoingne.
who of this not-him beg and urge
 “Sor moi leissiez ceste besoingne”,
Upon me leave this business
 fet li rois, “si n'an parlez ja!
says the king and not-thereof speak ever

Que ja an sui prez grant piece a.

5240

For already thereof I-am ready great while ago

Tot sanz proiere et sanz requeste

Quite without prayer and without request

sera bien feite ceste anqueste.”

will-be well made this inquest

Chascuns l'an ancline et soploie,

Each to-him-thereof bows and entreats

et li rois maintenant anvoie

and the king at-once sends

par son reaume ses messages,

5245

through his realm his messengers

serjanz bien conëuz et sages,

sergeants well known and wise

qui ont par tote la contree

who have through all the country

de lui novele demandee.

of him news asked

Par tot ont la novele anquise,

Through everywhere they-have the news inquired

mes n'an ont nule voire aprise.

5250

but not-thereof they-have any true learned

N'an truevent point, si s'an retornent

Not-thereof they-find a-whit so themselves-thence return

la ou li chevalier sejoignent,

there where the knights are-staying

Gauvains et Kes et tuit li autre,

Gawain and Kay and all the others

qui dient que lance sor fautre,

who say that lance on rest

5255 trestuit armé, querre l'iront;
quite-all armed to-seek him-they-will-go
 ja autrui n'i anvoieront.
ever another not-thither they-will-send

The Letter, and the Tournament Cried

XX

A letter comes to Bademagu's court in Lancelot's name: he is with Arthur, and the queen and Gawain and Kay may come. There are tokens in it, and they believe it. They ride home rejoicing and find him not there. Meanwhile the ladies of the land have cried a tournament at Noauz to get themselves husbands. The news reaches the house where Lancelot is shut up, and his keeper's wife lends him her husband's vermilion arms, taking his love and his oath to come back. A herald finds him on a poor bed and runs out crying that the measurer has come.

Un jor après mangier estoient
One day after eating they-were
 tuit an la sale ou il s'armoient,
all in the hall where they armed-themselves
 s'estoit venu a l'estovoir,
and-it-was come to the-necessity

5260 qu'il n'i avoit que del movoir,
that-there not-thereto was but of-the setting-out
 quant uns vaslez leanz antra
when a young-man therein entered
 et parmi eus outre passa
and through them beyond passed
 tant qu'il vint devant la rëine,
until that-he came before the queen

qui n'avoit pas color rosine,

who not-had at-all color rosy

que por Lancelot duel avoit

for over Lancelot grief she-had

tel, don noveles ne savoit,

such whereof news not she-knew

que la color an a muëe.

that the color thereof she-has changed

Et li vaslez l'a saluëe,

And the young-man her-has greeted

et le roi qui de li fu pres,

and the king who of her was near

et puis toz les autres après,

and then all the others after

et Keu et mon seignor Gauvain.

and Kay and my lord Gawain

Unes letres tint an sa main,

Some letters he-beld in his hand

ses tant le roi, et il les prant.

them he-holds-out to-the king and he them takes

A tel qui de rien n'i mesprant

To such-a-one who in anything not-therein errs

les fist li rois oiant toz lire.

them made the king in-hearing-of all read

Cil qui les lut lor sot bien dire

He who them read to-them knew well to-say

ce qu'il vit escrit an l'alue,

that which-he saw written in the-parchment

5265

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et dit que Lanceloz salue

and says that Lancelot greets

le roi come son buen seignor,

the king as his good lord

5280 si le mercie de l'enor

and him thanks for the-honor

qu'il li a faite et del servise,

which-he to-him has done and for-the service

come cil qui est a devise

as he who is at disposal

trestoz an son comandement.

quite-all at his commandment

Et sachiez bien certainnement

And know well certainly

5285 qu'il est avuec le roi Artu,

that-he is with the king Arthur

plains de santé et de vertu,

full of health and of strength

et dit qu'a la rëine mande

and says that-to the queen he-sends-word

qu'or s'an vaingne, s'ele comande,

that-now herself-thence come if-she commands

et mes sire Gauvains et Kes;

and my lord Gawain and Kay

5290 et s'i ot antresaingnes tes

and there-too were tokens such

qu'il durent croire, et bien le crurent.

that-they must believe and well it they-believed

Mout lié et mout joiant an furent:

Very glad and very joyful thereof they-were

de joie bruit tote la corz,

with joy resounds all the court

et l'andemain quant il fu jorz

and the-next-day when it was day

dient qu'il s'an voldront torner.

5295

they-say that-they themselves-thence will-wish to-turn

Et quant ce vint a l'ajorner,

And when this came to the-dawning

si s'aparoillent et atorment:

so they-make-ready and array-themselves

lievent et montent, si s'an tornent.

they-rise and mount and themselves-thence turn

Et li rois les siut et conduit

And the king them follows and escorts

a grant joie et a grant deduit

5300

with great joy and with great delight

une grant piece de la voie;

a great stretch of the way

fors de sa terre les convoie,

out of his land them he-conducts

et quant il les an ot fors mis,

and when he them thence had out put

a la rëine a congié pris,

of the queen he-bas leave taken

et puis a toz comunement.

5305

and then of all in-common

Et la rëine sagemant

And the queen wisely

au congié prandre le mercie

at-the leave taking him thanks

de ce que il l'a tant servie,

for this that he her-has so-much served

et ses deus braz au col li met,

and her two arms at-the neck to-him puts

5310 si li offre et si li promet

and to-him offers and so to-him promises

son servise et le son seignor:

her service and the of-her lord

ne li puet prometre greignor.

not to-him she-can promise greater

Et mes sire Gauvains aussi

And my lord Gawain likewise

com a seignor et a ami,

as to lord and to friend

5315 et Kes aussi, tuit li prometent.

and Kay likewise all to-him promise

Tantost a la voie se metent,

At-once on the way themselves they-put

si les comande a Deu li rois.

and them commends to God the king

Toz les autres après cez trois

All the others after these three

salue, et puis si s'an retourne.

he-greets and then so himself-thence returns

Et la rëine ne sejourne

5320

And the queen not tarries

nul jor de tote la semaine,

any day of all the week

ne la rote que ele mainne,

nor the company which she leads

tant qu'a la cort vint la novele,

until that-to the court came the news

qui au roi Artu fu mout bele,

which to-the king Arthur was very fair

de la rëine qui aproche,

5325

of the queen who draws-near

et de son neveu li retoche

and of his nephew to-him it-touches

granz joie au cuer et granz leesce,

great joy at-the heart and great gladness

qu'il cuidoit que par sa proesce

for-he thought that by his prowess

soit la rëine revenue,

be the queen come-back

et Kes et l'autre sanz menue;

5330

and Kay and the-other folk lesser

mes autrement est qu'il ne cuide.

but otherwise it-is than-he — thinks

Por eus tote la vile vuide,

For them all the town empties

si lor vont trestuit a l'ancontre,

and to-them go quite-all to the-meeting

et dit chascuns qui les ancontre,

and says each who them meets

5335 ou soit chevaliers ou vilains:

whether be-he knight or churl

“Bien vaingne mes sire Gauvains,

Well come my lord Gawain

qui la rëine a ramenee,

who the queen has brought-back

et mainte dame escheitvee,

and many-a lady made-captive

et maint prison nos a randu!”

and many-a prisoner to-us has given-back

5340 Et Gauvains lor a respondu:

And Gawain to-them has answered

“Seignor, de neant m’alosez.

Lords for nothing me-you-praise

Del dire hui mes vos reposez,

Of-the saying today more yourselves rest

qu’a moi nule chose n’an monte.

for-to me any thing not-thereof pertains

Ceste enors me vaut une honte,

This honor to-me is-worth a shame

5345 que je n’i ving n’a tans n’a ore;

for I not-thither came nor-in time nor-in hour

failli i ai par ma demore.

failed thereat I-have through my delay

Mes Lanceloz a tans i vint,

But Lancelot in time thither came

cui si granz enors i avint

to-whom so great honor thereat befell

qu’ains n’ot si grant nus chevaliers.”

that-ever not-had so great any knight

“Ou est il donc, biaux sire chiers,

Where is he then fair lord dear

quant nos nel veons ci elués?”

since we not-him see here on-the-spot

“Ou?” fet mes sire Gauvains lués;

Where says my lord Gawain straightway

“a la cort mon seignor le roi.

at the court of-my lord the king

Don n'i est il?” — “Nenil, par foi,

Then not-there is he No by faith

ne an tote ceste contree.

nor in all this country

Puis que ma dame an fu menee,

Since that my lady thence was led

nule novele n'an öïmes.”

any news not-thereof we-heard

Et mes sire Gauvains lors primes

And my lord Gawain then first

sot que les letres fausses furent,

knew that the letters false were

qui les träïrent et deçurent;

which them betrayed and deceived

par les letres sont decëu.

by the letters they-are deceived

Lors resont tuit a duel mëu:

Then again-are all to grief moved

a cort viennent lor duel menant,

to court they-come their grief making

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et li rois trestot maintenant

and the king quite at-once

5365 anquiert noveles de l'afeire.

inquires news of the-affair

Assez fu qui li sot retreire

Enough there-was who to-him knew to-recount

comant Lanceloz a ovré,

how Lancelot has wrought

comant par lui sont recovré

how by him are recovered

la rëine et tuit li prison,

the queen and all the prisoners

5370 comant et par quel träison

how and by what treason

li nains lor anbla et fortrest.

the dwarf from-them stole and took-away

Ceste chose le roi desplest

This thing to-the king displeases

et mout l'an poise et mout li grieve,

and much him-thereof it-weighs and much to-him it-grieves

mes joie le cuer li soslieve,

but joy the heart to-him uplifts

5375 qu'il a si grant de la rëine,

which-he has so great of the queen

que li diaus por la joie fine;

that the grief through the joy ends

quant la rien a, que il plus viaut,

when the thing he-has which he most wants

del remenant petit se diaut.

of-the remainder little himself he-grieves

Demantres que fors del päis
Meanwhile while out of-the land
 fu la rëine, ce m'est vis, 5380
was the queen this to-me-is seeming
 pristrent un parlemant antr'eles
they-took a parley among-themselves
 les dames et les dameiseles,
the ladies and the damsels
 qui desconseilliees estoient,
who unadvised were
 et distrent qu'eles se voldroient
and said that-they themselves would-wish
 marier mout prochainement, 5385
to-marry very shortly
 s'anpristrent a cel parlemant
so-they-undertook at that parley
 une aatine et un tornoi.
a contest and a tournament
 Vers celi de Pomelegloi
Against her of Pomelegloi
 l'anprist la dame de Noauz.
it-undertook the lady of Noauz
 De ces qui le feront noauz 5390
Of those who it will-do worse
 ne tandront parole de rien,
not they-will-bold word of anything
 mes de ces qui le feront bien
but of those who it will-do well
 dient que les voldront avoir;
they-say that them they-will-wish to-have

sel firent crier et savoir

so-it they-made cry and know

5395 par totes les terres prochaines

through all the lands near

et autressi par les loingtaines,

and likewise through the far-off

et firent a mout lonc termine

and they-made at very long term

crier le jor de l'atine

cry the day of the-contest

por ce que plus i eüst sanz.

for this that more thereat there-be folk

5400 Et la rëine vint dedanz

And the queen came within

le termine que mis i orent;

the term which set thereto they-had

et maintenant qu'eles le sorent

and as-soon as-they it knew

que la rëine estoit venue,

that the queen was come

la voie ont cele part tenue

the way they-have that side taken

5405 les plusors tant qu'a la cort vindrent

the most so-far that-to the court they-came

devant le roi, et si le tindrent

before the king and so him they-held

mout an grant, qu'un don lor donast

much in earnest that-a boon to-them he-give

et lor vouloir lor otreast.

and their wish to-them be-grant

Et il lor a acreanté,

And he to-them has promised

ainz qu'il s'eüst lor volanté,

before that-he knew their will

qu'il feroit quanqu'eles voldroient.

that-he would-do whatever-they would-wish

Lors li distrent qu'eles voloient

Then to-him they-said that-they wished

que il sofrist que la rëine

that he suffer that the queen

venist veoir lor aatine.

come to-see their contest

Et cil qui rien veer ne siaut

And he who anything to-refuse not is-wont

dist que lui plest s'ele le viaut.

said that to-him it-pleases if-she it wishes

Celes qui mout liees an sont

Those-women who very glad thereof are

devant la rëine s'an vont,

before the queen themselves-thence go

si li dïent eneslepas:

and to-her say straightway

"Dame, ne nos retolez pas

Lady not from-us take-back at-all

ce que li rois nos a doné."

that which the king to-us has given

Et ele lor a demandé:

And she to-them has asked

"Ques chose est ce? nel me celez!"

What thing is this not-it to-me hide

5410

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Lors li diënt: "Se vos volez

Then to-her they-say If you wish

5425 a nostre aatine venir,

to our contest to-come

ja ne vos an quiert retenir

ever not you thereof seeks to-keep

ne ja nel vos contredira."

nor ever not-it to-you he-will-forbid

Et ele dist qu'ele i ira

And she said that-she thither will-go

des que il le congié l'an done.

since that he the leave to-her-thereof gives

5430 Tantost par tote la corone

At-once through all the crown

les dameiseles an anvoient

the damsels thereof send-word

et mandent que eles devoient

and send that they were-to

la rëine amener au jor

the queen to-bring on-the day

qui estoit criëz de l'estor.

which was cried of the-combat

5435 La novele par tot ala

The news through everywhere went

et loing et pres et ça et la,

both far and near and here and there

s'est tant alee et estandue

and-it-is so-much gone and spread

qu'el reaume fu expandue,

that-in-the realm it-was diffused

don nus retorner ne soloit;

whence anyone to-return not was-wont

mes ore, qui onques voloit,

but now whoever ever wished

avoit et l'antree et l'issue,

bad both the-entry and the-exit

que ja ne li fust deffandue.

so-that ever not to-him it-was forbidden

Tant est par le reaume alee

So-much is through the realm gone

la novele dite et contee,

the news told and recounted

qu'ele vint chiés un seneschal

that-it came to-the-house-of a seneschal

Meleagant le desleal,

of-Meleagant the disloyal

le trāitor, que maus feus arde!

the traitor whom evil fire burn

Cil avoit Lancelot an garde:

He had Lancelot in keeping

chiés lui l'avoit an prison mis

at-the-house-of him him-be-had in prison put

Meleaganz ses anemis,

Meleagant his enemy

qui le haoit de grant häine.

who him hated with great hatred

La novele de l'aatine

The news of the-contest

sot Lanceloz, l'ore et le terme.

knew Lancelot the-hour and the term

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5445

5450

Puis ne furent si oeil sanz lerne

Thereafter not were his eyes without tear

5455 ne ses cuers liez, que il le sot.

nor his heart glad since he it knew

Dolant et pansif Lancelot

Sorrowing and pensive Lancelot

vit la dame de la meison,

saw the lady of the house

sel mist a consoil a reison:

and-him put to counsel to talk

“Sire, por Deu et por vostre ame,

Lord for God and for your soul

5460 voir me conoissiez”, fet la dame,

truth to-me confess says the lady

“por quoi vos estes si changeiez.

for why you are so changed

Vos ne bevez ne ne mangiez,

You not drink nor not eat

ne ne vos voi joer ne rire.

nor not you I-see play nor laugh

Sëuremant me poez dire

Safely to-me you-can say

5465 vostre panser et vostre enui.”

your thought and your trouble

“Ha! dame, se je dolanz sui,

Ab lady if I sorrowing am

por Deu, ne vos an merveilliez!

for God not you thereat marvel

Que voir mout sui desconseilliez

For truly much I-am helpless

quant je estre ne porrai la

when I to-be not shall-be-able there

ou toz li biens del mont sera:

where all the good of-the world will-be

a l'aatine ou toz assamble

at the-contest where all assembles

li pueples, soz cui terre tranble.

the people beneath whom earth trembles

Et neporquant s'il vos pleisoit

And nevertheless if-it to-you pleased

et Deus si franche vos feisoit

and God so noble you made

que vos aler m'i leissessiez,

that you to-go me-thither let

tot certainnement s'ëussiez

quite certainly you-would-know

que vers vos si me contandroie

that toward you so I would-bear-myself

qu'an vostre prison revandroie."

