OLD FRENCH SERIES · VOLUME 20

The Romance of the Rose

Guillaume de Lorris · Jean de Meun

Le Roman de la Rose

The Romance of the Rose

Part One: The Garden and Reason

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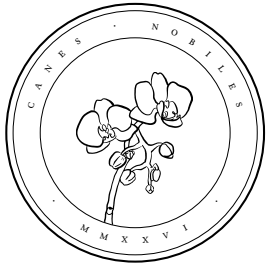
with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



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The Old French text follows Ernest Langlois' text, Le Roman de la Rose par Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Société des anciens textes français, tomes II and III (Paris, 1920–21), verses 1–7230

Translated and composed with AI, edited by Christopher Hench
Artwork by Esther Steves

Guillaume de Lorris' poem ends at verse 4058 and Jean de Meun's continuation begins at 4059; this first part of the whole Romance ends at 7230, where Reason leaves the lover. The spelling is Langlois', and his accentuation is his own rather than the Société's rule: the acute falls only on a final é or -és, so esté, verité, nés, and trés; the grave only on a final -ès, as in près, après, emprès, confès, and Socratès; the circumflex nowhere; and the tréma wherever two vowels do not make a diphthong. The letters u and v, i and j, are distinguished. The verse number the margin carries every fifth row is Langlois' own, which he prints every fourth. The 157 verse paragraphs his page indents that do not open a section are indented as he sets them, and the god of Love's first speech is left unclosed at 1897 because the edition leaves it so.

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The Dream, and the Month of May

I

Against those who hold that dreams are only fable, the poet cites Macrobius on Scipio's vision and sets down a dream of his twentieth year. He names the book the Romance of the Rose and offers it to the lady who ought to be called Rose. In the dream it is May: the woods green again, the earth in a gown of a hundred pairs of colors, the birds singing that were mute through the cold. He dresses, threads a silver needle, and walks out of town along a river to a meadow at the water's edge.

Maintes genz dient que en songes
Many folk say that in dreams
n'a se fables non e mençonges;
not-is except fables not and lies
mais l'en puet teus songes songier
but one can such dreams dream
qui ne sont mie mençongier,
which not are at-all lying
ainz sont après bien aparant;
rather are afterward well apparent
si en puis bien traire a garant
and thereof I-can well draw as warrant
un auctor qui ot non Macrobes,
an author who had name Macrobius
qui ne tint pas songes a lobes,
who not held at-all dreams as deceits
ançois escrist l'avision
rather wrote the-vision
qui avint au roi Scipion.
which befell to-the king Scipio

Quiconques cuide ne qui die
Whoever thinks or who may-say
que soit folor e musardie
that be folly and foolishness
de croire que songes aveigne,
to believe that a-dream come-true
qui ce voudra, por fol m'en teigne;
who this will-wish for a-fool me-thereat let-him-hold
car endroit moi ai je fiance
for as-for me have I trust
que songes est senefiance
that a-dream is a-signifying
des biens as genz e des enuiz;
of-the goods to-the folk and of-the troubles
car li plusor songent de nuiz
for the most-folk dream by night
maintes choses covertement
many things covertly
que l'en voit puis apertement.
which one sees afterward openly

Ou vintieme an de mon aage,
In-the twentieth year of my age
ou point qu'Amors prent le paage
at-the point that-Love takes the toll
des juenes genz, couchiez m'estoie
of-the young folk lain-down myself-I-was
une nuit, si con je soloie,
one night so as I was-wont
e me dormoie mout forment;
and myself I-slept very soundly

si vi un songe en mon dormant
and I-saw a dream in my sleeping
qui mout fu biaus e mout me plot;
which very was fair and much me pleased
mais en cel songe onques rien n'ot
but in that dream ever anything not-was
qui trestot avenu ne soit
which wholly come-to-pass not be
si con li songes recensoit.
so as the dream recounted
Or vueil cel songe rimeier,
Now I-wish that dream to-put-in-rhyme
por voz cuers plus faire esgaier,
to your hearts more make rejoice
qu'Amors le me prie e comande.
for-Love it to-me begs and commands
E se nus ne nule demande
And if anyone or any-woman asks
coment je vueil que li romanz
how I wish that the romance
soit apelez que je comenz,
be called which I begin
ce est li Romanz de la Rose,
this is the Romance of the Rose
ou l'Art d'Amors est toute enclose.
wherein the-Art of-Love is wholly enclosed
La matire en est bone e nueve;
The matter thereof is good and new

or doint Deus qu'en gré le reçueve
now may-grant God that-in favor it she-receive
cele por cui je l'ai empris;
she for whom I it-have undertaken
c'est cele qui tant a de pris
she-is the-one who so-much has of worth
e tant est dine d'estre amee
and so is worthy to-be loved
qu'el doit estre Rose clamee.
that-she ought be Rose called
Avis m'iere qu'il estoit mais,
Seeming to-me-was that-it was May
il a ja bien cinc anz ou mais,
it is already fully five years or more
qu'en mai estoie, ce sonjoie,
that-in May I-was this I-dreamed
ou tens amoreus, plein de joie,
in-the season amorous full of joy
ou tens ou toute rien s'esgaie,
in-the season when every thing itself-rejoices
que l'en ne voit boisson ne haie
when one not sees bush nor hedge
qui en mai parer ne se vueille
that in May to-deck not itself wishes
e covrir de novele fueille.
and to-cover with new leaf
Li bois recuevrent lor verdure,
The woods recover their greenness
qui sont sec tant come ivers dure;
which are dry as-long as winter lasts

la terre meïsmes s'orgueille
the earth herself herself-grows-proud
por la rosee qui la mueille,
for the dew which her wets
e oblie la povreté
and forgets the poverty
ou ele a tot l'iver esté;
wherein she has all the-winter been
lors devient la terre si gobe
then becomes the earth so proud
qu'el viaut avoir novele robe;
that-she wishes to-have new gown
si set si cointe robe faire
and knows so dainty gown to-make
que de colors i a cent paire.
that of colors there are hundred pairs
L'erbe e les flors blanches e perses,
The-grass and the flowers white and blue
e de maintes colors diverses,
and of many colors diverse
c'est la robe que je devise,
this-is the gown which I describe
por quoi la terre miauz se prise.
for which the earth better herself prizes
Li oisel, qui se sont teü
The birds which themselves have kept-silent
tant come il ont le froit eü
as-long as they have the cold had
e le tens divers e frarin,
and the weather harsh and wretched

sont en mai, por le tens serin,
are in May for the weather serene
si lié qu'il montrent en chantant
so glad that-they show in singing
qu'en lor cuers a de joie tant
that-in their hearts there-is of joy so-much
qu'il lor estuet chanter par force.
that-it them behooves to-sing by force
Li rossigniaus lores s'esforce
The nightingale then himself-exerts
de chanter e de faire noise;
to sing and to make noise
lors se deduit e lors s'envoise
then himself delights and then himself-disports
li papegauz e la calandre;
the parrot and the lark
lors estuet juenes genz entendre
then it-behooves young folk to-attend
a estre gais e amoreus,
to be gay and amorous
por le tens bel e doucereus;
for the weather fair and sweet
mout a dur cuer qui en mai n'aime,
very has hard heart who in May not-loves
quant il ot chanter sor la raime
when he hears sing on the bough
as oisiaus les douz chanz piteus.
of-the birds the sweet songs plaintive
En icelui tens deliteus,
In that season delightful

que toute rien d'amer s'esfroie,
when every creature to-love itself-stirs
sonjai une nuit que j'estoie;
I-dreamed one night that I-was
lors m'iere avis en mon dormant
then to-me-was seeming in my sleeping
qu'il estoit matins durement:
that-it was morning fully
de mon lit tantost me levai,
from my bed at-once myself I-raised
chauçai moi e mes mains lavai.
I-shod myself and my hands washed
Lors trais une aguille d'argent
Then I-drew a needle of-silver
d'un aguillier mignot e gent,
from-a needle-case dainty and fine
si pris l'aguille a enfiler.
and I-began the-needle to thread
Hors de vile oi talent d'aler,
Out of town I-had desire to-go
por oïr des oisiaus les sons,
to hear of-the birds the songs
qui chantoient par ces boissons
which were-singing among these bushes
en icele saison novele.
in that season new
Cousant mes manches a videle,
Sewing my sleeves with spiral-stitch
m'en vois lors toz seus esbatant,
myself-thence I-go then all alone disporting

e les oiselez escoutant,
and the little-birds listening-to
qui de chanter mout s'angoissoient,
which with singing greatly themselves-strained
por les vergiers qui florissoient.
because-of the gardens which were-blooming
Jolis, gais e pleins de leece,
Merry gay and full of gladness
vers une riviere m'adrece
toward a river myself-I-direct
que j'oi près d'ilueques bruire;
which I-heard near of-there to-murmur
car ne me soi aler deduire
for not myself I-knew to-go to-delight
plus bel que sus cele riviere.
more fairly than upon that river
D'un tertre qui près d'iluec iere
From-a hill which near of-there was
descendoit l'eve grant e roide.
came-down the-water great and swift
Clere estoit l'eve e ausi froide
Clear was the-water and also cold
come puiz ou come fontaine;
as a-well or as a-spring
si estoit poi mendre de Seine,
and it-was little smaller than Seine
mais qu'ele estoit plus espandue.
but that-it was more spread-out

Onques mais n'avoie veüe
Ever before not-had seen
cele eve qui si bien seoit;
that water which so well suited
si m'abelissoit e seoit
and me-it-pleased and suited
a regarder le leu plaisant.
to look-at the place pleasant
De l'eve clere e reluisant
With the-water clear and shining
mon vis rafreschi e lavai;
my face I-refreshed and washed
si vi tot covert e pavé
and I-saw wholly covered and paved
le fonz de l'eve de gravele.
the bottom of the-water with gravel
La praerie grant e bele
The meadow great and fair
trés au pié de l'eve batoit.
right at-the foot of the-water reached
Clere e serie e bele estoit
Clear and calm and fair was
la matinee e atempree;
the morning and temperate
lors m'en alai par mi la pree,
then myself-thence I-went through midst the meadow
contreval l'eve esbaneiant,
down-along the-water disporting
tot le rivage costeiant.
all the bank skirting

The Images on the Wall

II

A little further on stands a great walled garden, its outer face painted and carved with figures, and he reads them one by one. In the middle is Hate, scowling and wrapped in a cloth; beside her Felony and Villainy; then Covetousness with hooked hands, who drives men to usury, theft, and fraud; then Avarice, lean and green as a chive, in a gown ten years old, knotting shut the purse she hides in her hand; then Envy, who never laughed in her life, rejoices at nothing but another's ruin and cannot look a man in the face.

Quant j'oi un poi avant alé,
When I-had a little forward gone
si vi un vergier grant e lé,
and I-saw a garden great and wide
tot clos de haut mur bataillié,
all closed with high wall battlemented
portrait dehors e entaillié
painted outside and carved
a maintes riches escritures.
with many rich inscriptions
Les images e les pointures
The images and the paintings
dou mur volentiers remirai.
of-the wall gladly I-gazed-at
Si vos conterai e dirai
And to-you I-shall-relate and say
de ces images la semblance,
of these images the likeness
si com moi vient en remembrance.
so as to-me comes in remembrance

Enz en le mileu vi Haïne,
Right in the middle I-saw Hate
qui de corroz e d'ataïne
who of wrath and of-rancor
sembla bien estre moverresse;
seemed well to-be a-stirrer
corroceuse e tençonerresse,
wrathful and quarrelsome
e pleine de grant cuvertage
and full of great baseness
estoit par semblant cele image;
was by seeming that image
si n'estoit pas bien atornee,
and not-was at-all well adorned
ainz sembloit fame forsenee.
rather seemed a-woman frenzied
Rechignié avoit e froncié
Scowling she-had and wrinkled
le vis, e le nés secorcié;
the face and the nose turned-up
hisdeuse estoit e roïlliee;
hideous she-was and rust-stained
e si estoit entortilliee
and so she-was wrapped
hisdosement d'une toaille.
hideously in-a cloth
Une autre image d'autel taille
An other image of-such fashion
a senestre avoit delez lui;
on the-left there-was beside her

son non desus sa teste lui:
her name above her head I-read
apelee estoit Felonie.
called she-was Felony
Une image qui Vilanie
An image which Villainy
avoit non revi devers destre,
had name I-saw-in-turn toward the-right
qui estoit auques d'autel estre
which was somewhat of-such bearing
con ces deus e d'autel faiture;
as these two and of-such making
bien sembla male creature,
well she-seemed an-evil creature
e sembla bien estre outrageuse
and she-seemed well to-be outrageous
e mesdisant e ramponeuse;
and slandering and jeering
mout sot bien poindre e bien portraire
very knew well to-paint and well to-portray
cil qui sot tel image faire,
he who knew such an-image to-make
qu'el sembloit bien chose vilaine;
for-she seemed well a-thing base
bien sembloit estre d'afiz pleine
well she-seemed to-be of-taunts full
e fame qui petit seüst
and a-woman who little might-know
d'enorer ce qu'ele deüst.
of-honoring that which-she ought

Après fu pointe Covoitise;
Next was painted Covetousness
c'est cele qui les genz atise
she-is the-one who the folk incites
de prendre e de neient doner,
to take and to nothing give
e les granz avoirs aüner;
and the great wealth to-heap-up
c'est cele qui fait a usure
she-is the-one who makes at usury
prester mainz por la grant ardure
lend many for the great ardor
d'avoir conquerre e assembler;
of-wealth to-win and to-gather
c'est cele qui semont d'embler
she-is the-one who summons to-steal
les larrons e les ribaudiaus;
the thieves and the ruffians
si est granz pechiez e granz diaus,
and it-is great sin and great grief
qu'en la fin maint en covient pendre;
for-in the end many-a-one thereof it-behooves to-hang
c'est cele qui fait l'autrui prendre,
she-is the-one who makes another's-(goods) take
rober, tolir e bareter,
rob seize and cheat
e bescochier e mesconter;
and defraud and miscount

c'est cele qui les tricheors
she-is the-one who the tricksters
fait toz e les faus plaideors,
makes all and the false pleaders
qui maintes foiz par lor faveles
who many times by their chatter
ont as vallez e as puceles
have from-the young-men and from-the maidens
lor droites eritez tolues.
their rightful heritages taken-away
Recorbelees e crochues
Hooked and crooked
avoit les mains icele image:
had the hands that image
si fu droiz, que toz jorz enrage
and it-was right that all days rages
Covoitise de l'autrui prendre;
Covetousness to another's take
Covoitise ne set entendre
Covetousness not knows to-attend
fors que a l'autrui acrochier;
except that to another's snatching
Covoitise a l'autrui trop chier.
Covetousness holds another's too dear
Une autre image i ot assise
An other image there was set
coste a coste de Covoitise,
side by side of Covetousness
Avarice estoit apelee.
Avarice she-was called