that-into your prison I-would-come-back

"Certes", fet ele, "jel fëisse

Certainly says she I-it would-do

mout volantiers se n'i vëisse

very willingly if not-therein I-saw

ma destrucion et ma mort.

my destruction and my death

Mes je criem mon seignor si fort,

But I fear my lord so greatly

5470

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Meleagant le deputeire,

Meleagant the scoundrel

que je ne l'oseroie feire,

that I not it-would-dare do

5485 qu'il destruiroit mon seignor tot.

for-he would-destroy my lord quite

N'est mervoille se jel redot,

Not-is a-marvel if I-it dread

qu'il est si fel con vos savez."

for-he is as wicked as you know

"Dame, se vos peor avez

Lady if you fear have

que je tantost après l'estor

that I at-once after the-combat

5490 an vostre prison ne retor,

into your prison not return

un seiremant vos an ferai,

an oath to-you thereof I-shall-make

don ja ne me parjureraï,

whereof ever not myself I-shall-forswear

que ja n'iert riens qui me detaingne

that ever not-will-be anything which me detain

qu'an vostre prison ne revaingne

that-into your prison not I-come-back

5495 maintenant après le tornoi."

at-once after the tournament

"Par foi", fet ele, "et je l'otroi

By faith says she and I it-grant

par un covant." — "Dame, par quel?"

on a covenant Lady on what

Ele respont: "Sire, par tel

She answers Lord on such

que le retor me jureroiz

that the return to-me you-will-swear

et avuec m'assëuroeroiz

and withal to-me-you-will-assure

de vostre amor, que je l'avrai."

of your love that I it-I-shall-have

"Dame, tote celi que j'ai

Lady all that which I-have

vos doing et jur le revenir."

to-you I-give and I-swear the coming-back

"Or m'an puis a neant tenir",

Now myself-thereof I-may to nothing bold

fet la dame tot an riant;

says the lady all in laughing

"Autrui par le mien esciant

To-another by the my knowledge

avez bailliee et comandee

you-have handed-over and committed

l'amor que vos ai demandee.

the-love which of-you I-have asked

Et neporquant sanz nul desdaing

And nevertheless without any disdain

tant con j'an puis avoir j'an praing.

as-much as I-thereof can have I-thereof take

A ce que je puis m'an tandrai,

To that which I can myself-thereof I-shall-bold

et le seiremant an prandrai,

and the oath thereof I-shall-take

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que vers moi si vos contandroiz

that toward me so you will-bear-yourself

que an ma prison revandroiz.”

that into my prison you-will-come-back

5515 Lanceloz tot a sa devise

Lancelot quite at her disposal

le seiremant sor sainte eglise

the oath upon holy church

li fet, qu'il revandra sanz faille.

to-her makes that-he will-come-back without fail

Et la dame tantost li baille

And the lady at-once to-him hands

les armes son seignor vermoilles

the arms of-her lord vermilion

5520 et le cheval, qui a mervoilles

and the horse which to marvels

estoit biaux et forz et hardiz.

was fair and strong and bold

Cil monte, si s'an est partiz,

He mounts so himself-thence is departed

armez d'unes armes mout beles,

armed with arms very fair

trestotes fresches et noveles,

quite-all fresh and new

5525 s'a tant erré qu'a Noauz vint.

and-he-has so-much journeyed that-to Noauz he-came

De cele partie se tint

Of that party himself he-held

et prist fors de la vile ostel.

and took outside of the town lodging

Ains si prodon n'ot mes itel,
Ever so worthy-a-man not-had before such-a-one

car mout estoit petiz et bas;
for very it-was small and low

mes herbergier ne voloit pas
but to-lodge not he-wished at-all

5530

an leu ou il fust conëuz.
in a-place where he might-be known

Chevaliers buens et eslëuz
Knights good and chosen

ot mout el chastel amassez;
there-were many in-the castle gathered

mes plus an ot de fors assez,
but more thereof there-were from outside enough

que por la rëine an i ot
for because-of the queen thereof there were

5535

tant venu que li quinz n'i pot
so-many come that the fiftb not-thereat could

ostel avoir dedanz recet;
lodging have within the-stronghold

que por un an i avoit set,
for in-place-of one thereof there were seven

don ja un tot seul n'i ëüst
whereof ever a quite single-one not-there would-have-been

se por la rëine ne fust.
if for the queen not it-were

5540

Bien cinc liues tot environ

Fully five leagues quite around

se furent logié li baron

themselves were lodged the barons

es trez, es loges et es tantes.

in-the pavilions in-the booths and in-the tents

Dames et dameiseles jantes

Ladies and damsels comely

5545 i rot tant que mervoilles fu.

there in-turn-were so-many that a-marvel it-was

Lanceloz ot mis son escu

Lancelot had put his shield

a l'uis de son ostel de fors,

at the-door of his lodging from outside

et il por aiesier son cors

and he for to-ease his body

fu desarmez et se gisoit

was disarmed and himself was-lying

5550 an un lit qu'il mout po prisoit;

on a bed which-he very little prized

qu'estroiz iert et la coute tanve,

for-narrow it-was and the quilt thin

coverte d'un gros drap de chanve.

covered with-a coarse cloth of hemp

Lanceloz trestoz desarmez

Lancelot quite-all disarmed

s'estoit sor le lit acotez.

himself-was upon the bed leaned

5555 La ou il jut si povremant,

There where he lay so poorly

a tant ez vos un garnemant,

at that behold you a rogue

un hiraute d'armes an chemise,

a herald of-arms in shirt

qui an la taverne avoit mise

who in the tavern had put

sa cote avuec sa chauceüre,

his coat with his footwear

et vint nuz piez grant alüre

and came bare foot great pace

desafublez contre le vant.

uncloaked against the wind

L'escu trova a l'uis devant,

The-shield he-found at the-door before

si l'esgarda, mes ne pot estre

and it-he-looked-at but not it-could be

qu'il conëust lui ne son mestre;

that-he might-know it nor its master

ne set qui porter le devoit.

not he-knows who to-bear it was-to

L'uis de la meison overt voit,

The-door of the house open he-sees

s'antre anz et voit gesir el lit

so-he-enters within and sees lying on-the bed

Lancelot, et puis qu'il le vit,

Lancelot and after that-he him saw

le conut et si s'an seigna.

him he-knew and so himself-thereat he-crossed

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- 5570 Et Lanceloz li anseigna
And Lancelot to-him charged
 et deffandi qu'il ne parlast
and forbade that-he not speak
 de lui an leu ou il alast;
of him in a-place where he might-go
 que s'il disoit qu'il le s'eüst,
for if-he said that-he him knew
 miauz li vandroit que il s'eüst
better to-him it-would-come than-if he himself-had
- 5575 les iauz trez ou le col brisié.
the eyes put-out or the neck broken
 "Sire, je vos ai mout prisié",
Lord I you have much prized
 fet li hirauz, "toz jorz et pris,
says the herald all days and I-prize
 ne ja tant con je soie vis
nor ever as-long as I be alive
 ne ferai rien por nul avoir,
not I-shall-do anything for any goods
- 5580 don mal gre me doiez savoir."
whereof ill will to-me you-ought know
 Tantost fors de la meison saut,
At-once out of the house he-leaps
 si s'an vet criant mout an haut:
and himself-thence goes crying very in loud
 "Or est venuz qui aunera!
Now is come he-who will-measure
 Or est venuz qui aunera!"
Now is come he-who will-measure

Ice crie par tot li garz,

This cries through all the lad

et janz saillent de totes parz,

and folk leap from all sides

si li demandent que il crie.

and of-him they-ask what he cries

Cil n'est tant hardiz que le die,

He not-is so bold that it he-say

ainz s'an va criant ce mëismes.

rather himself-thence goes crying this same

Et sachiez que dit fu lors primes:

And know that said it-was then first

“Or est venuz qui aunera!”

Now is come he-who will-measure

Nostre mestre an fu li hira

Our master thereof was the herald

qui a dire le nos aprist;

who to say it to-us taught

car il premieremant le dist.

for he firstly it said

Ja sont assamblees les rotes,

Already are assembled the companies

la rëine et les dames totes,

the queen and the ladies all

et chevalier et autres janz,

and knights and other folk

et mout i avoit des serjanz

and many thereat there-were of-the sergeants

de totes parz, destre et senestre.

on all sides right and left

5585

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- 5600 La ou li tornois devoit estre
There where the tournament was-to be
 ot unes granz loges de fust
there-were some great galleries of wood
 por ce que la rëine i fust
for this that the queen thereat be
 et les dames et les puceles:
and the ladies and the maidens
 ains nus ne vit loges si beles
ever anyone not saw galleries so fair
 5605 ne si longues ne si bien faites.
nor so long nor so well made
 La se sont les dames atreites
There themselves are the ladies drawn
 trestotes après la rëine,
quite-all after the queen
 qui veoir voldront l'aatine
who to-see will-wish the-contest
 et qui le fera miauz ou pis.
and who it will-do better or worse
 5610 Chevalier vienent dis et dis,
Knights come ten and ten
 et vint et vint, et trante et trante,
and twenty and twenty and thirty and thirty
 ça quatre vint et ça nonante,
here four score and here ninety
 ça çant, ça plus et ça deus tanz,
here a-hundred here more and here two times

si est l'assamblee si granz

and is the-assembly so great

devant les loges et an tor,

before the galleries and in circle

que il ancomacent l'estor.

that they begin the-combat

Armé et desarmé assanblent,

Armed and unarmed they-gather

les lances un grant bois ressanblent,

the lances a great wood resemble

que tant an i font apporter

for so-many thereof there they-make bring

cil qui se vuelent deporter,

those who themselves wish to-disport

qu'il n'i paroît se lances non

that-it not-there appears except lances not

et banieres et gonfalon.

and banners and gonfalon

Li josteor au joster muevent,

The joustors to-the jousting move

qui conpeignons assez i truevent

who companions enough thereat find

qui por joster venu estoient;

who for to-joust come were

et li autre se raprestoient

and the others themselves in-turn-made-ready

de feire autres chevaleries.

to do other feats-of-chivalry

5615

5620

5625

Si sont plainnes les praeries

So are full the meadows

et les arees et li sonbre,

and the plowlands and the fallows

5630 que l'an ne puet esmer le nombre

that one not can reckon the number

des chevaliers, tant an i ot.

of-the knights so-many thereof there were

Mes n'i ot point de Lancelot

But not-there was a-whit of Lancelot

a cele premiere assanblee;

at that first assembly

mes quant il vint parmi la pree,

but when he came across the meadow

5635 et li hirauez le vit venir,

and the herald him saw coming

de crïer ne se pot tenir:

from to-cry not himself he-could hold

“Veez celui qui aunera!

See him who will-measure

Veez celui qui aunera!”

See him who will-measure

Et l'an demande: “Qui est il?”

And one asks Who is he

5640 Ne lor an viaut rien dire cil.

Not to-them thereof wishes anything say he

The Tournament of Noauz

XXI

The first day he is worth twenty of the best, until the queen's maiden brings him the word — at the worst — and thereafter he misses every stroke and flees every knight, and the crowd that praised him jeers that his ell is broken. Next morning the word comes again and he obeys it again. Then she sends the very best, and he throws a knight a hundred feet, gives away every horse he wins, and the damsels swear to marry nobody else. At the parting he drops his shield in the press and rides back to his prison.

Quant Lanceloz an l'estor vint,

When Lancelot into the-combat came

il seus valoit des meillors vint,

he alone was-worth of-the best twenty

sel comance si bien a feire

and-it he-begins so well to do

que nus ne puet ses iauz reitreire

that anyone not can his eyes withdraw

de lui esgarder ou qu'il soit.

from him to-watch wherever that-he be

Devers Pomelegloi estoit

On-the-side-of Pomelegloi was

uns chevaliers preuz et vaillanz,

a knight valiant and worthy

et ses chevaus estoit saillanz

and his horse was leaping

et coranz plus que cers de lande.

and running more than a-stag of heath

Cil estoit fiz le roi d'Irlande,

He was son of-the king of-Ireland

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qui mout bien et bel le feisoit;

who very well and fairly it did

mes quatre tanz a toz pleisoit

but four times to all pleased

li chevaliers qu'il ne conoissent.

the knight whom-they not know

Trestuit de demander s'angoissent:

Quite-all of asking themselves-torment

5655 "Qui est cil qui si bien le fet?"

Who is he who so well it does

Et la rëine a consoil tret

And the queen to counsel draws

une pucele cointe et sage,

a maiden clever and wise

si li dist: "Pucele, un message

and to-her said Maiden a message

vos estuet feire, et tost le feites

to-you it-behooves to-do and quickly it do

5660 a paroles briemant retreites.

in words briefly recounted

Jus de cez loges avalez,

Down from these galleries descend

a cel chevalier m'an alez

to that knight for-me-thence go

qui porte cel escu vermoil,

who bears that shield vermilion

et si li dites a consoil

and so to-him say in private

5665 que 'au noauz', que je li mant."

that at-the worst that I to-him send-word

Cele i vet tost et sagemant

She thither goes quickly and wisely

fet ce que la rëine viaut.

does that which the queen wishes

Après le chevalier s'aquiaut

After the knight herself-she-bastens

tant que mout pres de lui s'est jointe,

so-much that very near to him herself-is joined

si li dist come sage et cointe,

and to-him said as wise and clever

que ne l'ot veisins ne veisine:

so-that not it-heard neighbor nor neighbor-woman

"Sire, ma dame la rëine

Lord my lady the queen

par moi vos mande et jel vos di

by me to-you sends-word and I-it to-you say

que 'au noauz.'" Quant cil l'öi,

that at-the worst When he it-heard

si li respont: "Mout volantiers!"

so to-her he-answers Very willingly

Come cil qui est suens antiers.

As he who is hers entirely

Et lors contre un chevalier muet

And then against a knight he-moves

tant con chevaus porter le puet

as-fast as horse to-carry him can

et faut, quant il le dut ferir;

and misses when he him ought strike

5670

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- 5680 n'onques puis jusqu'a l'anserir
nor-ever after until the-evening
 ne fist s'au pis non que il pot
not he-did except-at-the worst not that he could
 por ce qu'a la rëine plot.
for this that-to the queen it-pleased
 Et li autre qui le requiert
And the other who him attacks
 n'a pas failli, einçois le fiert
not-has at-all missed rather him strikes
- 5685 si que trestot le desaiue.
so that quite-wholly him be-disables
 Et cil se met lors a la fuie,
And he himself puts then to the flight
 n'onques puis contre chevalier
nor-ever after against a-knight
 ne torna le col del destrier,
not turned-he the neck of-the charger
 ne por morir rien ne fëist
nor for to-die anything not he-would-do
- 5690 se sa grant honte n'i vëist
if his great shame not-therein he-saw
 et son let et sa desenor,
and his ugliness and his dishonor
 et fet sanblant qu'il et peor
and he-makes semblance that-be have fear
 de toz ces qui viennent et vont.
of all those who come and go

Et li chevalier de lui font

And the knights of him make

lor risees et lor gabois,

their laughter and their mockery

qui mout le prisoient einçois.

who much him prized before

Et li hiraüz qui soloit dire:

And the herald who was-wont to-say

“Cil les veintra trestoz a tire!”,

He them will-vanquish quite-all in a-row

est mout maz et mout desconfiz,

is very downcast and very discomfited

qu’il ot les gas et les afiz

for-he hears the jests and the taunts

de ces qui dient: “Or te tes,

of those who say Now thyself be-still

amis! Cist n’aunera hui mes.

friend This-one not-will-measure today more

Tant a auné qu’or est brisiee

So-much he-has measured that-now is broken

s’aune que tant nos as prisiee.”

his-ell which so-much to-us thou-hast praised

Li plusor dient: “Ce que doit?