Laide estoit e sale e folee
Ugly was and foul and battered
cele image, e maigre e chaitive,
that image and lean and wretched
e ausi vert come une cive;
and as green as a chive
tant par estoit descoloree
so much she-was discolored
qu'el sembloit estre enlangoree;
that-she seemed to-be wasted
chose sembloit morte de fain,
a-thing she-seemed dead of hunger
qui vesquist solement de pain
who might-live only on bread
pestri a lessu fort e aigre.
kneaded with lye strong and sharp
E avuec ce qu'ele iere maigre,
And besides this that-she was lean
iert ele povrement vestue:
was she poorly clad
cote avoit viez e derompue,
a-gown she-had old and torn
come s'el fust as chiens remese;
as if-it had-been to-the dogs left
povre estoit la cote e esrese
poor was the gown and threadbare
e pleine de viez paletiaus.
and full of old patches

Delez li pendoit uns mantiaus
Beside her hung a mantle
a une perchete graillete,
on a little-pole slender
e une cote de brunete;
and a gown of brown-cloth
ou mantel n'ot pas penne vaire,
in-the mantle not-was at-all fur miniver
mais mout vil e de povre afaire,
but very mean and of poor sort
d'aigniaus noirs, veluz e pesanz.
of-lambs black shaggy and heavy
Bien avoit sa robe dis anz,
Fully had her gown ten years
mais Avarice dou vestir
but Avarice of-the clothing
se viaut mout a tart enhastir;
herself wishes very at late to-hasten
car sachiez que mout li pesast
for know that much her it-would-grieve
se cele robe point usast;
if that gown at-all wore-out
car s'el fust usee e mauvaise,
for if-it were worn and bad
Avarice eüst grant mesaise
Avarice would-have great distress
de robe nueve e grant disete
for gown new and great want
avant qu'ele eüst autre faite.
before that-she had another made

Avarice en sa main tenoit
Avarice in her hand held
une borse qu'el reponoit,
a purse which-she hid
e la nooit si durement
and it knotted so tightly
qu'el demorast mout longuement
that-she would-tarry very long
ançois qu'ele en peüst rien traire;
before that-she thereof could anything draw
mais el n'avoit de ce que faire:
but she not-had of this what to-do
el n'aloit pas a ce beant
she not-went at-all at this gaping
que de la borse ostast neant.
that from the purse she-take anything
Après refu portraite Envie,
Next was-in-turn portrayed Envy
qui ne rist onques en sa vie,
who not laughed ever in her life
n'onques por riens ne s'esjoï
nor-ever for anything not herself-rejoiced
s'ele ne vit ou s'el n'oï
if-she not saw or if-she not-heard
aucun grant domage retraire.
some great harm to-be-told
Nule rien ne li puet tant plaire
Any thing not her can so-much please
con fait maus e mesaventure.
as does evil and misadventure

Quant el voit grant desconfiture
When she sees great ruin
sor aucun prodome cheoir,
upon some worthy-man fall
ice li plaist mout a veoir.
that her pleases much to see
Ele est trop liee en son corage
She is exceedingly glad in her heart
quant el voit aucun grant lignage
when she sees some great lineage
decheoir ou aler a honte;
fall or go to shame
e quant aucuns a enor monte
and when anyone to honor rises
par son sen e par sa proece,
by his sense and by his prowess
c'est la chose qui plus la blece;
that-is the thing which most her wounds
car sachiez que mout la covient
for know that much her it-behooves
estre iriee quant biens avient.
to-be angered when good befalls
Envie est de tel cruauté
Envy is of such cruelty
qu'ele ne porte leiauté
that-she not bears loyalty
a compaignon ne a compaigne,
to companion nor to companion-woman
n'ele n'a parent, tant li teigne,
nor-she not-has kin however-near to-her be-bound

a cui el ne soit anemie;
to whom she not be an-enemy
car certes el ne voudroit mie
for certainly she not would-wish at-all
que biens venist nes a son pere.
that good should-come not-even to her father
Mais sachiez bien qu'ele compere
But know well that-she pays-for
sa malice trop laidement;
her malice too foully
qu'ele est en si trés grant torment
for-she is in so very great torment
e a tel duel quant genz bien font
and has such grief when folk well do
que par un poi qu'ele n'en font.
that by a little that-she thereof melts
Ses felons cuers si la detrenche
Her cruel heart so her cuts-up
que de li Deu e la gent venche.
that on her God and the folk avenges
Envie ne fine nule eure
Envy not ceases any hour
d'aucun blasme metre as genz seure;
of-some blame to-put on-the folk upon
je cuit que s'ele conoissoit
I think that if-she knew
le trés plus prodome qui soit
the very most worthy-man who be
ne deça mer ne dela mer,
neither this-side-of sea nor beyond sea

si le voudroit ele blasmer;
yet him would-wish she to-blame
e s'il iere si bien apris
and if-he were so well taught
qu'el ne peüst de tot son pris
that-she not could of all his worth
abatre ne lui desprisier,
strike-down nor him disparage
si voudroit ele apetisier
yet would-wish she to-lessen
sa proece au moins e s'enor
his prowess at-the least and his-honor
par parole faire menor.
by word make smaller
Lors vi qu'Envie en la pointure
Then I-saw that-Envy in the painting
avoit trop laide esgardeüre:
had exceedingly ugly a-look
ele ne regardast neient
she not would-look at-all
fors de travers en borgneiant;
except from the-side in squinting
si avoit un mauvais usage,
and she-had a bad habit
car el ne peüst au visage
for she not could in-the face
regarder rien de plain en plain,
look-at anything from full to full
ainz clooit un ueil par desdein;
rather she-closed one eye out-of disdain

qu'ele fondoit d'ire e ardoit
for-she melted with-wrath and burned
quant aucuns qu'ele regardoit
when anyone whom-she looked-at
estoit ou preuz ou biaus ou genz
was either worthy or fair or noble
ou amez ou loez de genz. 290
or loved or praised by folk

Sorrow, Old Age, Hypocrisy, and Poverty

III

Four more figures finish the wall. Sorrow has torn her own face and gown; joy and grief, the poet observes, are contraries. Old Age is shrunk a foot, toothless, and unable to walk four fathoms without a crutch, and her portrait becomes a meditation on Time, which steals from us so secretly that it seems to stand still and will age us all unless Death comes first. Then Hypocrisy, working her mischief in secret under a psalter and a hair shirt; and last Poverty, naked but for an old sack, crouched apart like a dog.