The most say This what means

Il estoit si preuz or androit:

He was so valiant now presently

or est si tres coarde chose

now is so very cowardly a-thing

que chevalier atandre n’ose.

that a-knight to-await not-he-dares

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Espoir por ce si bien le fist

Perhaps for this so well it he-did

5710 qu'ains mes d'armes ne s'antremist,

that-ever before of-arms not he-meddled

si fu si preuz an son venir

and he-was so valiant in his coming

qu'a lui ne se pooit tenir

that-against him not himself could hold

nus chevaliers, tant fust senez;

any knight however were-he wise

qu'il feroit come forsenez.

for-he struck like one-out-of-his-senses

5715 Or a tant des armes apris

Now he-has so-much of-the arms learned

que ja mes tant com il soit vis

that ever more so-long as he be alive

n'avra talant d'armes porter.

not-he-will-have desire of-arms to-bear

Ses cuers nel puet plus andurer,

His heart not-it can more endure

qu'el monde n'a rien si coarde."

for-in-the world not-is a-thing so cowardly

5720 Et la rëine qui l'esgarde

And the queen who him-watches

an est mout liee, et mout li plect,

thereat is very glad and much to-her it-pleases

qu'ele set bien, et si s'an test,

for-she knows well and so herself-thereof keeps-silent

que ce est Lanceloz por voir.

that this is Lancelot for truth

Einsi tote jor jusqu'au soir

Thus all day until-the evening

se fist cil tenir por coart,

himself made he bold for coward

mes li bas vespres les depart:

but the low vespers them parts

au departir i ot grant plet

at-the parting thereat was great dispute

de ces qui miauz l'avoient fet.

of those who best it-had done

Li fiz le roi d'Irlande panse

The son of-the king of-Ireland thinks

sanz contredit et sanz deffanse

without contradiction and without denial

qu'il et tot le los et le pris;

that-he have all the praise and the prize

mes leidemant i a mespris

but foully thereat he-has erred

qu'assez i ot de ses parauz.

for-enough thereat were of his equals

Nëis li chevaliers vermauz

Even the knight vermilion

plot as dames et as puceles,

pleased to-the ladies and to-the maidens

as plus jantes et as plus beles,

to-the most comely and to-the most fair

tant qu'eles n'orent a nelui

so-much that-they not-had on anyone

le jor baé tant com a lui;

the day gazed so-much as on him

5725

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que bien orent vëu comant

for well they-had seen how

5740 il l'avoit fet premieremant,

he it-had done at-first

com il estoit preuz et hardiz;

how he was valiant and bold

puis refu si acoardiz

then was-in-turn so cowed

qu'il n'osoit chevalier atandre,

that-he not-dared a-knight to-await

ainz le pöist abatre et prandre

rather him might strike-down and take

5745 toz li pire se il vossist.

quite the worst if he wished

Mes a toz et a totes sist

But to all-men and to all-women it-seemed-good

que l'andemain tuit revandroient

that the-next-day all would-come-again

a l'aatine et si prandroient

to the-contest and so would-take

les dameiseles a seignors

the damsels as lords

5750 ces cui le jor seroit l'enors;

those to-whom the day would-be the-honor

einsi le dïent et atornent.

thus it they-say and arrange

A tant vers les ostés s'an tornent,

At that toward the lodgings themselves-thence turn

et quant il vindrent as ostés,

and when they came to-the lodgings

an plusors leus an ot de tes

in several places thereof were of such

qui ancomancierent a dire:

who began to say

“Ou est des chevaliers li pire

Where is of-the knights the worst

et li noauz et li despiz?

and the vilest and the despised

Ou est alez? Ou est tapiz?

Where is he-gone Where is he-bid

Ou iert trovez? Ou le querrons?

Where will-be-be found Where him shall-we-see

Espoir ja mes ne le verrons;

Perhaps ever more not him we-shall-see

car mauvestiez l'an a chacié,

for cowardice him-thence has driven

don il a tel fes anbracié

whereof he has such a-burden embraced

qu'el monde n'a rien si mauveise;

that-in-the world not-is a-thing so base

n'il n'a pas tort; car plus a eise

nor-he not-has at-all wrong for more at ease

est uns mauvés çant mile tanz

is a base-man a-hundred thousand times

que n'est uns preuz, uns conbatanz.

than is a valiant-man a fighter

Mauvestiez est mout aiseiee,

Cowardice is very comfortable

por ce l'a cist an pes beisiee,

for this her-has this-one in peace kissed

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s'a pris de li quanque il a.

and-has taken from her whatever he has

5770 Onques voir tant ne s'avilla

Ever truly so-much not debased-itself

proesce qu'an lui se mëist

prowess that-in him herself she-put

ne que pres de lui s'assëist;

nor that near to him she-sat

mes an lui s'est tote reposte

but in him herself-is wholly hidden

mauvestiez, s'a trové tel oste

cowardice and-has found such a-host

5775 qui tant l'enore et tant la sert

who so-much her-honors and so-much her serves

que por s'enor la soe pert."

that for her-honor the his he-loses

Einsi tote nuit se dejangent

Thus all night themselves they-chatter

cil qui de mal dire s'estrangent.

those who with evil speaking choke-themselves

Mes tes dit sovant mal d'autrui

But such-a-one says often evil of-another

5780 qui mout est pire de celui

who much is worse than he

que il blasme et que il despist.

whom he blames and whom he despises

Chascuns ce que lui plect an dist:

Each that which to-him pleases thereof says

et quant ce vint a l'ajornee

and when this came to the-daybreak

refu la janz tote atornee,

again-was the folk wholly arrayed

si revindrent a l'aatine.

and they-came-again to the-contest

Es loges refu la rëine

In-the galleries again-was the queen

et les dames et les puceles,

and the ladies and the maidens

si ot chevaliers avuec eles

and there-were knights with them

assez, qui armes ne portoient,

plenty who arms not bore

qui prison ou croisié estoient,

who prisoners or crossed were

et cil les armes lor devisent

and they the arms to-them describe

des chevaliers que il plus prisent.

of-the knights whom they most prize

Antr'eus dient: "Veez vos or

Among-themselves they-say See you now

celui a cele bande d'or

him with that band of-gold

parmi cel escu de bellic?

across that shield on slant

C'est Governauz de Roberdic.

This-is Governauz of Roberdic

5785

5790

5795

Et veez vos celui après

And see you him next

qui an son escu pres a pres

who on his shield close to close

a paint une egle et un dragon?

has painted an eagle and a dragon

5800 C'est li fiz le roi d'Arragon

This-is the son of-the king of-Aragon

qui venuz est an ceste terre

who come is into this land

por los et por enor conquerre.

for praise and for honor to-win

Et veez vos celui de joste

And see you him along side

qui si bien point et si bien joste

who so well spurs and so well jousts

5805 a cel escu vert d'une part,

with that shield green on-one part

s'a sor le vert paint un liepart

and-has upon the green painted a leopard

et d'azur est l'autre meitiez?

and of-azure is the-other half

C'est Ignaures li coveitiez,

This-is Ignaures the coveted

li amoreus et li pleisanz.

the amorous and the pleasing

5810 Et cil qui porte les feisanz

And he who bears the pheasants

an son escu painz bec a bec,

on his shield painted beak to beak

c'est Coguillanz de Mautirec.

this-is Coguillanz of Mautirec

Et veez vos cez deus de lez

And see you those two at side

a cez deus chevaus pomelez

with those two horses dappled

as escuz d'or as lions bis?

with-the shields of-gold with-the lions dun

5815

Li uns a non Semiramis

The one has name Semiramis

et li autres est ses conpainz,

and the other is his companion

s'ont d'un sanblant lor escuz tainz.

and-they-have of-one likeness their shields tinted

Et veez vos celui qui porte

And see you him who bears

an son escu painte une porte,

on his shield painted a gate

5820

si sanble qu'il s'an isse uns cers?

and it-seems that-it itself-thence issues a stag

Par foi, ce est li rois Iders."

By faith this is the king Iders

Einsi devisent cil des loges.

Thus describe those of-the galleries

"Cil escuz fu fez a Limoges,

That shield was made at Limoges

- 5825 si l'an aporta Piladés
and it-thence brought Piladés
 qui an estor viaut estre adés
who in combat wishes to-be always
 et mout le desirre et golose.
and much it desires and craves
 Cil autre fu fez a Tolose
That other was made at Toulouse
 et li lorains et li peitraus,
and the reins and the breast-strap
- 5830 si l'an aporta Keus d'Estraus.
and it-thence brought Keus of-Estraus
 Cil vint de Lyon sor le Rosne:
That-one came from Lyon on the Rhone
 n'a nul si bel dessoz le trone,
not-is any so fair beneath the heaven
 si fu por une grant desserte
and it-was for a great merit
 donez Taulas de la Deserte
given (to-)Taulas of the Desert
- 5835 qui bel le porte et bien s'an cuevre.
who fairly it bears and well himself-therewith covers
 Et cil autre si est de l'uevre
And that other so is of the-work
 d'Angleterre et fu fez a Londres,
of-England and was made at London
 ou vos veez cez deus arondes
where you see those two swallows
 qui sanblent que voler s'an doivent,
which seem that to-fly themselves-thence ought

mes ne se muevent, ainz reçoivent

5840

but not themselves they-move rather they-receive

mainz cos des aciers peitevins;

many blows of-the steels Poitevin

sel porte Thoas li meschins.”

and-it bears Thoas the youth

Einsi devisent et deboissent

Thus they-describe and blazon

les armes de ces qu’il conoissent;

the arms of those whom-they know

mes de celui mie n’i voient,

5845

but of him at-all not-therein they-see

qu’an tel despit ëu avoient,

whom-in such contempt had they-had

si cudent qu’il s’an soit anblez

so they-think that-he himself-thence be stolen-away

quant a l’estor n’est assamblez.

since to the-combat not-he-is gathered

Quant la rëine point n’an voit,

When the queen a-whit not-thereof sees

talanz li prant qu’ele i anvoit

5850

desire her takes that-she thither send

les rans cerchier tant qu’an le truisse.

the ranks to-search until that-one him find

Ne set cui anvoier i puisse,

Not she-knows whom to-send thither she-may

qui miauz le quiere de celi

who better him seek than her

qui hier i ala de par li.

who yesterday thither went of by her

- 5855 Tot maintenant a li l'apele,
Quite at-once to her she-calls-her
 si li dist: "Alez, dameisele,
and to-her said Go damsel
 monter sor vostre palefroï!
to-mount upon your palfrey
 Au chevalier d'ier vos anvoi,
To-the knight of-yesterday you I-send
 sel querez tant que vos l'aiiez!
and-him seek until that you him-have
- 5860 Por rien ne vos an delaïiez,
For anything not yourself thereof delay
 et si li redites ancor
and so to-him say-again still
 que au noauz le reface or.
that at-the worst it be-do-again now
 Et quant vos l'an avroiz semons,
And when you him-thereof will-have urged
 s'antandez bien a son respons."
so-beed well to his answer
- 5865 Cele de rien ne s'an retarde,
She in anything not herself-thereat delays
 qui bien s'estoit donee garde
who well herself-had given heed
 le soir quel part il torneroit,
the evening what way he would-turn
 por ce que sanz dote savoit
for this that without doubt she-knew
 qu'ele i referoit anvoïiee.
that-she thither would-again-be sent

Parmi les rans s'est avoïee

5870

Through the ranks herself-is made-her-way

tant qu'ele vit le chevalier,

until that-she saw the knight

si li vet tantost consellier

and to-him goes at-once to-counsel

que ancor au noauz le face,

that still at-the worst it he-do

s'avoir viaut l'amor et la grace

if-to-have he-wishes the-love and the favor

la rëine, qu'ele li mande.

5875

of-the queen which-she to-him sends

Et cil, "Des qu'ele le comande",

And he Since that-she it commands

li respont, "la soe merci!"

to-her answers the her thanks

Tantost cele s'an departi,

At-once she herself-thence departed

et lors comencent a huiier

and then they-begin to boot

vaslet, serjant et escuiier

5880

young-men sergeants and squires

et dient tuit: "Veez mervoilles!

and say all See marvels

Car cil d'ier as armes vermoilles

For he of-yesterday with-the arms vermilion

est revenuz. Mes que quiert il?

is come-back But what seeks he

Ja n'a el monde rien si vil,

Ever not-is in-the world anything so vile

- 5885 si despite ne si faillie!
so despicable nor so failed
- Si l'a mauvestiez an baillie
So him-has cowardice in keeping
- qu'il ne puet rien contre li feire."
that-he not can anything against her do
- Et la pucele s'an repeire,
And the maiden herself-thence returns
- s'est a la rëine venue,
and-is to the queen come
- 5890 qui mout l'a corte et pres tenue
who very her-has short and close held
- tant que la response ot öie,
until that the answer she-had heard
- don ele s'est mout esjöie
whereof she herself-is much rejoiced
- por ce qu'or set ele sanz dote
for this that-now knows she without doubt
- que ce est cil cui ele est tote
that this is he whose she is wholly
- 5895 et il toz suens sanz nule faille.
and he quite hers without any fail
- A la pucele dit qu'ele aille
To the maiden she-says that-she go
- mout tost arriere et si li die
very quickly back and so to-him say
- que ele li comande et prie
that she to-him commands and prays
- que tot 'le miauz' que il porra:
that all the best that he will-be-able

et cele dit qu'ele i ira 5900
and she says that-she thither will-go

tot maintenant sanz respit querre.
right at-once without respite to-seek

Des loges est venue a terre
From-the galleries she-is come to ground

la ou ses vaslez l'atandoit,
there where her young-man her-awaited

qui son palefroi li gardoit,
who her palfrey for-her kept

et ele monte, si s'an va 5905
and she mounts and herself-thence goes

tant que le chevalier trova,
until that the knight she-found

si li ala maintenant dire:
and to-him went at-once to-say

“Or vos mande ma dame, sire,
Now to-you sends-word my lady lord

que tot ‘le miauz’ que vos porroiz!”
that all the best that you will-be-able

Et il respont: “Or li diroiz 5910
And he answers Now to-her you-will-say

qu'il n'est riens nule qui me griet
that not-is thing any which to-me be-grievous

a feire des que il li siet;
to do since that it to-her is-pleasing

car quanque li plest m'atalante.”
for whatever to-her pleases to-me-is-desirable

Lors ne fu mie cele lante

Then not was at-all she slow

5915 de son message reporter,

of her message to-carry-back

que mout an cuide deporter

for much thereby she-thinks to-delight

la rëine et esleecier.

the queen and to-gladden

Quantqu'ele se pot adrecier

As-fast-as-she herself could direct

s'est vers les loges adreciee,

herself-is toward the galleries directed

5920 et la rëine s'est dreciee,

and the queen herself-is risen

si li est a l'ancontre alee;

and to-her is to the-meeting gone

mes n'est mie jus avalee,

but not-is at-all down descended

ainz l'atant au chief del degré.

rather her-awaits at-the head of-the stair

Et cele vient, qui mout a gre

And she comes who much to liking

5925 li sot son message conter.

to-her knew her message to-tell

Les degrez comance a monter

The stairs she-begins to climb

et quant ele est venue a li,

and when she is come to her

si li dist: "Dame, onques ne vi
and to-her said Lady ever not I-saw

nul chevalier tant deboneire,

any knight so gracious

qu'il viaut si outreemant feire

for-he wishes so utterly to-do

trestot quanque vos li mandez;

quite-all whatever you to-him send-word

que se le voir m'an demandez,

for if the truth of-me-thereof you-ask

autel chiere tot par igal

the-same countenance quite in equal

fet il del bien come del mal."

makes he of-the good as of-the ill

"Par foi", fet ele, "bien puet estre."