Delez Envie auques près iere
Beside Envy somewhat near was
Tristece pointe en la maisiere;
Sorrow painted on the wall
mais bien paroit a sa color
but well appeared by her color
qu'ele avoit au cuer grant dolor,
that-she had in-the heart great grief
e sembloit avoir la jaunice, 295
and she-seemed to-have the jaundice

si n'i feïst riens Avarice
and not-there would-do anything Avarice
de paleté ne de maigrece;
in pallor nor in leanness
car li esmais e la destrece
for the dismay and the distress
e la pesance e li enuiz
and the heaviness and the trouble
qu'el sofroit de jorz e de nuiz
which-she suffered by days and by nights
l'avoient mout faite jaunir
her-had greatly made grow-yellow
e maigre e pale devenir.
and lean and pale become
Onques rien nee en tel martire
Ever a-thing born in such martyrdom
ne fu mais ne n'ot si grant ire
not was before nor not-had so great wrath
come il sembloit que ele eüst;
as it seemed that she had
je cuit que nus ne li seüst
I think that anyone not to-her would-know
faire rien qui li peüst plaire;
to-do anything which to-her could please
n'el ne se vosist pas retraire
nor-she not herself would-wish at-all to-withdraw
ne reconforter a nul fuer
nor to-be-comforted at any price
dou duel qu'ele avoit a son cuer.
from-the grief which-she had in her heart

Trop avoit son cuer corrocié
Too-much she-had her heart embittered
e son duel parfont comencié.
and her grief deeply begun
Mout sembloit bien estre dolente,
Greatly she-seemed indeed to-be doleful
car el n'avoit pas esté lente
for she not-had at-all been slow
d'esgratiner toute sa chiere;
in-scratching all her face
n'el n'avoit pas sa robe chiere:
nor-she not-had at-all her gown dear
en maint leu l'avoit desciriee,
in many-a place it-she-had torn
con cele qui mout iert iriee.
as she who greatly was angered
Si chevel tuit destrecié furent,
Her hair all disheveled were
e espandu par son col jurent;
and spread over her neck lay
qu'el les avoit trestoz deroz
for-she them had all torn
de mautalent e de corroz.
out-of ill-will and out-of wrath
Si sachiez bien veriteument
And know well truly
qu'el ploroit mout parfondement:
that-she wept very deeply

nus tant fust durs ne la veïst
anyone however were hard not her would-see
a cui grant pitié n'en preïst;
to whom great pity not-thereat would-take
qu'el se derompoit e batoit
for-she herself tore and beat
e ses poinz ensemble hurtoit.
and her fists together struck
Mout iere a duel faire ententive
Very she-was on grief making intent
la dolereuse, la chaitive;
the doleful the wretched
il ne li tenoit d'envoisier
it not to-her concerned to-make-merry
ne d'acoler ne de baisier;
nor to-embrace nor to kiss
car qui le cuer a bien dolent,
for who the heart has fully doleful
sachiez de voir qu'il n'a talent
know for truth that-he not-has desire
de dancier ne de queroler.
to dance nor to carol
Nus ne se porroit amoler,
Anyone not himself could incline
qui duel eüst, a joie faire;
who grief might-have to joy make
car joie e diaus sont dui contraire.
for joy and grief are two contraries

Après fu Vieillece portraite,
Next was Old-Age portrayed
qui estoit bien un pié retraite
who was fully a foot shrunk
de tel come ele soloit estre;
from such as she was-wont to-be
a poine qu'el se pooit paistre,
with difficulty that-she herself could feed
tant estoit vieille e redotee.
so-much she-was aged and doting
Mout estoit sa biauté gastee,
Very was her beauty spoiled
mout estoit laide devenue.
very she-was ugly become
Toute sa teste estoit chenue
All her head was hoary
e blanche con s'el fust florie.
and white as if-it had-been in-flower
Ce ne fust mie grant morie
That not would-be at-all great loss
s'ele morist, ne granz pechiez,
if-she died nor great sin
car toz ses cors estoit sechiez
for all her body was withered
de vieillece e aneientiz.
with age and brought-to-nothing
Mout estoit ja ses vis flestiz,
Very was already her face shriveled
qui fu jadis soés e plains;
which was formerly smooth and full

or estoit toz de fronces pleins.
now it-was all of wrinkles full
Les oreilles avoit mossues,
The ears she-had mossy
e toutes les denz si perdues
and all the teeth so lost
qu'ele n'en avoit mais nes une.
that-she not-thereof had more even one
Tant par estoit de grant vieillune
So much she-was of great eld
qu'el n'alast mie la montance
that-she not-would-go at-all the distance
de quatre toises senz potence.
of four fathoms without a-crutch
Li Tens qui s'en vait nuit e jor,
The Time which itself-thence goes night and day
senz repos prendre e senz sejor,
without rest taking and without stay
e qui de nos se part e emble
and which from us itself parts and steals
si celeement qu'il nos semble
so secretly that-it to-us seems
qu'il s'arest adès en un point,
that-it itself-stays ever at one point
e il ne s'i areste point,
and it not itself-there stays at-all
ainz ne fine de trespasser,
rather not ceases from passing-on

que l'en ne puet neïs penser
so-that one not can even think
queus tens ce est qui est presenz,
what time this is which is present
sel demandez as clers lisanz;
if-it you-ask of-the clerks reading
car ainz que l'en l'eüst pensé
for before that one it-had thought
seroient ja troi tens passé.
would-be already three times passed
Li Tens qui ne puet sejorner,
The Time which not can tarry
ainz vait toz jorz senz retorner,
rather goes all days without returning
con l'eve qui s'avale toute,
as the-water which itself-lowers wholly
n'il n'en retorne arriere goute;
nor-it not-thereof returns backward a-drop
li Tens vers cui neienz ne dure,
the Time against which nothing not endures
ne fers ne chose tant soit dure,
neither iron nor a-thing however be hard
car Tens gaste tot e manjue;
for Time wastes all and devours
li Tens qui toute chose mue,
the Time which every thing changes
qui tot fait croistre e tot norrist
which all makes grow and all nourishes
e qui tot use e tot porrist;
and which all wears and all rots

li Tens qui envieilli noz peres,
the Time which aged our fathers
qui vieillist rois e empereres
which ages kings and emperors
e qui toz nos envieillira,
and which all us will-age
ou Morz nos desavancira;
or Death us will-forestall
li Tens, qui tot a en baillie
the Time which all has in keeping
des genz vieillir, l'avoit vieillie
of-the folk to-age her-had aged
si durement qu'au mien cuidier
so grievously that-to-the my thinking
el ne se pooit mais aidier,
she not herself could more help
ainz retornoit ja en enfance;
rather she-turned already into childhood
car certes el n'avoit poissance,
for certainly she not-had power
ce cuit je, ne force ne sen,
this think I nor force nor sense
ne plus que uns enfes d'un an.
no more than a child of-one year
Neporquant, au mien escientre,
Nevertheless to-the my knowledge
ele avoit esté sage e entre,
she had been wise and shrewd
quant ele iert en son droit aage;
when she was in her right age

mais je cuit qu'el n'iere mais sage,
but I think that-she not-was more wise
ainz estoit toute rassotee.
rather she-was wholly besotted
Ele ot d'une chape forree
She had with-a cloak lined
mout bien, si con je me recors,
very well so as I myself recall
abrié e vestu son cors.
sheltered and clothed her body
Bien fu vestue chaudement,
Well she-was clad warmly
car ele eüst froit autrement:
for she would-have cold otherwise
ces vieilles genz ont tost froidure;
these old folk have soon chill
bien savez que c'est lor nature.
well you-know that this-is their nature
Une image ot après escrite
An image there-was next depicted
qui sembloit bien estre ypocrite;
which seemed indeed to-be a-hypocrite
Papelardie iert apelee.
Hypocrisy she-was called
C'est cele qui en recelee,
She-is the-one who in secret
quant nus ne s'en puet prendre garde,
when anyone not himself-thereof can take heed
de nul mal faire n'est coarde;
of any evil to-do not-is afraid

el fait dehors le marmiteus,
she plays outwardly the sanctimonious
si a le vis simple e piteus,
and has the face simple and piteous
e semble sainte creature,
and seems a-holy creature
mais soz ciel n'a male aventure
but under heaven not-is an-evil deed
qu'ele ne penst en son corage.
which-she not thinks in her heart
Mout la resembloit bien l'image,
Greatly her resembled well the-image
qui faite fu a sa semblance;
which made was in her likeness
qu'el fu de simple contenance,
for-she was of simple bearing
e si fu chauciee e vestue
and so she-was shod and clad
tot ausi con fame rendue.
all just as a-woman vowed
En sa main un sautier tenoit;
In her hand a psalter she-held
si sachiez que mout se penoit;
and know that much herself took-pains
de faire a Deu prieres feintes,
in making to God prayers feigned
e d'apeler e sainz e saintes.
and in-calling-on both saints and holy-women
El ne fu gaie ne jolive,
She not was gay nor merry

ainz fu par semblant ententive
rather she-was by seeming intent
dou tot a bones uevres faire;
of-the all to good works to-do
e si avoit vestu la haire.
and so she-had put-on the hair-shirt
Si sachiez qu'el n'iere pas grasse,
And know that-she not-was at-all fat
ainz sembloit de jeüner lasse,
rather she-seemed with fasting weary
s'avoit la color pale e morte.
and-she-had the color pale and dead
A li e as siens iert la porte
To her and to-the her-own was the gate
deveee de parevis;
forbidden of paradise
car iceste gent font lor vis
for this-same folk make their faces
amaigrir, ce dit l'Evangile,
grow-lean this says the-Gospel
por avoir los par mi la vile,
in-order-to have praise through midst the town
e por un poi de gloire vaine,
and for a little of glory vain
qui lor toudra Deu e son reine.
which to-them will-take-away God and his kingdom

Portraite fu au derrenier
Portrayed was at-the last
Povreté, qui un seul denier
Poverty who a single penny
n'eüst pas, s'el se deüst pendre,
not-would-have at-all if-she herself must hang
tant seüst bien sa robe vendre,
however she-might-know well her gown to-sell
qu'ele estoit nue come vers.
for-she was naked as a-worm
Se li tens fust un poi divers,
If the weather were a little harsh
je cuit qu'ele acorast de froit,
I think that-she would-die of cold
qu'el n'avoit qu'un viez sac estroit,
for-she not-had but-a old sack narrow
tot plein de mauvais paletiaus:
all full of wretched patches
c'estoit sa cote e ses mantiaus;
this-was her gown and her mantle
el n'avoit plus que afubler:
she not-had more to put-on
grant loisir avoit de trembler.
great leisure she-had for trembling
Des autres fu un poi loignet;
From-the others she-was a little apart
com povres chiens en un coignet
like a-poor dog in a corner
se cropoit e atapissoit;
herself she-crouched and cowered

car povre chose, ou qu'ele soit,
for a-poor thing wherever that-she be
est toz jorz honteuse e despite.
is all days shamed and despised
L'eure puisse estre la maudite
The-hour may it-be the accursed
que povres on fu conceüz!
in-which a-poor man was conceived
Qu'il ne sera ja bien peüz, 460
For-he not will-be ever well fed
ne bien vestuz, ne bien chauciez;
nor well clothed nor well shod
n'il n'est amez ne essauciez.
nor-he not-is loved nor exalted

The Little Gate, and Idleness

IV

Within the garden the birds are singing, three times as many as in all France, and he hunts the square wall for a way in. At last a small wicket of hornbeam is opened by a maiden with hair blonde as a basin, a mirror in her hand, and a garland of fresh roses over one of gold braid. She is Idleness, familiar of Mirth, who owns the garden, had its trees brought from the land of the Saracens, and had the sad images painted outside. Mirth is within, and the lover resolves to see that company tonight.

Les images bien avisai,
The images well I-observed
car, si come j'ai devisé,
for so as I-have described

furent a or e a azur
they-were with gold and with azure
de toutes parz pointes ou mur.
on all sides painted on-the wall
Hauz fu li murs e toz carrez;
High was the wall and all square
si en estoit clos e barrez,
and thereby was closed and barred
en leu de haies, uns vergiers,
in place of hedges a garden
ou onc n'avoit entré bergiers.
where ever not-had entered a-shepherd
Cil vergiers en trop bel leu sist.
That garden in exceedingly fair place stood
Qui dedenz mener me vosist,
Whoever within to-lead me had-wished
ou par eschiele ou par degré,
either by ladder or by step
je l'en seüsse mout bon gré;
I to-him-thereof would-owe very good thanks
car tel joie ne tel deduit
for such joy nor such delight
ne vit mais on, si con je cuit,
not saw ever one so as I think
come il avoit en cel vergier;
as there was in that garden
car li leus d'oisiaus herbergier
for the place for-birds to-lodge
n'estoit ne desdeigneus ne chiches;
not-was neither disdainful nor niggardly

onc mais ne fu nus leus si riches
ever before not was any place so rich
d'arbres ne d'oisillons chantanz,
in-trees nor in-little-birds singing
qu'il i avoit d'oisiaus trois tanz
for-it there was of-birds three times
qu'en tot le reiaume de France.
than-in all the realm of France
Mout estoit bele l'acordance
Very was fair the-harmony
de lor piteus chant a oïr;
of their plaintive song to hear
toz li monz s'en doit esjoïr.
all the world itself-thereat ought to-rejoice
Je endroit moi m'en esjoï
I as-for me myself-thereat rejoiced
si durement, quant je l'oï,
so greatly when I it-heard
que n'en preïsse pas cent livres,
that not-thereof I-would-take at-all hundred pounds
se li passages fust delivres,
if the passage were free
que enz n'entrasse e ne veïsse
that within not-I-should-enter and not should-see
l'assemblee, que Deus guerisse!
the-company whom God preserve
Des oisiaus qui laienz estoient,
Of-the birds which within were

qui envoisieement chantoient
which merrily sang
les dances d'Amors e les notes
the dances of-Love and the airs
plaisanz, cortoises e mignotes.
pleasing courtly and dainty
Quant j'oi les oisiaus chanter,
When I-heard the birds sing
forment me pris a dementer
strongly myself I-began to puzzle
par quel art ne par quel engin
by what art nor by what device
je porroie entrer ou jardin.
I could enter in-the garden
Mais je ne poi onc encontrer
But I not could ever find
leu par ou j'i peüsse entrer;
a-place by which I-there could enter
si sachiez que je ne savoie
and know that I not knew
s'il i avoit pertuis ne voie
whether-it there was a-gap nor way
ne leu par ou l'en i entrast;
nor place by which one there might-enter
ne nus on qui le me montrast
nor any man who it to-me might-show
n'iert iluec, car j'estoie seus.
not-was there for I-was alone
Destroiz fui mout e angoisseus,
Distressed I-was very and anguished

tant qu'au derrenier me sovint
until that-at-the last to-me came-to-mind
qu'onques en nul sen ce n'avint
that-ever in any wise this not-befell
qu'en si bel vergier n'eüst uis,
that-in so fair a-garden not-were a-door
ou eschiele ou quelque pertuis.
either ladder or some gap
Lors m'en alai grant aleüre,
Then myself-thence I-went at-great pace
aceignant la compasseüre
circling the circuit
e la cloison dou mur carré,
and the enclosure of-the wall square
tant que un uisset bien serré
until that a little-door well shut
trovai, petitet e estroit;
I-found very-small and narrow
par autre leu nus n'i entroit.
by other place anyone not-there entered
A l'uis començai a ferir,
At the-door I-began to strike
qu'autre entree n'i soi querir.
for-other entry not-there I-knew to-seek
Assez i feri e boutai,
Much there I-struck and pushed
e par maintes foiz escoutai
and for many times I-listened
se j'orroie venir nule arme.
whether I-should-hear come any soul