By faith says she well it-can be

Lors s'an retorne a la fenestre

Then herself-thence she-turns to the window

por les chevaliers esgarder.

for the knights to-watch

Et Lanceloz sanz plus tarder

And Lancelot without more delaying

l'escu par les enarmes prant,

the-shield by the shield-straps takes

que volantez l'art et esprant

for will him-burns and kindles

de mostrar tote sa proesce.

to show all his prowess

5930

5935

5940

Le col de son cheval adresce

The neck of his horse he-directs

et leisse corre antre deus rans.

and lets run between two ranks

Tuit seront esbäi par tans

All will-be astounded in time

5945 li decëu, li amusé,

the deceived the beguiled

qui an lui gaber ont usé

who in him to-mock have spent

del jor grant piece et de la nuit.

of-the day great while and of the night

Mout s'an font grant piece deduit

Much themselves-thereof they-make great while sport

et deporté et solacié.

and diversion and solace

5950 Par les enarmes anbracié

By the shield-straps embraced

tint son escu li fiz le roi

beld his shield the son of-the king

d'Irlande, et point a grant desroi

of-Ireland and spurs in great fury

de l'autre part ancontre lui;

from the-other side against him

si s'antreviennent anbedui

and each-other-they-come-at both

5955 si que li fiz le roi d'Irlande

so that the son of-the king of-Ireland

de la joste plus ne demande,

of the joust more not asks

que sa lance fraint et estrosse;

for his lance breaks and shatters

car n'ot mie feru sor mosse,

for not-be-had at-all struck on moss

mes sor es mout dures et seches.

but on boards very hard and dry

Lanceloz une de ses teches

5960

Lancelot one of his tricks

li a aprise a cele joste,

to-him has taught at that joust

que l'escu au braz li ajoste,

for the-shield to-the arm to-him be-joins

et le braz au costé li serre,

and the arm to-the side to-him be-presses

sel porte del cheval a terre.

and-him bears from-the horse to ground

Et tantost chevalier descochent,

5965

And at-once knights dart-out

d'anbedeus parz poignent et brochent,

from-both sides they-spur and prick

li un por celui desconbrer,

the ones for him to-free

et li autre por anconbrer.

and the others for to-encumber

Li un lor seignors eidier cuident,

The ones their lords to-help think

et des plusors les seles vuident

5970

and of-the most the saddles they-empty

an la meslee et an l'estor;

in the mêlée and in the-combat

mes onques an trestot le jor

but ever in quite-all the day

Gauvains d'armes ne se mesla,

Gawain in-arms not himself mingled

qui iert avuec les autres la;

who was with the others there

5975 qu'a esgarder tant li pleisoit

for-to watch so-much to-him pleased

les proesses que cil feisoit

the prowesses which he did

as armes de sinople taintes,

with-the arms of sinople tinted

qu'estre li sanbloient estaintes

that-to-be to-him seemed extinguished

celes que li autre feisoient,

those which the others did

5980 qu'anvers les soes ne paroient.

for-against the his not appeared

Et li hiraüz se resbaudist

And the herald himself grows-bold-again

tant qu'oiant toz mout an haut dist:

so-much that-in-hearing-of all very in loud he-said

“Or est venuz qui aunera!

Now is come he-who will-measure

Hui mes verroiz que il fera,

Today more you-will-see what he will-do

5985 hui mes aparra sa proesce.”

today more will-appear his prowess

Et lors li chevaliers adresece

And then the knight directs

son cheval et fet une pointe

his horse and makes a charge

ancontre un chevalier mout cointe,

against a knight very trim

et fiert si qu'il le porte jus

and strikes so that-he him bears down

loing del cheval çant piez ou plus.

5990

far from-the horse a-hundred feet or more

Si bien a feire le comance

So well to do it he-begins

et de l'espee et de la lance,

both with the-sword and with the lance

qu'il n'est riens qui armes ne port

that not-is anyone who arms not bear

qu'a lui veoir ne se deport.

who-in him to-see not himself delight

Nes maint de ces qui armes portent

5995

Even many of those who arms bear

s'i redelitent et deportent;

thereat-themselves again-delight and disport

que granz deporz est de veoir

for great pleasure it-is to see

com il fet tumber et cheoir

how he makes tumble and fall

chevaus et chevaliers ansamble.

horses and knights together

- 6000 Gueires a chevalier n'assamble
Much with a-knight not-he-closes
 qu'an sele de cheval remaingne,
that-in saddle of horse he-remain
 et les chevaus que il gaaingne
and the horses which he wins
 done a toz ces qui les voloient.
he-gives to all those who them wanted
 Et cil qui gaber le soloient
And those who to-mock him were-wont
- 6005 dient: "Honi somes et mort.
say Shamed we-are and dead
 Mout avomes ëu grant tort
Much we-have had great wrong
 de lui despire et avillier;
in him to-despise and to-debase
 certes il vaut bien un millier
certainly he is-worth fully a thousand
 de tes a an cest chanp assez;
of such there-are in this field enough
- 6010 que il a veincuz et passez
for he has vanquished and surpassed
 trestoz les chevaliers del monde:
quite-all the knights of-the world
 n'i a nul qui a lui s'aponde."
not-there is anyone who to him compare-himself
 Et les dameiseles disoient,
And the damsels said
 qui a mervoilles l'esgardoient,
who to marvels him-watched

que cil les tolt a marïer;

that he them takes-away from marrying

car tant ne s'osoient fier

for so-much not themselves-dared trust

an lor biautez n'an lor richescs,

in their beauties nor-in their riches

n'an lor pooirs n'an lor hautescs,

nor-in their powers nor-in their high-rank

que por biauté ne por avoir

that for beauty nor for wealth

nule d'eles deignast avoir

any of-them would-deign have

cist chevaliers, que trop est preuz.

this knight for too he-is valiant

Et neporquant si font tes veuz

And nevertheless so make such vows

les plusors d'eles, qu'eles diënt

the most of-them that-they say

que s'a cestui ne se marïent

that if-to this-one not themselves they-marry

ne seront oan marïees,

not they-will-be this-year married

n'a mari n'a seignor donees.

nor-to husband nor-to lord given

Et la rëine, qui autant

And the queen who bears

ce don eles se vont vantant,

that whereof they themselves go boasting

a soi mëisme an rit et gabe;

to her self thereat laughs and jests

6015

6020

6025

6030 bien set que por tot l'or d'Arrabe,
well she-knows that for all the-gold of-Arabia

qui trestot devant li metroit,
which quite-all before her one-would-put

la meillor d'eles ne prandroit,
the best of-them not would-take

la plus bele ne la plus jante,
the most fair nor the most comely

cil qui a totes atalante.
he who to all is-desirable

6035 Et lor volantez est comune,
And their will is common

si qu'avoir le voldroit chascune;
so that-to-have him would-wish each

et l'une est de l'autre jalose,
and the-one is of the-other jealous

si con s'ele fust ja s'espouse,
just as if-she were already his-wife

por ce que si adroit le voient,
for this that so skillful him they-see

6040 qu'eles ne pansent ne ne croient
that-they not think nor not believe

qu'on terriens, tant lor pleisoit,
that-a-man earthly so-much to-them pleased

pöist feire ce qu'il feisoit.
could do that which-he did

Si bien le fist qu'au departir

So well it he-did that-at-the parting

d'andeus parz distrent sanz mantir

on-both sides they-said without lying

que n'i avoit ëu paroil

that not-there had had equal

cil qui porte l'escu vermoil.

he who bears the-shield vermilion

Trestuit le distrent et voirs fu:

Quite-all it said and true it-was

mes au departir son escu

but at-the parting his shield

leissa an la presse cheoir

he-let in the press fall

la ou plus grant la pot veoir,

there where most great it he-could see

et sa lance et sa couverture;

and his lance and his horse-cloth

puis se mist an grant alëure,

then himself he-put in great pace

si s'an ala si an anblee

and himself-thence went so in stealth

que nus de tote l'assanblee,

that anyone of all the-assembly

qui la fust, garde ne s'an prist.

who there was heed not himself-thereof took

Et cil a la voie se mist,

And he on the way himself put

6045

6050

6055

si s'an ala mout tost et droit

and himself-thence went very quickly and straight

cele part don venuz estoit,

that way whence come he-was

por aquiter son seiremant.

for to-acquit his oath

6060 Au partir del tornoiemant

At-the departing of-the tournament

le quierent et demandent tuit:

him seek and ask-for all

n'an truevent point, car il s'an fuit,

not-thereof they-find a-while for he himself-thence flees

qu'il n'a cure qu'an le conoisse.

for-he not-has care that-one him know

Grant duel an ont et grant anguisse

Great grief thereof have and great anguish

6065 li chevalier, qui an fëissent

the knights who thereof would-have-made

grant joie se il le tenissent.

great joy if they him held

Et s'il as chevaliers pesa

And if-it to-the knights grieved

quant il ainsi leissiez les a,

when he thus left them has

les dameiseles quant le sorent

the damsels when it they-knew

6070 assez plus grant pesance an orent,

much more great heaviness thereof had

et dient que par saint Johan

and say that by saint John

ne se marieront oan.

not themselves they-will-marry this-year

Quant celui n'ont que eles aiment

Since him not-they-have whom they love

trestoz les autres quites claimment.

quite-all the others quit they-declare

L'aatine ainsi departi

The-contest thus broke-up

qu'onques nule n'an prist mari.

that-ever any not-thereof took husband

Et Lanceloz pas ne sejourne,

And Lancelot at-all not tarries

mes tost an sa prison retourne.

but quickly into his prison returns

Et li seneschaus vint einçois

And the seneschal came before

de Lancelot deus jorz ou trois,

of Lancelot two days or three

si demanda ou il estoit.

and asked where he was

Et la dame, qui li avoit

And the lady who to-him had

ses armes vermoilles bailliees,

his arms vermilion banded

beles et bien apareilliees,

fair and well furnished

et son hernois et son cheval,

and his harness and his horse

6075

6080

6085

le voir an dist au seneschal,

the truth thereof said to-the seneschal

comant ele l'ot anvoiié

how she him-had sent

la ou l'an avoit tornoiié

there where one had tourneyed

a l'aatine de Noauz.

at the-contest of Noauz

6090 "Ne pöissiez feire noauz,

Not you-could do worse

dame, voir", fet li seneschaus;

lady truly says the seneschal

"mout m'an vandra, ce cuit, granz maus,

much to-me-thereof will-come this I-think great ill

que mes sire Meleaganz

for my lord Melegant

me fera pis que li laganz

to-me will-do worse than the sea-wreck

6095 se j'avoie esté perilliez.

if I-had been shipwrecked

Morz an serai et essilliez

Dead thereof I-shall-be and exiled

maintenant que il le savra,

as-soon as he it will-know

que ja de moi pitié n'avra."

for ever of me pity not-he-will-have

"Biaus sire, or ne vos esmaiez",

Fair lord now not yourself dismay

fet la dame; “ne n’an aiiez

6100

says the lady nor not-thereof have

tel peor, qu’il ne vos estuet.

such fear for-it not to-you is-needful

Riens nule retenir nel puet;

Thing any to-hold-back not-him can

car il le me jura sor sainz

for he it to-me swore upon relics

qu’il revandroit, ne porroit ainz.”

that-be would-come-back not he-could sooner

The Tower on the Sea

XXII

Told that Lancelot kept his oath, Meleagant has masons raise a tower on an island in an arm of the sea, walls him in with one narrow window for the food they grudge him, and swears the workmen to silence. He rides to Arthur's court to claim his battle, and Gawain undertakes to fight in his place at the year's end. At his father's birthday court Bademagu tells him that a deed praises itself and that his own boasting lowers him. A daughter of the king bears it and rides out alone, and after more than a month comes on a tower by the sea.

Li seneschaus maintenant monte,

6105

The seneschal at-once mounts

a son seignor vint, si li conte

to his lord came and to-him tells

tote la chose et l'avanture;

all the thing and the-adventure

mes de ce mout le rassëure

but of this much him be-reassures

que il li dist con feitemant

that he to-him said how exactly

6110 sa fame an prist le seiremant

his wife thereof took the oath

qu'il revandroit an la prison.

that-he would-come-back into the prison

"Il n'an fera ja mesprison",

He not-thereof will-do ever wrong

fet Meleaganz, "bien le sai;

says Meleagant well it I-know

et neporquant grant duel an ai

and nevertheless great grief thereof I-have

6115 de ce que vostre fame a fet.

of this which your wife has done

Je nel vossisse por nul plet

I not-it would-wish for any plea

qu'il ëüst esté an l'estor.

that-he had been in the-combat

Mes or vos metez au retor

But now yourself put to-the return

et gardez, quant il iert venuz,

and see when he will-be come

6120 qu'il soit an tel prison tenuz

that-he be in such prison held

qu'il n'isse de la prison fors

that-he not-issue of the prison out

ne n'et nul pooir de son cors:

nor not-have any power of his body

et maintenant le me mandez.”

and at-once it to-me send-word

“Fet iert si con vos comandez”,

Done it-will-be just as you command

fet li seneschaus, si s’an va,

says the seneschal and himself-thence goes

et Lancelot venu trova,

and Lancelot come he-found

qui prison tenoit an sa cort.

who prison held in his court

Uns messages arriere cort,

A messenger back runs

que li seneschaus an anvoie

whom the seneschal thence sends

a Meleagant droite voie,

to Meleagant straight way

si li a dit de Lancelot

and to-him has said of Lancelot

qu’il est venuz. Et quant il l’ot,

that-he is come And when he it-heard

si prant maçons et charpantiers

then he-takes masons and carpenters

qui a anviz ou volantiers

who with reluctance or willingly

firent ce qu’il lor comanda.

did that which-he to-them commanded

Les meillors del päis manda,

The best of-the land he-summoned

6125

6130

6135

si lor a dit qu'il li fëissent

and to-them has said that-they for-him make

une tor et painne i mëissent

a tower and pains thereto put

an ce que ele fust tost feite.

in this that it be quickly made

6140 Sor la mer fu la pierre treite;

Upon the sea was the stone drawn

que pres de Gorre iqui de lez

for near to Gorre there along side

an cort uns braz et granz et lez:

thereinto runs an arm both great and broad

anmi le braz une isle avoit

amid the arm an island there-was

que Meleaganz bien savoit.

which Meleagant well knew

6145 La comanda la pierre a treire

There he-ordered the stone to draw

et le meirrien por la tor feire.

and the timber for the tower to-make

An mains de cinquante et set jorz

In less than fifty and seven days

fu tote parfeite la torz

was quite finished the tower

haute et espesse et bien fondee.

high and thick and well founded

6150 Quant ele fu a ce menee,

When it was to this brought

Lancelot amener i fist

Lancelot to-bring thither he-made

par nuit et an la tor le mist,

by night and in the tower him he-put

puis comanda les huis murer,

then he-ordered the doors to-wall-up

et fist toz les maçons jurer

and made all the masons swear

que ja par eus de cele tor

that ever by them of that tower

ne sera parole a nul jor.

not will-be word on any day

Einsi vost qu'ele fust celee,

Thus he-wished that-it be hidden

ne n'i remest huis ne antree

nor not-therein remained door nor entry

fors une petite fenestre.

except a little window

Leanz covint Lancelot estre,

In-there it-behooved Lancelot to-be

si li donoit l'an a mangier

and to-him gave one to eat

mout povremant et a dangier

very poorly and with grudging

par cele fenestre petite

through that window little

a ore devisee et dite,

at hour appointed and named

6155

6160

- 6165 si con l'ot dit et comandé
just as it-had said and ordered
 li fel plains de desleauté.
the wicked-one full of disloyalty
 Or a tot fet quanque il viaut
Now has quite done whatever he wishes
 Meleganz et donc s'aquiaut
Melegant and then himself-hastens
 droit a la cort le roi Artu:
straight to the court of-the king Arthur
 6170 estes le vos ja la venu.
behold him you already there come
 Et quant il vint devant le roi,
And when he came before the king
 mout plains d'orguel et de desroi
very full of-pride and of outrage
 a comanciee sa reison:
he-has begun his speech
 "Rois, devant toi an ta meison
King before thee in thy house
 6175 ai une bataille arramie;
I-have a battle pledged
 mes de Lancelot n'i voi mie,
but of Lancelot not-there I-see at-all
 qui l'a anprise ancontre moi.
who it-has undertaken against me

Et neporquant si con je doi

And nevertheless just as I ought

ma bataille oiant toz present

my battle in-hearing-of all I-present

ces que ceanz voi an present.

6180

those whom in-here I-see at present

Et s'il est ceanz, avant vaingne

And if-he is in-here forward let-him-come

et soit tes que covant me taingne

and let-him-be such that covenant to-me be-bold

an vostre cort d'ui an un an.

in your court from-today in a year

Ne sai s'onques le vos dist l'an

Not I-know if-ever it to-you said one

an quel maniere et an quel guise

6185

in what manner and in what wise

ceste bataille fu anprise;

this battle was undertaken

mes je voi chevaliers ceanz,

but I see knights in-here

qui furent a noz covenanz,

who were at our covenants

et bien dire le vos savroient

and well to-say it to-you would-know

se le voir conoistre an voloient.

6190

if the truth to-acknowledge thereof they-wished

Mes s'il le me voloit noier,

But if-he it to-me wished to-deny

ja n'i loerai soudoier,

ever not-therein I-shall-hire a-mercenary

ainz le mosterrai vers son cors.”

rather it I-shall-show against his body

La rëine qui seoit lors

The queen who sat then

6195 delez le roi a soi le tire

beside the king to herself him draws

et si li ancomance a dire:

and so to-him begins to say

“Sire, savez vos qui est cist?