Le guichet, qui estoit de charme,
The wicket which was of hornbeam
adonc m'ovri une pucele,
then to-me-opened a maiden
qui assez estoit gente e bele.
who quite was comely and fair
Cheveus ot blonz come uns bacins,
Hair she-had blond as a basin
la char plus tendre qu'uns poucins,
the flesh more tender than-a chick
front reluisant, sorciz voutiz.
forehead shining eyebrows arched
Li entriauz ne fu pas petiz,
The space-between-the-eyes not was at-all small
ainz iert assez granz par mesure;
rather it-was quite wide in measure
le nés ot bien fait a droiture,
the nose she-had well made in straightness
e les iauz vairs come uns faucons,
and the eyes bright-gray as a falcon
por faire envie a ces bricons.
to make envy in these fools
Douce aleine ot e savoree,
Sweet breath she-had and fragrant
e face blanche e coloree,
and face white and ruddy
la bouche petite e grossete;
the mouth small and full
s'ot ou menton une fossete.
and-she-had in-the chin a dimple

Li cos fu de bone moison,
The neck was of good measure
gros assez e lons par raison,
thick enough and long in proportion
si n'i ot bube ne malan:
and not-there was pimple nor sore
n'avoit jusqu'en Jerusalen
not-there-was as-far-as-in Jerusalem
fame qui plus bel col portast;
woman who more fair neck bore
poliz iert e soés au tast.
smooth it-was and soft to-the touch
La gorge avoit autresi blanche
The throat she-had likewise white
come est la nois desus la branche,
as is the snow upon the branch
quant il a freschement negié.
when it has freshly snowed
Le cors ot bien fait e dougié;
The body she-had well made and slender
il n'esteüst en nule terre
it not-would-be-needful in any land
nul plus bel cors de fame querre.
any more fair body of woman to-seek
D'orfrois ot un chapel mignot;
Of-gold-braid she-had a garland dainty
onques nule pucele n'ot
ever any maiden not-had
plus cointe ne plus desguisié:
more dainty nor more elaborate

ne l'avroie droit devisié.
not it-I-should-have rightly described
Un chapel de roses tot frois
A garland of roses all fresh
ot desus le chapel d'orfrois.
she-had above the garland of-gold-braid
En sa main tint un miroer;
In her hand she-held a mirror
si ot d'un riche treçoer
and she-had with-a rich hair-band
son chief trecié mout richement.
her head braided very richly
Bien e bel e estroitement
Well and fairly and tightly
ot andeus cousues ses manches;
she-had both sewn her sleeves
e, por garder que ses mains blanches
and to keep that her hands white
ne halassent, ot uns blans ganz.
not should-tan she-had a-pair-of white gloves
Cote ot d'un riche vert de Ganz,
A-gown she-had of-a rich green of Ghent
cousue a lignuel tot entor.
sewn with a-cord all around
Il paroit bien a son ator
It appeared well by her array
qu'ele estoit poi embesoigniee.
that-she was little busied
Quant ele s'estoit bien pigniee,
When she herself-had well combed

e bien paree e atornee,
and well adorned and arrayed
ele avoit faite sa jornee.
she had made her day's-work
Mout avoit bon tens e bon mai,
Very she-had good time and good May
qu'el n'avoit soussi ne esmai
for-she not-had care nor dismay
de nule rien, fors solement
for any thing except only
de soi atorner noblement.
for herself to-array nobly
Quant ensi m'ot l'uis desfermé
When thus to-me-had the-door unbarred
la pucele au cors acesmé,
the maiden with-the body trim
je l'en merciai bonement,
I her-thereof thanked kindly
e si li demandai coment
and so her I-asked how
ele avoit non e qui ele iere.
she had name and who she was
Ele ne fu pas vers moi fiere
She not was at-all toward me haughty
ne de respondre desdeigneuse:
nor of answering disdainful
«Je me faz», ce dist ele, «Oiseuse
I myself make that said she Idleness
apeler a mes conoissanz.
to-call by my acquaintances

Riche fame sui e poissanz.
Rich woman I-am and powerful
S'ai d'une chose mout bon tens,
And-I-have of-one thing very good time
car a nule rien je n'entens
for to any thing I not-attend
qu'a moi joer e solacier,
but-to myself play and solace
e a moi pignier e trecier.
and to myself comb and braid
Privee sui mout e acointe
Familiar I-am very and intimate
de Deduit le mignot, le cointe,
with Mirth the dainty the elegant
ce est cil cui est cist Jardins,
this is he whose is this Garden
qui de la terre as Sarradins
who from the land of-the Saracens
fist ça les arbres aporter
had hither the trees brought
qu'il fist par le vergier planter.
which-he had through the garden planted
Quant li arbre furent creü,
When the trees were grown
le mur que vos avez veü
the wall which you have seen
fist Deduiz lors tot entor faire;
had Mirth then all around made

e si fist au dehors portraire
and so he-had on-the outside portrayed
les images qui i sont pointes,
the images which there are painted
qui ne sont mignotes ne cointes,
which not are dainty nor elegant
ainz sont dolereuses e tristes,
rather are doleful and sad
si con vos orendroit veïstes.
so as you just-now saw
Maintes foiz por esbaneier
Many times to disport
se vient en cest leu ombreier
himself comes in this place to-take-shade
Deduiz e les genz qui le sivent,
Mirth and the folk who him follow
qui en joie e en solaz vivent.
who in joy and in solace live
Encore orendroit est senz doute
Even just-now is without doubt
Deduiz laienz, ou il escoute
Mirth within where he listens
a chanter les rossignolez,
to sing the nightingales
mauviz e autres oiselez.
thrushes and other little-birds

Il se jeue iluec e solace
He himself sports there and solaces
o ses genz, que plus bele place
with his folk for more fair place
ne plus bel leu por soi joer
nor more fair spot for himself to-play
ne porroit il mie troer.
not could he at-all find
Les plus beles genz, ce sachiez,
The most fair folk this know
que vos jamais nul leu truissiez,
that you ever any place may-find
si sont li compaignon Deduit,
so are the companions (of-)Mirth
qu'il moine avuec soi e conduit.»
whom-he leads with him and guides
Quant Oiseuse m'ot ce conté,
When Idleness to-me-had this told
e j'oi mout bien tot escouté,
and I-had very well all listened
je li dis lores: «Dame Oiseuse,
I to-her said then Lady Idleness
ja de ce ne seiez douteuse,
ever of this not be doubtful
puis que Deduiz, li biaus, li genz,
since that Mirth the fair the noble

est orendroit avuec ses genz
is just-now with his folk
en cest vergier, ceste assemblee
in this garden this company
ne m'iert pas, se je puis, emblee
not to-me-will-be at-all if I can stolen
que ne la voie encore enuit.
that not it I-see yet tonight
Veoir la m'estuet, car je cuit
To-see it me-behooves for I think
que bele est cele compaignie
that fair is that company
e cortoise e bien enseignie.»
and courteous and well bred

The Garden and Its Birds

V

He goes in and thinks himself in an earthly paradise. Nightingales, jays, starlings, larks, blackbirds, and parrots fill the garden, and their song is like angels' and no mortal ever heard the like. He walks to the right along a path of fennel and mint and finds Mirth in a bower with folk so fair he takes them for winged angels. They are dancing a carol to the singing of Gladness; flute-players, jugglers, and timbrel-girls attend. Courtesy calls him over, and he takes his place in the dance.

Lors entrai, senz plus dire mot,
Then I-entered without more saying word
par l'uis que Oiseuse overt m'ot,
by the-door which Idleness opened to-me-had
ou vergier, e quant je fui enz,
into-the garden and when I was within

je fui liez e bauz e joianz;
I was glad and blithe and joyous
e sachiez que je cuidai estre
and know that I thought to-be
por voir en parevis terrestre;
for truth in paradise earthly
tant estoit li leus delitables
so-much was the place delightful
qu'il sembloit estre esperitables;
that-it seemed to-be spiritual
car, si come lors m'iert avis,
for so as then to-me-was seeming
il ne fait en nul parevis
it not is in any paradise
si bon estre come il faisoit
so good to-be as it was
ou vergier qui tant me plaisoit.
in-the garden which so-much me pleased
D'oisiaus chantanz avoit assez
Of-birds singing there-was plenty
par tot le vergier amassez.
through all the garden gathered
En un leu avoit rossigniaus,
In one place there-were nightingales
d'autre part jais e estorniaus;
on-other side jays and starlings
si ravoit aillors granz escoles
and there-were-in-turn elsewhere great schools
de roietiaus e de tortoles,
of wrens and of turtledoves

de chardoneriaus, d'arondeles,
of goldfinches of-swallows
d'aloes e de lardereles;
of-larks and of tit-larks
calandres ravoit amassees
calandra-larks there-were-in-turn gathered
en un autre leu, qui lassees
in an other place which wearied
de chanter fussent a enviz;
of singing were with reluctance
melles i avoit e mauviz,
blackbirds there were and thrushes
qui beoient a sormonter
which sought to outdo
ces autres oisiaus par chanter;
these other birds in singing
il ravoit aillors papegauz,
it there-were-again elsewhere parrots
e mainz oisiaus qui par ces gauz
and many birds which through these thickets
e par ces bois ou il abitent
and through these woods where they dwell
en lor bel chanter se delitent.
in their fair singing themselves delight
Trop par faisoient bel servise
Exceedingly much made fair service
cil oisel que je vos devise.
those birds which I to-you describe

Il chantoient un chant itel
They sang a song such
con fussent ange esperitel;
as were angels spiritual
e bien sachiez, quant je l'oï,
and well know when I it-heard
mout durement m'en esjoï;
very greatly myself-thereat I-rejoiced
qu'onc mais si douce melodie
for-ever before so sweet a-melody
ne fu d'ome mortel oïe.
not was by-man mortal heard
Tant estoit cil chanz douz e biaus
So-much was that song sweet and fair
qu'il ne sembloit pas chant d'oisiaus,
that-it not seemed at-all song of-birds
ainz le peüst l'en aesmer
rather it might one liken
a chant de sereines de mer,
to song of sirens of sea
qui, por lor voiz qu'eles ont saines
who for their voices which-they have sound
e series, ont non sereines.
and clear have name sirens
A chanter furent ententif
To sing were intent
li oiselet, qui aprentif
the little-birds which apprentices
ne furent pas ne non sachant;
not were at-all nor not knowing

si sachiez, quant j'oï le chant
and know when I-heard the song
e je vi le leu verdeier,
and I saw the place grow-green
je me pris mout a esgaier;
I myself began much to rejoice
si n'avoie esté encore onques
and not-I-had been yet ever
si gais con je devin adonques.
so gay as I became then
Por la grant delitableté,
For the great delightfulness
fui pleins de grant joliveté;
I-was full of great merriment
e lores soi je bien e vi
and then knew I well and saw
qu'Oiseuse m'avoit bien servi,
that-Idleness me-had well served
qui m'avoit en ce deduit mis;
who me-had into this delight put
bien deüsse estre ses amis,
well I-ought be her friend
quant ele m'avoit desfermé
since she me-had unbarred
le guichet dou vergier ramé.
the wicket of-the garden leafy
Dès ore, si con je savrai,
From now so as I shall-know-how
vos conterai coment j'ovrai:
to-you I-shall-relate how I-acted

primes de quoi Deduiz servoit,
first of what Mirth busied-himself
e quel compaignie il avoit,
and what company he had
senz longue fable vos vueil dire;
without long fable to-you I-wish to-say
e dou vergier trestot a tire
and of-the garden wholly in order
la façon vos redirai puis.
the fashion to-you I-shall-tell after
Tot ensemble dire ne puis,
All together say not I-can
mais tot vos conterai en ordre,
but all to-you I-shall-relate in order
que nus n'i sache que remordre.
so-that anyone not-thereat know what to-carp-at
Grant servise douz e plaisant
Great service sweet and pleasing
aloient li oisel faisant;
went the birds making
lais d'amors e sonez cortois
lays of-love and songs courtly
chantoient en lor serventois,
they-sang in their serventois
li un en haut, li autre en bas.
the one in high the other in low
De lor chant, n'estoit mie gas,
Of their song not-was at-all a-jest

la douçor e la melodie
the sweetness and the melody
me mist ou cuer grant reverdie;
me put in-the heart great renewal
mais quant j'oi escouté un poi
but when I-had listened a little
les oisiaus, tenir ne me poi
to-the birds hold not myself I-could
qu'adonc Deduit veoir n'alasse;
that-then Mirth to-see I-should-go
car a veoir mout desirasse
for to see much I-desired
son contenement e son estre.
his bearing and his estate
Lors m'en alai tot droit a destre,
Then myself-thence I-went all straight to right
par une petitete sente,
by a very-little path
pleine de fenoil e de mente;
full of fennel and of mint
mais auques près trovai Deduit;
but somewhat near I-found Mirth
car maintenant en un reduit
for at-once into a retreat
m'en entrai ou Deduiz estoit.
myself-thence I-entered where Mirth was
Deduiz ilueques s'esbatoit;
Mirth there himself-disported

s'avoit si beles genz o soi
and-he-had so fair folk with him
que, quant je les vi, je ne soi
that when I them saw I not knew
don si trés beles genz pooient
whence so very fair folk could
estre venu, car il sembloient
be come for they seemed
tot por voir anges empenez.
all for truth angels winged
Si beles genz ne vit on nez.
So fair folk not saw one born
Ceste gent don je vos parole
This folk of-whom I to-you speak
s'estoient pris a la querole,
themselves-had taken to the carol
e une dame lor chantoit,
and a lady to-them sang
qui Leece apelee estoit.
who Gladness called was
Bien sot chanter e plaisamment,
Well she-knew to-sing and pleasingly
ne nule plus avenamment
nor any more becomingly
ne plus bel ses refraiz n'assist.
nor more fairly her refrains not-set
A chanter merveilles li sist,
To sing marvelously her suited
qu'ele avoit la voiz clere e saine.
for-she had the voice clear and sound