Lord know you who is this-one

C’est Meleaganz qui me prist

This-is Melegant who me took

el conduit Keu le seneschal:

in-the escort of-Kay the seneschal

6200 assez li fist et honte et mal.”

much to-him he-did both shame and barm

Et li rois li a respondu:

And the king to-her has answered

“Dame, je l’ai bien antandu:

Lady I it-have well understood

je sai mout bien que ce est cil

I know very well that this is he

qui tenoit ma jant an essil.”

who held my folk in exile

6205 La rëine plus n’an parole:

The queen more not-thereof speaks

li rois atorne sa parole

the king turns his speech

vers Melegant, si li dit:

toward Melegant and to-him says

“Amis”, fet il, “se Deus m’ait,

Friend says he so God me-help

de Lancelot nos ne savons

of Lancelot we not know

noveles, don grant duel avons.”

news whereof great grief we-have

6210

“Sire rois”, fet Meleaganz,

Lord king says Meleagant

“Lanceloz me dist que ceanz

Lancelot to-me said that in-here

le troveroie je sanz faille;

him should-find I without fail

ne je ne doi ceste bataille

nor I not ought this battle

semondre s’an vostre cort non,

summon except-in your court not

6215

si vuel que trestuit cist baron

and I-wish that quite-all these barons

qui ci sont m’an portent tesmoing

who here are for-me-thereof bear witness

que d’ui an un an la semoing

that from-today in a year it I-summon

par les covanz que nos fëimes

by the covenants which we made

la ou la bataille anprëimes.”

there where the battle we-undertook

6220

A cest mot an estant se lieve

At this word in standing himself raises

mes sire Gauvains, cui mout grieve

my lord Gawain whom much grieves

de la parole que il ot,

of the speech which he hears

et dit: "Sire, de Lancelot

and says Lord of Lancelot

6225 n'a point an tote ceste terre;

not-is a-whit in all this land

mes nos l'anvoieromes querre,

but we him-shall-send to-see

se Deu plest, sel trovera l'an,

if God please and-him will-find one

einçois que vaingne au chief de l'an,

before that come to-the end of the-year

s'il n'est morz ou anprisonez.

if-he not-is dead or imprisoned

6230 Et s'il ne vient, si me donez

And if-he not comes then to-me give

la bataille, je la ferai:

the battle I it will-do

por Lancelot m'an armerai

for Lancelot myself-thereof I-shall-arm

au jor se il ne vient einçois."

on-the day if he not comes sooner

"Häi, por Deu, biaux sire rois",

Ab for God fair lord king

6235 fet Meleaganz, "donez li:

says Meleagant give to-him

il le viaut et je vos an pri,

he it wishes and I you thereof pray

qu'el monde chevalier ne sai,

for-in-the world knight not I-know

a cui si volantiers m'essai,

against whom so willingly I-try-myself

fors que Lancelot solemant.

except that Lancelot only

Mes sachiez bien certainnement,

But know well certainly

s'a l'un d'eus deus ne me combat,

if-with the-one of-them two not myself I-fight

nul eschange ne nul rachat

any exchange nor any ransom

fors que l'un d'eus deus n'an prandroie."

except that the-one of-them two not-for-it I-would-take

Et li rois dit que il l'otroie

And the king says that he it-grants

se Lanceloz ne vient dedanz.

if Lancelot not comes within

A tant s'an part Meleaganz

At that himself-thence parts Meleagant

de la cort le roi, si s'an va,

from the court of-the king and himself-thence goes

ne fina tant que il trova

nor ceased until that he found

le roi Bademagu son pere.

the king Bademagu his father

6240

6245

- 6250 Devant lui, por ce que il pere
Before him for this that it appear
 qu'il est preuz et de grant afeire,
that-he is valiant and of great consequence
 comança un sanblant a feire
he-began a semblance to make
 et une chiere merveilleuse.
and a countenance marvelous
 Cest jor tenoit cort mout joieuse
This day held court very joyous
- 6255 li rois a Bade sa cité.
the king at Bade his city
 Jorz fu de sa natevité,
Day it-was of his nativity
 por ce la tint grant et pleniére,
for this it he-held great and full
 si ot jant de mainte meniere
and there-were folk of many-a kind
 avuec lui venu plus qu'assez.
with him come more than-enough
- 6260 Toz fu li palés antassez
Quite was the palace crammed
 de chevaliers et de puceles;
with knights and with maidens
 mes une an i ot avuec eles,
but one thereof there was with them
 qui suer estoit Meleagant,
who sister was (of-)Meleagant

don bien vos dirai ça avant

whereof well to-you I-shall-tell here onward

mon panser et m'antancion,

my thought and my-intention

por quoi j'an ai fet mancion;

for why I-thereof have made mention

mes n'afiert pas a ma matire

but not-belongs at-all to my matter

que ci androit le doie dire,

that here on-the-spot it I-should tell

ne je ne la vuel boceiier

nor I not it wish to-dent

ne corronpre ne forceiier,

nor to-corrupt nor to-force

mes mener buen chemin et droit.

but to-lead a-good road and straight

Or si vos dirai la androit,

Now so to-you I-shall-tell there on-the-spot

ou Meleaganz est venuz,

where Meleagant is come

que oiant toz, gros et menuz,

who in-bearing-of all great and small

dist a son pere mout an haut:

said to his father very in loud

“Pere”, fet il, “se Deus me saut,

Father says he so God me save

s'il vos plect, or me dites voir,

if-it to-you pleases now to-me tell truth

6265

6270

6275

se cil ne doit grant joie avoir

whether he not ought great joy have

et se mout n'est de grant vertu,

and whether very not-is of great valor

6280 qui a la cort le roi Artu

who at the court of-the king Arthur

par ses armes se fet doter?"

by his arms himself makes fear

Li pere sanz plus escoter

The father without more to-listen

a sa demande li respont:

to his question to-him answers

"Fiz", fet il, "tuit cil qui buen sont

Son says he all those who good are

6285 doivent enorer et servir

ought to-honor and to-serve

celui qui ce puet desservir,

him who this can deserve

et maintenir sa conpeignie."

and to-maintain his company

Lors le blandist et si li prie,

Then him he-coaxes and so to-him prays

et dit qu'or ne li soit tœu

and says that-now not to-him be bidden

6290 por qu'il a ce amantœu,

for why-he has this mentioned

qu'il quiert, qu'il viaut, et don il vient.

what-he seeks what-he wishes and whence he comes

"Sire, ne sai s'il vos sovient",

Lord not I-know if-it to-you recalls

fet se donques Meleaganz,

says himself then Meleagant

“Des esgarz et des covenanz

Of-the judgments and of-the covenants

qui dit furent et recordé

which said were and recorded

quant par vos fumes acordé

when by you we-were reconciled

et je et Lanceloz ansanble.

both I and Lancelot together

Lors fu esgardé, ce me sanble,

Then it-was adjudged this to-me seems

et devant plusors nos dist l'an,

and before many to-us said one

que nos fussiens au chief de l'an

that we should-be at-the end of the-year

an la cort Artu prest andui.

in the court of-Arthur ready both

J'i alai quant aler i dui,

I-thither went when to-go thither I-had

apareilliez et apresez

arrayed and made-ready

de ce por quoi j'i iere alez.

for this for which I-thither was gone

Tot ce que je dui feire i fis:

All this which I had to-do thereat I-did

Lancelot demandai et quis,

Lancelot I-asked-for and sought

contre cui je devoie ovrer;

against whom I was-to work

6295

6300

6305

mes nel poi veoir ne trover:

but not-him I-could see nor find

föiz s'an est et destornez.

fled himself-thence is and turned-aside

6310 Or si m'an sui par tel tornez

Now so myself-thereof I-am on such turned

que Gauvains m'a sa foi plevie

that Gawain to-me-has his faith pledged

que se Lanceloz n'est an vie,

that if Lancelot not-is in life

et se dedanz le terme mis

and if within the term set

ne vient, bien m'a dit et promis

not he-comes well to-me-has said and promised

6315 que ja respiz pris n'an sera,

that ever respite taken not-thereof will-be

mes il mëismes la fera

but he himself it will-do

ancontre moi por Lancelot.

against me for Lancelot

Artus n'a chevalier qu'an lot

Arthur not-has a-knight whom-one praises

tant con cestui, bien est sëu;

so-much as this-one well it-is known

6320 mes ainz que florissent sëu

but before that blossom elders

verrai je, s'au ferir venons,

shall-see I if-to-the striking we-come

s'au fet s'acorde li renons,

if-to-the deed agrees the renown

et mon vuel seroit or androit.”

and my wish it-would-be now presently

“Fiz”, fet li peres, “or a droit

Son says the father now with right

te fes ici tenir por sot.

6325

thyself thou-makest here hold for a-fool

Or set tes qui devant nel sot

Now knows such-a-one who before not-it knew

par toi mēismes ta folie.

by thee thyself thy folly

Voirs est que buens cuers s’umilie,

True it-is that a-good heart humbles-itself

mes li fos et li sorcuidiez

but the fool and the overweening

n’iert ja de folie vuidiez.

6330

not-will-be ever of folly emptied

Fiz, por toi le di, que tes teches

Son for thee it I-say for thy traits

par sont si dures et si seches

utterly are so hard and so dry

qu’il n’i a douçor n’amistié.

that-there not-therein is sweetness nor-friendship

Li tuens cuers est toz sanz pitié:

The thy heart is quite without pity

trop par ies de folie espris.

6335

too utterly thou-art with folly kindled

C’est ce por quoi je te mespris,

This-is that for which I thee misprize

c’est ce qui mout t’abeissera.

this-is that which much thee-will-lower

Se tu es preuz, assez sera

If thou art valiant enough will-be

qui le bien an tesmoignera

who the good thereof will-witness

6340 a l'ore qu'il besoignera.

at the-hour that-it will-be-needed

N'estuet pas prodome loer

Not-behooves at-all a-worthy-man to-praise

son cuer por son fet aloer;

his heart for his deed to-commend

que li fez mēismes se loe;

for the deed itself itself praises

nēis la monte d'une aloe

even the worth of-a lark

6345 ne t'āide a monter an pris

not thee-helps to rise in worth

tes los, mes assez mains t'an pris.

thy praise but much less thee-thereof I-prize

Fiz, je te chasti; mes cui chaut?

Son I thee chastise but to-whom matters

Quantqu'an dit a fol petit vaut;

Whatever-one says to a-fool little avails

que cil ne se fet fors debate,

for he not himself does but beat

6350 qui de fol viaut folie abatre,

who from a-fool wishes folly to-beat-down

et biens qu'an ansaingne et descuevre

and good that-one teaches and discloses

ne vaut rien s'an nel met a oevre,

not is-worth anything if-one not-it puts to work

ainz est lués alé et perdu.”

rather it-is straightway gone and lost

Ez vos durement esperdu

Behold you sorely distraught

Meleagant et forsené.

Meleagant and out-of-his-senses

Onques home de mere né,

Ever a-man of mother born

ce vos puis je bien por voir dire,

this to-you can I well for truth say

ne vëistes aussi plain d'ire

not you-saw so full of-wrath

com il estoit; et par corroz

as he was and with anger

fu ilueques li festuz roz,

was there the straw broken

car de rien nule ne blandist

for in thing any not he-coaxes

son pere, mes einçois li dist:

his father but rather to-him said

“Est ce songes ou vos resvez,

Is this a-dream or you rave

qui dites que je sui desvez

who say that I am mad

por ce se je vos cont mon estre?

for this if I to-you tell my state

Com a mon seignor cuidoie estre

As to my lord I-thought to-be

a vos venuz, com a mon pere;

to you come as to my father

6355

6360

6365

mes ne sanble pas qu'il apere,

but not seems at-all that-it appear

car plus vilmant me leidoiez,

for more vilely me you-revile

6370 ce m'est a vis, que ne doiiez;

this to-me-is to seeming than — you-ought

ne reison dire ne savez

nor reason to-say not you-know

por quoi ancomancié l'avez."

for why begun it-you-have

"Si faz assez." — "Et vos de quoi?"

Yes I-do enough And you of what

"Que nule rien an toi ne voi

For any thing in thee not I-see

6375 fors solemant folie et rage.

but only folly and madness

Je conois mout bien ton corage

I know very well thy heart

qui ancor grant mal te fera.

which yet great harm thee will-do

Dahé et qui ja cuidera

Curse have who ever will-think

que Lanceloz, li bien apris,

that Lancelot the well taught

6380 qui de toz fors de toi a pris,

who from all except from thee has praise

s'an soit por ta crieme föiz;

himself-thence be for thy fear fled

mes espoir il est anfoiz

but perhaps he is buried

ou an tel prison anserrez,

or in such a-prison shut

don li huis est si fort serrez

whereof the door is so strongly locked

qu'il n'an puet issir sanz congié.

that-be not-thence can issue without leave

6385

Certes c'est la chose don gié

Certainly this-is the thing whereof I

seroie durement iriez

should-be sorely grieved

s'il estoit morz ou anpiriez.

if-be were dead or harmed

Certes, trop i avroit grant perte,

Certainly too there would-be great loss

se criature si aperte,

if a-creature so accomplished

6390

si bele, si preuz, si serie

so fair so valiant so serene

estoit ja si par tans perie;

were already so in time perished

mes c'est mançonge, se Deu plest."

but this-is a-lie if God please

A tant Bademaguz se test;

At that Bademagu himself keeps-silent

- 6395 mes quanqu'il ot dit et conté
but whatever-he had said and recounted
 ot antandu et escouté
had heard and listened-to
 une soe fille pucele,
a his daughter maiden
 et sachiez bien que ce fu cele
and know well that this was she
 qu'or ainz amantui an mon conte,
whom-just before I-mentioned in my tale
 6400 qui n'est pas liee quant an conte
who not-is at-all glad when one recounts
 tes noveles de Lancelot.
such news of Lancelot
 Bien aparçoit qu'an le celot
Well she-perceives that-one him was-hiding
 quant an n'an fet ne vant ne voie.
when one not-thereof makes neither wind nor track
 "Ja Deus", fet ele, "ne me voie
Ever God says she not me see
 6405 quant je ja mes reposerai
when I ever more shall-rest
 jusque tant que je an savrai
until so-much that I thereof shall-know
 novele certaine et veraie!"
news certain and true
 Maintenant sanz nule delaie,
At-once without any delay
 sanz noise feire et sanz murmure,
without noise to-make and without murmur

s'an cort monter sor une mure

6410

herself-thence runs to-mount upon a mule

mout bele et mout soef portant.

very fair and very softly carrying

Mes de ma part vos di je tant,

But of my part to-you say I this-much

qu'ele ne set onques quel part

that-she not knows ever what way

torner quant de la cort se part;

to-turn when from the court herself parts

n'ele nel set n'ele nel rueve,

6415

nor-she not-it knows nor-she not-it asks

mes el premier chemin qu'el trueve

but in-the first road that-she finds

s'an antre et va grant alëure,

herself-thence she-enters and goes great pace

ne set ou, mes par aventure,

not she-knows where but by adventure

sanz chevalier et sanz serjant.

without knight and without sergeant

Mout se haste, mout est an grant

6420

Much herself she-hastens much she-is in earnest

de consiure ce qu'ele chace.

to overtake that which-she chases

Mout se porquiert, mout se porchace,

Much herself she-searches much herself she-pursues

mes ce n'iert ja mie si tost:

but this not-will-be ever at-all so soon

n'estuet pas qu'ele se repost

not-behooves at-all that-she herself rest

6425 ne demort an un leu granmant

nor tarry in one place greatly

s'ele viaut feire avenanmant

if-she wishes to-do fittingly

ce qu'ele a anpanse a feire,

that which-she has purposed to do

c'est Lancelot de prison treire,

this-is Lancelot from prison to-draw

s'el le trueve et feire le puisse.

if-she him finds and to-do it may

6430 Mes je cuit qu'einçois qu'el le truisse

But I think that-before that-she him find

an avra maint päis cerchié,

thereof she-will-have many-a land searched

maint alé et maint reverchié

many traveled and many ransacked

ainz que nule novele an oie.

before that any news thereof she-bear

Mes que vaudroit se je contoie

But what would-avail if I recounted

6435 ne ses gistes ne ses jornees?

neither her lodgings nor her day's-rides

Mes tantes voies a tornees

But so-many ways she-has turned

a mont, a val, et sus et jus,

to above to below and up and down

que passez fu li mois et plus,

that passed was the month and more

qu'onques plus aprendre n'an pot
that-ever more to-learn not-thereof she-could

ne mes qu'ele devant an sot, 6440
any more than-she before thereof knew

et c'est neanz tot an travers.
and this-is nothing quite in crosswise

Un jor s'an aloit a travers
One day herself-thence was-going at crosswise

un chanp mout dolante et pansive,
a field very sorrowing and pensive

et vit bien loing joste une rive
and saw quite far beside a shore

lez un braz de mer une tor, 6445
beside an arm of sea a tower

mes n'avoit d'une lieue an tor
but not-there-was within-a league in circle

meison ne buiron ne repeire.
house nor hut nor dwelling

Meleaganz l'ot faite feire,
Meleagant it-had made build

qui Lancelot mis i avoit;
who Lancelot put therein had

mes cele neant n'an savoit. 6450
but she anything not-thereof knew

Et si tost com el l'ot vëue
And as soon as she it-had seen

i a si mise sa vëue
thereon she-has so set her gaze

qu'aillors ne la torne ne met.
that-elsewhere not it she-turns nor puts

Et ses cuers tres bien li promet

And her heart very well to-her promises

6455 que c'est ce qu'ele a tant chacié;

that this-is that which-she has so-much chased

mes ore an est venue a chié,

but now thereof she-is come to end

qu'a droite voie l'a menee

for-to straight way her-has led

fortune qui tant l'a penee.

fortune who so-much her-has tormented

Bademagu's Daughter

XXIII

At the tower on the shore, which has one narrow opening and no door, she hears a voice inside arraigning Fortune and Gawain and asking for death. She calls until he hears her, and he learns who she is: the maiden whose boon he paid at the Bridge of the Sword with a knight's head. She finds a pick and he cuts his way out, and she carries him on her mule to a house of her own, bathes and clothes him until he is nimbler than ever, and sends him off to court on a matchless horse.

La pucele la tor aproche

The maiden the tower approaches

6460 et ja est si pres qu'ele i toche.

and already is so near that-she it touches

An tor vet, oroille et escote,

In circle she-goes listens and hearkens

et s'i met s'antancion tote

and thereon puts her-attention whole

savoir mon se ele i öist

to-know indeed if she there might-bear

chose don ele s'esjöist.

a-thing whereof she might-rejoice

A val esgarde et a mont bee:

To below she-looks and to above gazes

la tor voit fort et haute et lee;

the tower she-sees strong and high and broad

mervolle soi que ce puet estre,

marvels herself what this can be

qu'ele n'i voit huis ne fenestre,

that-she not-therein sees door nor window

fors une petite et estroite;

except one little and narrow

an la tor qui est haute et droite

in the tower which is high and upright

n'avoit eschiele ne degré.

not-there-was ladder nor stair

Por ce croit que c'est fet de gre

For this she-believes that this-is done of purpose

et que Lanceloz soit dedanz;

and that Lancelot be within

mes ainz qu'ele manjust des danz

but before that-she eat with-the teeth

savra se ce est voirs ou non.

she-will-know whether this is true or not

Lors le viaut apeler par non:

Then him she-wishes to-call by name

6465

6470

6475

apeler voloit Lancelot,

to-call she-wished Lancelot

mes ce la retarde qu'ele ot,

but this her delays that-she bears

andemantiers qu'el se teisoit,

meanwhile that-she herself kept-silent

6480 une voiz qui un duel feisoit

a voice which a grief made

an la tor merueilleus et fort,

in the tower marvelous and strong

qui ne queroit el que la mort.

which not sought other than the death

La mort covoite et morir viaut,

The death it-covets and to-die it-wishes

car trop a mal et trop se diaut:

for too-much it-has pain and too-much itself grieves

6485 sa vie et son cors despisoit,

his life and his body he-despised

a la foiee si disoit

at the times so he-said

foiblement, qu'ele iert basse et roe:

feebly for-it was low and hoarse

“Häi! fortune, con ta roe

Ab fortune how thy wheel

m'est ore leidemant tornee!

to-me-is now foully turned

6490 Leidemant la m'as bestornee,

Fouilly it to-me-thou-hast overturned

qu'or iere a mont, or sui a val,

for-now I-was to above now I-am to below

or avoie bien, or ai mal,

then I-had good now I-have ill

or me plores, or me rioies.

now to-me thou-weepest then to-me thou-wast-laughing

Las, cheitis, por quoi t'i fioies

Alas wretch for why thyself-therein didst-trust

quant ele si tost t'a leissié!

when she so soon thee-has left

An po d'ore t'a abeissié

In little of-hour thee-she-has lowered

voiremant 'de si haut si bas'.

truly from so high so low

Fortune, quant tu me gabas

Fortune when thou me mockedst

mout fëis mal, mes toi que chaut!

much thou-didst ill but to-thee what matters

A neant t'est comant qu'il aut.

For nothing to-thee-is however that-it go

Ha, sainte Croiz, sainz Esperiz,

Ab holy Cross holy Spirit

con sui perduz, con sui periz!

how I-am lost how I-am undone

Con sui del tot an tot alez!

How I-am of-the all in all gone

Ha, Gauvains, vos qui tant valez,

Ab Gawain you who so-much are-worth

qui de bontez n'avez paroil,

who of goodness not-have equal

6495

6500

6505

certes, duremant me mervoil

certainly sorely myself I-marvel

por quoi vos ne me secorez!

for why you not me succor

Certes, trop i par demorez,

Certainly too-much thereat utterly you-tarry

si ne faites pas cortisie.

and not you-do at-all courtesy

6510 Bien dëust avoir vostre äie

Well ought to-have your help

cil cui tant soliiez amer!

he whom so-much you-were-wont to-love

Certes, de ça ne de la mer,

Certainly of this-side nor of the sea

ce puis je bien dire sanz faille,

this can I well say without fail

n'ëust destor ne repostaille,

not-would-be nook nor biding-place

6515 ou je ne vos ëusse quis

where I not you would-have sought

a tot le mains set anz ou dis,

for quite the least seven years or ten

se je an prison vos sëusse,

if I in prison you knew

ainz que trové ne vos ëusse.

before that found — you I-had

Mes de quoi me vois debatant?

But of what myself I-go struggling

Il ne vos an est mie a tant

6520

It not to-you thereof is at-all to so-much

qu'antrer an voilliez an la painne.

that-to-enter thereinto you-wish in the pains

Li vilains dit bien voir qu'a painne

The churl says quite true that-with difficulty

puet an mes un ami trover!

can one now a friend find

De legier puet an esprover

With ease can one prove

au besoing qui est buens amis.

6525

at-the need who is a-good friend

Las! plus a d'un an qu'an m'a mis

Alas more is than-a year that-one me-has put

ci an ceste tor an prison.

here in this tower in prison

Certes, jel taing a mesprison,

Certainly I-it hold as a-wrong

Gauvains, quant leissié m'i avez!

Gawain since left me-here you-have

Mes espoir que vos nel savez,

6530

But perhaps that you not-it know

espoir que je vos blasme a tort.

perhaps that I you blame with wrong

Certes, voirs est, bien m'i acort

Certainly true it-is well myself-thereto I-agree

et grant outrage et grant mal fis

and great outrage and great ill I-did

quant jel cuidai, car je sui fis

when I-it thought for I am sure

6535 que por quanque cuevrent les nues

that for whatever cover the clouds

ne fust que ne fussent venues

not would-it-be that — were come

voz janz et vos por moi fors treire

your folk and you for me forth to-draw

de cest mal et de cest contreire,

from this ill and from this adversity

se vos de voir le sëussiez;

if you of truth it knew

6540 et feire le redëussiez

and to-do it you-ought-again

par amor et par conpeignie,

through love and through fellowship

qu'autremant ne le di je mie.

for-otherwise not it say I at-all

Mes c'est neanz, ce ne puet estre.

But this-is nothing this not can be

Ha, de Deu et de saint Selvestre

Ab by God and by saint Selvestre

6545 soit maudiz, et Deus le destruie,

be-he cursed and God him destroy

cil qui a tel honte m'estuie!

be who with such shame me-shuts-up

C'est li pire qui soit an vie,

This-is the worst who be in life

Meleaganz, qui par anvie

Meleagant who through envy

m'a fet tot le pis que il pot!"

to-me-has done quite the worst that he could

A tant se coise, a tant se tot

At that himself quiets at that himself busbed

cil qui a dolor sa vie use.

he who in sorrow his life wears

Mes lors cele qui a val muse

But then she who to below waits

quanqu'il ot dit ot antandu;

whatever-he bad said bad heard

n'a plus longuemant atandu,

not-has more long waited

qu'or set qu'ele est bien assenee,

for-now she-knows that-she is well directed

si apele come senee:

and calls as one-wise

"Lanceloz!" quanqu'el puet et plus;

Lancelot as-much-as-she can and more

"amis, vos qui estes lassus,

friend you who are up-there

parlez a une vostre amie!"

speak to a your friend

Mes cil dedanz ne l'öi mie.

But he within not it-heard at-all

Et cele plus et plus s'esforce,

And she more and more strains-herself

6550

6555

6560

tant que cil qui n'a point de force

so-much that he who not-has a-whit of strength

l'antröi, si s'an merveilla

it-half-heard and himself-thereat marveled

que puet estre qui l'apela.

what can be who him-called

6565 La voiz autant, apeler s'ot,

The voice he-hears to-call himself-he-hears

mes qui l'apele il ne le sot:

but who him-calls he not it knew

fantosme cuide que ce soit.

a-phantom he-thinks that this be

Tot an tor soi garde et porvoit

Quite in circle himself he-looks and peers

savoir mon s'il vëist nelui;

to-know indeed whether-he might-see anyone

6570 mes ne voit fors la tor et lui.

but not he-sees except the tower and himself

“Deus”, fet il, “qu'est ice que j'oi?

God says he what-is this which I-hear

J'oi parler et neant ne voi!

I-hear speaking and anything not I-see

Par foi, ce est plus que mervoille,

By faith this is more than marvel

si ne dor je pas, einçois voille.

and not sleep I at-all rather I-wake

6575 Espoir, s'il m'avenist an songe,

Perhaps if-it to-me-befell in dream

cuidasse que ce fust mançonge;

I-would-think that this were a-lie

mes je voil et por ce me grieve.”

but I wake and for this to-me it-grieves

Lors a quelque painne se lieve

Then with some trouble himself be-raises

et va vers le pertuis petit

and goes toward the opening little

foiblement petit et petit;

feebly little and little

quant il i fu, si s'i acoste

when he there was so himself-thereto be-leans

sus et jus, de lonc et de coste.

up and down of length and of side

Quant sa vëue a mise fors,

When his gaze he-has put out

si com il pot esgarder, lors

as as he could look then

vit celi qui huchié l'avoit:

he-saw her who hailed him-had

ne la conut, quant il la voit;

not her he-knew when he her sees

mes cele tantost conut lui,

but she at-once knew him

si li dit: “Lanceloz, je sui

and to-him says Lancelot I am

por vos querre de loing venue.

for you to-see from afar come

Or est si la chose avenue,

Now is so the thing come-about

Deu merci, qu'or vos ai trové.

God thanks that-now you I-have found

6580

6585

6590

Je suis cele qui vos rové,

I am she who of-you asked

quant au pont de l'espee alastes,

when to-the bridge of the-sword you-went

un don, et vos le me donastes

a boon and you it to-me gave

6595 mout volantiers quant jel vos quis:

very willingly when I-it of-you sought

ce fu del chevalier conquis

this was of-the knight vanquished

le chief que je vos fis tranchier,

the head which I you made cut-off

que je nes point n'avoie chier.

whom I even a-whit not-held dear

Por cest don et por cest servise

For this boon and for this service

6600 me sui an ceste painne mise:

myself I-am in this trouble put

por ce vos metrai fors de ci."

for this you I-shall-put out of here

"Pucele, la vostre merci",

Maiden by-the your leave

fet se donc li anprisonez;

says himself then the imprisoned-one

"Bien me sera guerredonez

Well to-me will-be guerdoned

6605 li servises que je vos fis,

the service which I to-you did

se je fors de ceanz sui mis.

if I out of in-here am put

Se fors de ci me poez metre,
If out of here me you-can put
 por voir vos puis dire et prometre
for truth to-you I-can say and promise
 que je toz jorz mes serai vostre,
that I all days more shall-be yours
 si m'äit sainz Pos li apostre!

6610

so me-help saint Pos the apostle
 Et se je Deu voie an la face,
And so I God may-see in the face
 ja mes n'iert jorz que je ne face
ever more not-will-be a-day that I not do
 quanque vos pleira comander.
whatever to-you will-please to-command
 Ne ja ne savroiz demander

Nor ever not you-will-know to-ask
 chose nule, por que je l'aie,
thing any provided that I it-have
 que vos ne l'aïiez sanz delaie.”
but you not it-have without delay

6615

“Amis, ja de ce ne dotez
Friend ever of this not doubt
 que bien n'an soïiez fors botez.
that well not-thereof you-be out thrust

Hui seroiz desclos et delivres:
Today you-will-be unshut and free

je nel leiroie por mil livres
I not-it would-leave for a-thousand pounds
 que fors n'an soïiez ainz le jor.
but out not-thereof you-be before the day

6620

Lors vos metrai a buen sejour,

Then you I-shall-put at good rest

a grant repos, et a grant eise.

at great repose and at great ease

Ja n'avrai chose qui vos pleise,

Ever not-I-shall-have a-thing which you please

6625 se vos la volez, ne l'aiiez.

if you it wish not you-it-have

Ja de rien ne vos esmaiez:

Ever of anything not yourself dismay

mes einçois me covient porquerre,

but first to-me it-behooves to-search-out

ou que soit ci an ceste terre,

wherever that be here in this land

aucun angin, se je le truis,

some device if I it find

6630 don puissiez croistre cest pertuis

whereby you-may enlarge this opening

seviaus tant qu'issir an puissiez."

at-least so-much that-to-issue thereof you-may

"Et Deus doint que vos le truissiez!"

And God grant that you it find

Fet se cil qui bien s'i acorde;

Says himself he who well himself-thereto agrees

"et j'ai ceanz a planté corde

and I-have in-here in plenty cord

6635 que li cuivert bailliee m'ont

which the base-ones handed to-me-have

por treire mon mangier a mont,

for to-draw my food to above

pain d'orge dur et eve trouble

bread of-barley hard and water muddy

qui le cuer et le cors me trouble.”

which the heart and the body to-me troubles

Lors la fille Bademagu

Then the daughter (of-)Bademagu

un pic fort, quarré et agu

a pick strong square and sharp

porquiert tant qu'el l'a, puis le baille

seeks-out until that-she it-has then it she-bands

celui qui tant an hurte et maille

to-him who so-much therewith strikes and hammers

et tant a feru et chevé,

and so-much has smitten and dug

neporquant si li a grevé,

nevertheless yet to-him it-has cost

qu'issuz s'an est tot largement.

that-issued himself-thence is quite freely

Or est a grant alegement,

Now he-is at great relief

or a grant joie, ce sachiez,

now he-has great joy this know

quant il est de prison sachiez

since he is from prison drawn

et quant il d'iluec se remue,

and since he from-there himself removes

ou tel piece a esté an mue.

where such a-while he-has been in mew

Or est au large et a l'essor:

Now he-is at-the large and at the-open-air

6640

6645

6650

et sachiez bien que por tot l'or
and know well that for all the-gold

qui est expanduz par le mont,
which is spread through the world

qui tot le mëist an un mont
if-one quite it put in one heap

6655 et tot li donast et soffist,
and quite to-him gave and sufficed

arrieres estre ne vossist.

back to-be not he-would-wish

Ez vos desserré Lancelot,

Behold you unlocked Lancelot

qui si iert vains qu'il chancelot

who so was faint that-be staggered

de vanité et de foiblesce.

from emptiness and from weakness

6660 Cele si soef que nel blesce

She so gently that not-him she-hurt

le met devant soi sor sa mure,

him puts before herself upon her mule

puis si s'an vont grant alëure.

then so themselves-thence go great pace

Mes la pucele se desvoie

But the maiden herself turns-aside

tot de gre por ce qu'an nes voie,

quite of purpose for this that-one not-them see

6665 et chevauche celeemant;

and rides secretly

car s'ele alast apertemant

for if-she went openly

espoir assez tost lor n'üst

perhaps quite soon to-them would-harm

aucuns s'il les reconüst;

someone if-he them recognized

et ce ne vossist ele pas.

and this not would-wish she at-all

Por ce eschive les maus pas

For this she-shuns the bad passes

et est venue a un repeire,

and is come to a dwelling

ou sovant sejourne et repeire,

where often she-stays and resorts

por ce que biaux estoit et janz.

for this that fair it-was and comely

Et li repeires et les janz

And the dwelling and the folk

ierent an son comant del tot,

were at her command of-the all

si estoit plantëis de tot

and it-was abounding in everything

li leus et sœurs et privez.

the place both safe and private

La est Lanceloz arivez:

There is Lancelot arrived

et si tost com il fu venuz,

and as soon as he was come

quant il fu de sa robe nuz,

when he was of his robe bare

6670

6675

6680

an une haute bele couche

in a high fair couch

la pucele soef le couche,

the maiden gently him lays

puis le baingne, puis le conroie

then him she-bathes then him she-tends

si tres bien que je n'an porroie

so very well that I not-thereof could

6685 la meitié deviser ne dire.

the half describe nor tell

Soef le menoie et atire

Gently him she-bandles and dresses

aussi com el fëist son pere:

just as she would-do her father

tot le renovele et repere,

quite him she-renews and restores

tot le remue et tot le change.

quite him she-alters and quite him she-changes

6690 Or n'est mie mains biaux d'un ange,

Now not-is at-all less fair than-an angel

or est plus tornanz et plus vistes

now he-is more nimble and more quick

qu'onques rien aussi ne vëistes.

than-ever a-thing so not you-saw

N'est mes roigneus n'esgëunez,

Not-is more scabby nor-starved

mes forz et biaux, si s'est levez.

but strong and fair so himself-is risen

Et la pucele quis li ot

6695

And the maiden sought for-him had

robe plus bele qu'ele pot,

a-robe more fair than-she could

don au lever le revesti;

where-with at-the rising him she-reclothed

et cil lieemant la vesti

and he gladly it put-on

plus legiers que oisiaus qui vole.

more light than a-bird which flies

La pucele beise et acole,

6700

The maiden be-kisses and embraces

puis li dist amiablemant:

then to-her said amiably

“Amie”, fet il, “solemant

Friend says he only

a Deu et a vos rant merciz

to God and to you I-render thanks

de ce que sains sui et gariz.

for this that whole I-am and healed

Par vos sui de prison estors,

6705

By you I-am from prison rescued

por ce poez mon cuer, mon cors,

for this you-can my heart my body

et mon servise et mon avoir,

and my service and my goods

quant vos pleira, prandre et avoir.

when to-you it-will-please take and have

Tant m'avez fet que vostre sui,

So-much to-me-you-have done that yours I-am

- 6710 mes grant piece a que je ne fui
but great while it-is that I not was
 a la cort Artu mon seignor,
at the court (of-)Arthur my lord
 qui m'a porté mout grant enor;
who to-me-has borne very great honor
 et j'i avroie assez a feire.
and I-there would-have enough to do
 Or, douce amie deboneire,
Now sweet friend gracious
- 6715 par amors si vos prieroie
for love so of-you I-would-pray
 congié d'aler, et j'i iroie,
leave of-going and I-thither would-go
 s'il vos pleisoit, mout volantiers."
if-it to-you pleased very willingly
 "Lanceloz, biaux douz amis chiers",
Lancelot fair sweet friend dear
 fet la pucele, "jel vuel bien;
says the maiden I-it wish well
- 6720 que vostre enor et vostre bien
for your honor and your good
 vuel je par tot et ci et la."
wish I through everywhere both here and there
 Un merveillex cheval qu'ele a,
A marvelous horse which-she has
 le meillor qu'onques vëist nus,
the best that-ever saw anyone
 li done donc, et cil saut sus,
to-him she-gives then and he leaps up

qu'as estriers congié n'an rova:

for-of-the stirrups leave not-thereof he-asked

n'an sot mot quant sus se trova.

not-thereof knew a-word when up himself he-found

Lors a Deu qui onques ne mant

Then to God who ever not lies

s'antrecomandent buenemant.

each-other-they-commend heartily

6725

Lancelot Comes Back to Court

XXIV

Meleagant is at court and Gawain mounted, reaching for his shield, when Lancelot dismounts in front of him. The queen is nearest of all to the joy and shows least of it, because Reason shuts her heart in and puts the thing off until a more private hour. Lancelot tells the king plainly where he has been and who let him out, and Gawain yields him the battle. Meleagant, staring at a man he had left behind stone walls, comes within very little of losing his wits.

Lanceloz s'est mis a la voie

Lancelot himself-is put on the way

si liez que, se juré l'avoie,

so glad that if sworn I-it-had

ne porroie por nule painne

not I-could for any pains

dire la joie qu'il demainne

tell the joy which-he shows

de ce qu'einsi est eschapez

of this that-thus he-is escaped

de la ou il fu antrapez.

from there where he was entrapped

6730

- 6735 Mes or dit sovant et menu
But now he-says often and thick
 que mar l'a an prison tenu
that ill him-has in prison held
 li träître, li forsligniez,
the traitor the degenerate
 qui est gabez et angigniez,
who is mocked and tricked
 “Et maugré suen an sui je fors.”
And despite his thereof am I out
- 6740 Donc jure le cuer et le cors
Then he-swears the heart and the body
 celui qui tot le mont cria,
of-him who all the world created
 qu'avoir ne richesce nen a
that-goods nor riches not there-is
 des Babiloine jusqu'a Gant,
from Babylon as-far-as Ghent
 por qu'il leissast Meleagant
for which-he would-let Meleagant
- 6745 eschaper se il le tenoit
escape if he him held
 et de lui au dessus venoit;
and of him to-the above came
 que trop li a fet let et honte.
for too-much to-him he-has done ugliness and shame
 Mes li afeires a ce monte
But the matter to this comes
 que par tans an iert a mëismes;
that in time thereof he-will-be at the-point

car cil Meleaganz mēismes

6750

for that Meleagant himself

qu'il menace et tient ja si cort

whom-he threatens and holds already so short

estoit cest jor venuz a cort

was this day come to court

sanz ce que nus ne l'i manda,

without this that anyone not him-thither summoned

et lués qu'il i fu, demanda

and straightway that-he there was he-asked

tant mon seignor Gauvain qu'il l'ot.

6755

so-much for-my lord Gawain that-he him-had

Puis li anquiert de Lancelot

Then of-him he-inquires of Lancelot

li fel, li trāitre provez,

the wicked-one the traitor proved

se puis fu vëuz ne trovez,

whether since he-was seen nor found

aussi con s'il n'an sēust rien;

just as if-he not-thereof knew anything

non feisoit il, nel sot pas bien,

6760

not did he not-it knew at-all well

mes il le cuidoit bien savoir.

but he it thought well to-know

Et Gauvains li a dit por voir

And Gawain to-him has said for truth

qu'il nel vit ne il ne vint puis.

that-he not-him saw nor he not came since

“Des qu'einsi est que je nel truis”,

Since that-thus it-is that I not-him find

- 6765 fet Meleaganz, “donc venez
says Meleagant then come
 et mon covenant me tenez;
and my covenant to-me hold
 car plus ne vos an atandrai.”
for more not you thereof I-shall-await
 Ce fet Gauvains: “Bien vos tandrai,
This says Gawain Well to-you I-shall-hold
 se Deu plest ou j’ai ma creance,
if God please in-whom I-have my belief
 6770 jusqu’a po vostre covenance.
within a-little your covenant
 Bien me cuit a vos aquiter;
Well myself I-think toward you to-acquit
 mes se vient au plus poinz giter
but if it-comes to-the most points to-throw
 et j’an giet plus que ne façoiz,
and I-thereof throw more than — you-do
 si m’ait Deus et sainte foiz,
so me-belp God and holy faith
 6775 quanqu’avra el geu, tot an tasche
whatever-there-be in-the game quite in a-heap
 prandrai, ja n’an ferai relasche.”
I-shall-take ever not-thereof I-shall-make release
 Et lors Gauvains sanz plus atandre
And then Gawain without more waiting
 comande gitier et estandre
commands to-throw and to-spread
 iluec devant soi un tapi.
there before himself a carpet

Ne se font mucié ne tapi

6780

Not themselves make hidden nor crouched

a son comant li escuier,

at his command the squires

mes sanz grondre et sanz enuiier

but without grumbling and without vexing

de ce qu'il rueve s'antremetent.

of this which-he asks they-set-about

Le tapi aportent, sel metent

The carpet they-bring and-it they-lay

cele part ou il comanda,

6785

that way where he commanded

lors s'assiet cil qui le manda

then himself-seats he who it ordered

de dessore et armer se rueve

from above and to-arm himself he-asks

as vaslez que devant lui trueve,

of-the young-men whom before him he-finds

qui an piez dessublé estoient.

who on feet uncloaked were

Deus an i ot, qui li estoient

6790

Two thereof there were who to-him were

ne sai ou cosin ou neveu,

not I-know either cousin or nephew

por voir bien anseignié et preu:

for truth well taught and worthy

cil l'arment si bel et si bien

they him-arm so fairly and so well

qu'il n'i a soz le monde rien

that-there not-therein is beneath the world anything

6795 don nus hon reprandre les puisse

whereof any man to-blame them might

por mesprison nule qu'il truisse

for wrong any that-he find

an chose qu'il i aient fet.

in a-thing that-they thereat have done

Quant l'ont armé, li uns d'eus vet

When him-they-have armed the one of-them goes

amener un destrier d'Espaingne

to-bring a charger of-Spain

6800 tel qui plus tost cort par chanpaingne,

such which more swiftly runs over open-field

par bois, par tertres et par vaus

through woods over hills and through valleys

que ne fist li buens Bucifaus.

than — did the good Bucifaus

El cheval tel con vos oez

On-the horse such as you hear

monta li chevaliers loez,

mounted the knight praised

6805 Gauvains, li plus bien anseigniez

Gawain the most well taught

qui onques fust de main seigniez.

who ever was with hand signed

Et ja voloit son escu prendre

And already he-wished his shield to-take

quant il vit devant lui desçandre

when he saw before him dismount

Lancelot don ne se gardoit.

Lancelot whereof not himself he-was-aware

A grant mervolle l'esgardoit

With great marvel him-be-watched

por ce que si soudainnement

for this that so suddenly

est venuz; et se je ne mant,

he-is come and if I not lie

mervoilles li sont avenues

marvels to-him are befallen

aussi granz con s'il fust des nues

just great as if-he were from-the clouds

devant lui chëuz maintenant;

before him fallen at-once

mes lors nel va riens detenant

but then not-him goes anything holding-back

ne besoinz qu'il pöist avoir,

nor need that-be might have

quant il voit que c'est il por voir,

when he sees that this-is he for truth

qu'a terre ne soit desçanduz

but-to ground — he-be dismounted

puis li a ses braz estanduz,

then to-him has his arms stretched

si l'acole et salue et beise.

and him-embraces and greets and kisses

6810

6815

6820

Or a grant joie, or est a eise

Now he-has great joy now he-is at ease

quant son conpeignon a trouvé.

since his companion he-has found

Et je vos dirai voir prové,

And I to-you will-tell truth proved

6825 si ne m'an mescreez vos pas,

so not me-thereof disbelieve you at-all

que Gauvains tot eneslepas

that Gawain quite straightway

ne vossist pas qu'an l'eslëust

not would-wish at-all that-one him-should-choose

a roi par si qu'il ne l'ëust.

for king on condition that-be not him-had

Ja set li rois, ja sevent tuit

Now knows the king now know all

6830 que Lanceloz, cui qu'il enuit,

that Lancelot whom that-it vex

qui tel piece a esté gueitiez,

who such a-while has been watched-for

est venuz toz sains et heitiez;

is come quite whole and hale

s'an font grant joie tuit ansanble,

so-thereof make great joy all together

et por lui festoier s'assanble

and for him to-feast assembles

6835 la corz qui lonc tans l'a baé.

the court which long time him-has longed-for

N'i a nul tant de grant aé

Not-there is anyone so-much of great age

ou de petit, joie n'an face.

or of little joy not-thereof make

Joie depiece et si efface

Joy shatters and so effaces

la dolor qui einçois i ert:

the sorrow which before there was

li diaus s'an fuit, si i apert

the grief itself-thence flees and there appears

joie qui formant les revele.

joy which greatly them revives

Et la rëine n'i est ele

And the queen not-there is she

a cele joie qu'an demainne?

at that joy which-one shows

Öil, voir tote premerainne.

Yes truly quite the-first

Comant? — Por Deu, ou fust el donques?

How For God where would-be she then

Ele n'ot mes si grant joie onques

She not-bad more so great joy ever

com or a de sa revenue

as now she-has of bis return

et ele a lui ne fust venue?

and she to him not were come

6840

6845

Si est voir, ele an est si pres

Yes it-is true she thereof is so near

6850 que po s'an faut, mout an va pres

that little itself-thereof lacks much thereof goes near

que li cors le cuer ne sivoit.

that the body the heart — followed

Ou est donc li cuers? Il beisoit

Where is then the heart It was-kissing

et conjöissoit Lancelot.

and welcoming Lancelot

Et li cors por quoi se celot?

And the body for why itself was-hiding

6855 Por quoi n'est la joie anterine?

For why not-is the joy entire

A i donc corroz ne häine?

Is there then anger nor hatred

Nenil certes, ne tant ne quant,

No certainly nor so-much nor how-much

mes puet cel estre li auquant,

but may that be the some

li rois, li autre qui la sont,

the king the others who there are

6860 qui lor iauz expanduz i ont,

who their eyes spread thereon have

aparcëussent tost l'afeire

would-perceive soon the-matter

s'einsi veant toz vossist feire

if-thus in-sight-of all she-wished to-do

tot si con li cuers le vossist.

quite just as the heart it wished

Et se reisons ne li tossist

And if reason not from-her took

cel fol panser et cele rage,

that mad thought and that frenzy

si vëissent tot son corage,

then they-would-see all her heart

lors si fust trop granz la folie.

then so were too great the folly

Por ce reisons anferme et lie

For this reason shuts-in and binds

son fol cuer et son fol pansé,

her mad heart and her mad thought

si l'a un petit rassansé

and it-has a little brought-to-sense

et a mis la chose an respit

and has put the thing in respite

jusqu'a tant que voie et espit

until so-long that she-see and she-spy

un buen leu et un plus privé,

a good place and a more private

ou il soient miauz arivé

where they be better come

qu'or ne seroient a ceste ore.

than-now — they-would-be at this hour

Li rois Lancelot mout enore,

The king Lancelot much honors

et quant assez l'ot conjöi,

and when enough him-he-had welcomed

6865

6870

6875

si li dist: "Amis, je n'öi
and to-him said Friend I not-heard

certes de nul home noveles,
certainly of any man news

6880 piece a, qui si me fussent beles,
a-while ago which so to-me were fair

con de vos; mes mout m'esbäis
as of you but much I-wonder

an quel terre et an quel päis
in what land and in what country

vos avez si grant piece esté.
you have so great a-while been

Et tot iver et tot esté
And all winter and all summer

6885 vos ai fet querre et sus et jus,
you I-have made seek both up and down

n'onques trover ne vos pot nus."
nor-ever to-find not you could anyone

"Certes", fet Lanceloz, "biaus sire,
Certainly says Lancelot fair lord

a briés paroles vos puis dire
in brief words to-you I-can tell

tot si com il m'est avenü.
quite just as it to-me-is befallen

6890 Meleaganz si m'a tenu,
Meleagant so me-has held

li fel trāitres, an prison

the wicked traitor in prison

des cele ore que li prison

from that hour when the prisoners

de sa terre furent delivre,

of his land were freed

si m'a fet a grant honte vivre

and me-has made in great shame live

an une tor qui siet sor mer.

in a tower which sits on sea

La me fist metre et anfermer,

There me he-made put and shut-in

la menasse ancor dure vie

there I-should-lead still hard life

se ne fust une moie amie,

if not were a mine friend

une pucele cui je fis

a maiden to-whom I did

un petit servise jadis.

a little service formerly

Cele por assez petit don

She for quite little a-gift

m'a randu large guerredon:

to-me-has rendered large guerdon

grant enor m'a faite et grant bien.

great honor to-me-has done and great good

Mes celui cui je n'aim de rien,

But him whom I not-love in anything

6895

6900

- 6905 qui ceste honte et cest messfet
who this shame and this misdeed
 m'a porchacié, porquis et fet,
to-me-has procured sought-out and done
 voldrai randre son paiemant
I-shall-wish render his payment
 or androit sanz delaïemant.
now presently without delaying
 Il l'est venuz querre et il l'et.
He it-is come to-seek and he it-have
 6910 N'estuet pas que il s'an delet
Not-behooves at-all that he himself-thereof delay
 por l'atandre, car toz est prez,
for it-to-await for quite is ready
 li gaainz, la monte et li prez;
the gain the stake and the meadow
 mes ja Deus ne doint qu'il s'an lot."
but ever God not grant that-he himself-thereof praise
 Lors dit Gauvains a Lancelot:
Then says Gawain to Lancelot
 6915 "Amis", fet il, "iceste paie
Friend says he this payment
 se je vostre detor la paie,
if I your debt it pay
 c'iert assez petite bontez.
that-will-be quite little kindness
 Et aussi sui je ja montez
And besides am I already mounted
 et toz prez si con vos veez.
and quite ready just as you see

Biaus douz amis, ne me veez

6920

Fair sweet friend not to-me refuse

cest don que je requier et vuel.”

this boon which I require and wish

Cil dit qu’il se leiroit un oel,

He says that-he himself would-let an eye

voire andeus, de la teste treire

indeed both from the head draw

ainz qu’a ce le pöist atreire;

before that-to this him one-could draw

bien jure que ja n’avandra.

6925

well he-swears that ever not-it-will-happen

Il li doit et il li randra,

He to-him owes and he to-him will-render

car de sa main li afia.

for with his hand to-him he-pledged

Gauvains voit bien, mestier n’i a

Gawain sees well use not-therein is

riens nule que dire li sache,

thing any that to-say to-him he-know

si desvest son hauberc et sache

6930

so he-strips his hauberk and draws

de son dos, et tost se desarme.

from his back and quickly himself disarms

Lanceloz de ses armes s’arme

Lancelot with his arms arms-himself

tot sanz delai et sanz demore;

quite without delay and without tarrying

car mout li delaie et demore

for much to-him it-delays and lingers

6935 qu'aquitez se soit et paieiez.

that-acquitted himself be and paid

N'avra mes bien, s'iert apaieiez

Not-will-have more good until-will-be satisfied

Meleaganz qui se mervoille

Melegant who himself marvels

oultre reison de la mervoille

beyond reason at the marvel

qu'il a ses iauz esgarde et voit;

which-be with his eyes beholds and sees

6940 a bien petit qu'il ne desvoit

at quite little that-be — goes-mad

et par po n'a le san changié.

and by little has the sense changed

“Certes”, fet il, “fos fui quant gié

Certainly says he a-fool I-was when I

n'alai einçois que ça venisse

not-went before that hitber I-came

veoir, se je ancor tenisse

to-see whether I still held

6945 an ma prison et an ma tor

in my prison and in my tower

celui qui or m'a fet un tor.

him who now to-me-has done a turn

Ha! Deus, je por coi i alasse?

Ah God I for what thither should-go

Comant, par quel reison cuidasse

How by what reason should-I-think

que il s'an pöist estre issuz?

that he himself-thence might be issued

N'est li murs assez fort tissuz

Not-is the wall enough strongly woven

et la torz assez forz et haute?

and the tower enough strong and high

N'il n'i avoit pertuis ne faute,

Nor-there not-therein was opening nor flaw

par ou il issir an pëust

by which he to-issue thereof might

s'äie par defors n'ëust.

if-help from outside not-he-had

Espoir qu'il i fu ancusez.

Perhaps that-be there was betrayed

Or soit que li murs fust usez

Now be-it that the wall were worn

et toz cheuz et toz fonduz,

and quite fallen and quite crumbled

ne fust il avuec confonduz

not would-be he therewith destroyed

et morz et desmanbrez et roz?

and dead and dismembered and broken

Öil, si m'äit Deus trestoz,

Yes so me-help God quite-wholly

s'il fust chëuz, morz fust sanz faille;

if-it were fallen dead he-were without fail

mes je cuit, qu'ainz que li murs faille,

but I think that-sooner than the wall fail

6950

6955

6960

faudra la mers et l'eve tote

will-fail the sea and the-water entire

si qu'il n'an i remandra gote,

so that-there not-thereof there will-remain a-drop

6965 ne li monz ne durera plus

nor the world not will-last longer

s'a force n'est abatuz jus.

if-by force not-it-is beaten down

Autremant va, n'est pas issi:

Otherwise it-goes not-is at-all thus

äie ot quant il s'an issi,

help be-had when he himself-thence issued

ne s'an est autremant volez:

nor himself-thence is otherwise flown

6970 bien sui par consance afolez.

well I-am by connivance undone

Comant qu'il fust, il an est fors;

However that-it were he thereof is out

mes se je m'an gardasse lors,

but if I myself-thereof bad-guarded then

ja ne fust ne ja n'avenist,

ever not would-it-be nor ever would-not-happen

ne ja mes a cort ne venist.

nor ever more to court not he-would-come

6975 Mes tart an sui au repantir:

But late thereof I-am at-the repenting

cil qui n'a talant de mantir,

he who not-has desire of lying

li vilains, dit bien chose estable

the churl says quite a-thing settled

que a tart ferme l'an l'estable

that at late closes one the-stable

quant li chevaus an est menez.

when the horse thence is led

Bien sai qu'or serai demenez

Well I-know that-now I-shall-be handled

a grant honte et a grant leidure

with great shame and with great foulness

se assez ne suefre et andure.

if enough not I-suffer and endure

Quel sofrir et quel andurer?

What suffering and what enduring

Mes tant con je porrai durer

But as-long as I shall-be-able last

li donrai je assez antante,

to-him shall-give I enough attention

se Deu plest, a cui j'ai m'atante."

if God please in whom I-have my-hope

Einsi se va reconfortant

Thus himself he-goes comforting

ne ne demande mes fors tant

nor not asks more but so-much

qu'il an chanp soient mis ansamble.

that-they in field be put together

Et c'iert par tans, si con moi sanble,

And that-will-be in time just as to-me seems

car Lanceloz le va requerre,

for Lancelot him goes to-challenge

6980

6985

6990

qui mout tost le cuide conquerre.

who very soon him thinks to-conquer

Mes ainz que li uns l'autre assaille

But before that the one the-other assail

lor dit li rois que chascuns aille

to-them says the king that each go

6995 a val lez la tor an la lande,

to below beside the tower in the heath

n'a si bele jusqu'an Irlande.

not-is so fair as-far-as-into Ireland

Et il si font: la sont alé,

And they so do there are gone

mout furent tost jus avalé.

very they-were soon down descended

Li rois i va et tuit et totes

The king thither goes and all-men and all-women

7000 a granz tropiaus et a granz rotes.

in great troops and in great companies

La s'an vont tuit, nus n'i remaint,

There themselves-thence go all anyone not-there remains

et as fenestres revont maint,

and to-the windows again-go many-a-one

la rëine, dames, puceles

the queen ladies maidens

don avuec li avoit de beles.

whereof with her there-were of fair-ones

The Last Combat, and Godefroi de Leigni

XXV

On the heath stands a sycamore planted in Abel's time, with a clear spring under it running over gravel as bright as silver. Lancelot defies Meleagant and spares him nothing. The lances go through to the bare flesh, both men come down, and they fight on foot. He takes the right arm off at the iron sleeve, drives the nose-guard back through three teeth, and, since the man is too proud to ask mercy, unlaces his helm and strikes off his head. Nobody watching feels any pity. Godefroi de Leigni finished the Cart, with Chrétien's consent, from the walling-in onward.

An la lande un sagremor ot

7005

In the heath a sycamore there-was

si bel que plus estre ne pot:

so fair that more to-be not it-could

mout tenoit place, mout iert lez,

much it-held place much it-was broad

s'est li leus tot an tor orlez

and-is the place quite in circle bordered

de menue erbe fresche et bele,

with fine grass fresh and fair

qui an toz tans estoit novele.

7010

which in all seasons was new

Soz le sagremor jant et bel,

Beneath the sycamore comely and fair

qui plantez fu del tans Abel,

which planted was from-the time of-Abel

sort une clere fontenele

springs a clear little-spring

qui de corre est assez isnele.

which of running is quite swift

- 7015 Li graviers est et biaux et janz
The gravel is both fair and comely
 et clers con se ce fust arjanz,
and bright as if this were silver
 et li tuiaus, si con je cuit,
and the channel just as I think
 de fin or esmeré et cuit,
of fine gold refined and tried
 et cort parmi la lande a val,
and runs through the heath to below
- 7020 antre deus bois parmi un val.
between two woods through a valley
 Iluec plest le roi que il siee,
There pleases the king that he sit
 qu'il n'i voit rien qui li dessiee.
for-he not-therein sees anything which to-him displease
 Les janz fet treire bien an sus:
The folk he-makes draw well in back
 et Lanceloz mout tost cort sus
and Lancelot very quickly runs upon
- 7025 Meleagant de grant äir,
Meleagant with great fury
 con celui cui mout puet häir;
as him whom much he-can hate
 mes avant ainz que il le fiere
but first before that he him strike
 li dist a haute voiz et fiere:
to-him said in loud voice and proud
 "Traïiez vos la, je vos deffi!
Draw yourself there I you defy

Et sachiez bien trestot de fi

7030

And know well quite-wholly of certainty

que ne vos espargnerai point.”

that not you I-shall-spare a-whit

Lors broche son cheval et point

Then he-spurs his horse and pricks

et arriers un petit se tret

and backward a little himself draws

tant de place com uns ars tret;

as-much of space as a bow shoots

puis leissent l'uns vers l'autre corre

7035

then they-let the-one toward the-other run

quanque cheval lor porent corre,

as-fast-as horses to-them could run

si s'antrefierent maintenant

and each-other-they-strike at-once

es escuz qui bien sont tenant,

on-the shields which well are holding

qu'il les ont troez et perciez;

that-they them have boled and pierced

mes l'uns ne l'autre n'est bleciez

7040

but the-one nor the-other not-is wounded

n'an char consëuz a cele ore.

nor-in flesh reached at that hour

Lors passent outre sanz demore,

Then they-pass beyond without tarrying

puis se revont granz cos doner,

then themselves they-again-go great blows to-give

quanque chevaus puet randoner,

as-fast-as horse can gallop

7045 es escuz qu'il ont buens et forz.
on-the shields which-they have good and strong

Et il resont de grant esforz

And they again-are of great force

et chevalier preu et vassal,

and knights valiant and doughty

et fort et isnel li cheval.

and strong and swift the horses

Et a ce qu'il fierent granz cos

And at this that-they strike great blows

7050 sor les escuz qu'il ont as cos,
upon the shields which-they have at-the necks

les lances sont outre passees,

the lances are beyond passed

qui freites ne sont ne quassees,

which broken not are nor shattered

et sont a force parvenues

and are by force come

de ci qu'a lor charz totes nues.

from here that-to their flesb quite bare

7055 Par grant vertu l'uns l'autre anpaint

With great strength the-one the-other thrusts

qu'a terre se sont jus anpaint,

so-that-to ground themselves they-are down thrust

ne peitraus ne çangle n'estriers

nor breast-strap nor girth nor-stirrups

nes pot eidier, que par derriers

not-them could help but over behind

chascuns d'eus la sele ne vuide

each of-them the saddle — empties

que de seignor fu tote vuide.

which of master was quite empty

Estraiier an sont li cheval

Astray thereof are the horses

qui s'an vont a mont et a val:

which themselves-thence go to above and to below

li uns regibe, l'autres mort,

the one kicks the-other bites

que l'uns vossist l'autre avoir mort.

for the-one would-wish the-other to-have dead

Et li chevalier qui chëirent

And the knights who fell

plus tost qu'il porent sus saillirent

more quickly than-they could up leapt

et ont tost les espees treites,

and they-have quickly the swords drawn

qui de letres ierent portreites.

which with letters were figured

7060

7065

Les escuz devant lor vis metent

The shields before their faces they-put

7070 et des ore mes s'antremetent

and from now forth they-set-about

comant se puissent domagier

how each-other they-might harm

as buenes espees d'acier.

with-the good swords of-steel

Lanceloz nel redote mie,

Lancelot not-him fears at-all

car il savoit plus d'escremie

for he knew more of-swordplay

7075 la meitié que cil n'an savoit;

by-the half than he not-thereof knew

car des anface apris l'avoit.

for from childhood learned it-he-had

Andui s'antrefierent granz cos

Both each-other-they-strike great blows

sor les escuz qu'il ont as cos

upon the shields which-they have at-the necks

et sor les hiaumes d'or barrez,

and upon the helms of-gold barred

7080 que frez les ont et anbarrez;

that broken them they-have and battered

mes Lanceloz le haste fort,

but Lancelot him presses hard

si li done un grant cop et fort
and to-him gives a great blow and strong

devant l'escu a descovert

before the-shield at uncovered

el braz destre de fer covert,

on-the arm right with iron covered

si li a coupé et tranchié.

and to-him has cut and severed

Et quant cil se sant domagié

And when he himself feels maimed

de sa destre qu'il a perdue,

of his right-hand which-he has lost

dist que chier li sera vandue.

said that dear to-him it-will-be sold

S'il an puet leu ne eise avoir,

If-he thereof can place nor ease have

ne remandra por nul avoir;

not it-will-remain for any goods

car tant a duel et ire et rage

for so-much he-has grief and wrath and frenzy

qu'a bien petit que il n'anrage,

that-at quite little that he not-goes-mad

et mout po prise son afeire

and very little he-prizes his matter

s'un mauvés jeu ne li puet feire.

if-a wicked trick not to-him he-can do

Vers lui cort, que prendre le cuide,

Toward him he-runs for to-seize him he-thinks

mes Lanceloz bien se porcuide;

but Lancelot well himself bethinks

7085

7090

7095

car a s'espee qui bien taille

for with his-sword which well cuts

li a fet tel osche an sa taille,

to-him has made such a-notch in his waist

don il ne respassera mes,

whereof he not will-recover more

7100 ainz iert passez avris et mes;

before will-be passed April and May

que le nasel li hurte as danz,

for the nose-guard to-him he-drives to-the teeth

que trois l'an a brisiez dedanz.

so-that three to-him-thereof he-has broken within

Et Meleaganz a tel ire

And Meleagant has such wrath

qu'il ne puet parler ne mot dire,

that-he not can speak nor a-word say

7105 ne merci demander ne daingne,

nor mercy to-ask not he-deigns

car ses fos cuers li desansaingne,

for his mad heart him misteaches

qui trop l'anprisone et anlace.

which too-much him-imprisons and ensnares

Lanceloz vient, si li deslace

Lancelot comes and to-him unlaces

le hiaume et la teste li tranche.

the helm and the head to-him severs

7110 Ja mes cist ne li fera ganche:

Ever more this-one not to-him will-make swerve

morz est chëuz, fet est de lui.

dead he-is fallen done is of him

Mes or vos di, n'i a celui

But now to-you I-say not-there is one

qui iluec fust, qui ce vëist,

who there were who this saw

cui nule pitiez an prëist.

whom any pity thereof took

Li rois et tuit cil qui i sont

The king and all those who there are

grant joie an demainnent et font.

great joy thereof show and make

Lancelot desarment adonques

Lancelot they-disarm then

cil qui plus lié ne furent onques,

those who more glad not were ever

si l'an ont mené a grant joie.

and him-thence they-have led with great joy

Seignor, se avant an disoie,

Lords if further thereof I-told

ce seroit outre la matire,

this would-be beyond the matter

por ce au definer m'atire:

for this to-the ending I-dispose-myself

ci faut li romanz an travers.

here fails the romance in crosswise

Godefroiz de Leigni, li clers,

Godefroiz of Leigni the clerk

a parfinee la Charrete;

has finished the Cart

7115

7120

7125

mes nus hon blasme ne l'an mete

but any man blame not him-thereof put

se sor Crestiien a ovré,

if upon Chrétien he-has wrought

car ç'a il fet par le buen gre

for this-has he done by the good will

Crestiien qui le comança:

of-Chrétien who it began

7130 tant an a fet des la an ça,

so-much thereof he-has done from there on hither

ou Lanceloz fu anmurez,

where Lancelot was immured

tant con li contes est durez.

as-long as the tale is lasted

Tant an a fet: n'i vost plus metre

So-much thereof he-has done not-thereto he-would more put

ne mains, por le conte mal metre.

nor less for the tale ill to-put