E si n'estoit mie vilaine,
And so not-she-was at-all churlish
ainz se savoit bien debrisier,
rather herself she-knew well to-sway
ferir dou pié e envoisier;
to-strike with-the foot and to-make-merry
ele estoit adès costumiere
she was ever accustomed
de chanter en toz leus premiere,
to sing in all places first
car chanters estoit li mestiers
for singing was the trade
qu'ele faisoit plus volentiers.
which-she did most willingly
Lors veïssiez querole aler
Then you-would-see carol go
e genz mignotement baler
and folk daintily dance
e faire mainte bele tresche
and make many-a fair round
e maint bel tor sor l'erbe fresche.
and many-a fair turn on the-grass fresh
La veïssiez fleüteors,
There you-would-see flute-players
e menestreus e jogleors;
and minstrels and jugglers
si chantoit li uns rotruenges,
and sang the one rotrouenges
li autres notes loherenges,
the other airs Lorraine

por ce qu'en fait en Lohereine
because this that-one makes in Lorraine
plus beles notes qu'en nul reine.
more fair airs than-in any realm
Assez i ot tableterresses
Plenty there were castanet-women
iluec entor e timberresses,
there about and timbrel-women
qui mout savoient bien joer,
who much knew well to-play
qui ne finoient de ruer
who not ceased from tossing
le timbre en haut, sel recuilloient
the timbrel on high and-it they-caught-again
sor un doi, qu'onques n'i failloient.
on one finger that-ever not-there they-failed
Deus damoiseles mout mignotes,
Two damsels very dainty
qui estoient en pures cotes
who were in bare gowns
e treciees a une trece,
and braided into one braid
faisoit Deduiz par grant noblece
made Mirth in great nobleness
en mi la querole baler;
in midst the carol dance
mais de ce ne fait a parler
but of this not is-fit to speak
come eus baloient cointement:
how they danced daintily

l'une venoit tot belement
the-one came all gracefully
contre l'autre, e quant eus estoient
toward the-other and when they were
près a près, si s'entrejetoient
near to near so each-other-they-threw
les bouches, qu'il vos fust avis
the mouths so-that to-you it-were seeming
qu'eus s'entrebaisassent ou vis.
that-they each-other-kissed on-the face
Bien se savoient debrisier.
Well themselves they-knew to-sway
Ne vos en sai que devisier,
Not to-you thereof I-know what to-relate
mais nul jor mais ne me queïsse
but any day ever not myself I-should-wish
remuer tant con je veïsse
to-move so-long as I might-see
ceste gent ensi esforcier
this folk thus exert-themselves
de queroler e de dancier.
in caroling and in dancing
La querole tot en estant
The carol all on standing
regardai iluec jusqu'a tant
I-watched there until such-time
qu'une dame mout envoisie
that-a lady very merry
me tresvit, ce fu Cortoisie,
me perceived this was Courtesy

la vaillant e la debonaire,
the worthy and the gracious
que Deus defende de contraire!
whom God defend from harm
Cortoisie lors m'apela:
Courtesy then me-called
«Biaus amis, que faites vos la?»
Fair friend what do you there
Fait Cortoisie, «ça venez,
Says Courtesy hither come
e avueques nos vos prenez
and with us yourself take
a la querole, s'il vos plaist.»
to the carol if-it to-you please
Senz demorance e senz arest
Without delay and without stay
a la querole me sui pris,
to the carol myself I-am taken
si ne fui pas trop entrepris;
and not I-was at-all too abashed
mais sachiez que mout m'agrea
but know that much me-pleased
don Cortoisie me preia
that Courtesy me begged
e me dist que je querolasse;
and me said that I should-carol
car de queroler, se j'osasse,
for of caroling if I-dared
estoie envieus e sorpris.
I-was eager and seized

A regarder lores me pris
To watch then myself I-took
les cors, les façons e les chieres,
the bodies the figures and the faces
les semblances e les manieres
the semblances and the manners
des genz qui iluec queroloient;
of-the folk who there caroled
si vos dirai quel il estoient. 800
and to-you I-shall-say what they were

Mirth, Gladness, and the God of Love

VI

Mirth is tall and straight in samite figured with birds, and Gladness beside him, whose love he has had since she was seven. On the other side stands the god of Love, who rules lovers and makes lords into servants, in a flowered gown alive with birds. His bachelor Sweet Looks carries two bows and ten arrows: five of gold, named Beauty, Simplicity, Franchise, Company, and Fair Seeming, and five ugly ones, shafts and heads blacker than the devils of hell, named Pride, Villainy, Shame, Despair, and New Thought, whose meaning the poet will give before the end.

Deduiz fu biaus e lons e droiz:
Mirth was fair and tall and straight
jamais entre gent ne vendroiz
ever among folk not you-will-come
ou vos veiez nul plus bel ome.
where you may-see any more fair man
La face avoit, come une pome,
The face he-had as an apple

vermeille e blanche tot entor;
red and white all around
cointes fu e de bel ator.
elegant he-was and of fair array
Les iauz ot vairs, la bouche gente,
The eyes he-had bright-gray the mouth comely
e le nés fait par grant entente.
and the nose made with great care
Cheveus ot blonz, recercelez;
Hair he-had blond curled
par espaules fu auques lez,
across shoulders he-was somewhat broad
e grailles par mi la ceinture.
and slender through midst the waist
Il resembloit une pointure,
He resembled a painting
tant estoit biaus e acesmez,
so-much he-was fair and trim
e de toz membres bien formez.
and in all limbs well formed
Remuanz fu e preuz e vistes:
Lively he-was and worthy and nimble
plus legier ome ne veïstes.
more agile a-man not you-saw
Si n'avoit barbe ne grenon,
And not-he-had beard nor mustache
se petiz peus folages non;
except little hairs downy not
car il iert juenes damoisiaus.
for he was a-young squire

D'un samit portrait a oisiaus,
Of-a samite figured with birds
qui estoit toz a or batuz,
which was all with gold beaten
fu ses cors richement vestuz.
was his body richly clad
Mout fu la robe desguisiee;
Very was the gown elaborate
si iert en maint leu encisiee
and it-was in many-a place slashed
e decopee par cointise.
and cut-away for elegance
Chauciez refu par grant maistrise
Shod he-was-in-turn with great mastery
d'uns solers decopez a laz.
with-some shoes cut-away in lacing
Par druerie e par solaz
Out-of love and out-of delight
li ot s'amie fait chapel
to-him had his-friend made a-garland
de roses, qui mout li sist bel.
of roses which very to-him suited well
E savez vos qui iert s'amie?
And know you who was his-friend
Leece, qui nou haoit mie,
Gladness who not-him hated at-all
l'envoisiee, la bien chantanz,
the-merry the well singing
qui, des qu'el n'avoit que set anz,
who since that-she not-had but seven years

de s'amor li dona l'otroi.
of her-love to-him gave the-grant
Deduiz la tint par mi le doi
Mirth her held by midst the finger
a la querole, e ele lui;
at the carol and she him
bien s'entravenoient andui,
well each-other-they-suited both
qu'il estoit biaus e ele bele.
for-he was fair and she fair
El resembloit rose novele
She resembled a-rose new
de la color sor la char tendre,
of the color on the flesh tender
que l'en li peüst toute fendre
that one to-her could wholly split
a une petitete ronce.
with a very-little briar
Le front ot blanc, poli, senz fronce,
The forehead she-had white smooth without wrinkle
les sorciz bruns e enarchiez,
the eyebrows brown and arched
les iauz gais e si envoisiez
the eyes gay and so merry
qu'il rioient toz jorz avant
that-they laughed all days before
que la bouchete par covent.
that the little-mouth by agreement
Je ne vos sai dou nés que dire:
I not to-you know of-the nose what to-say

l'en nou feïst pas miauz de cire.
one not-it would-make at-all better of wax
Ele ot la bouche petitete,
She had the mouth very-small
e por baisier son ami prete;
and for kissing her friend ready
s'ot le chief blont e reluisant.
and-she-had the head blond and shining
Que vos iroie je disant?
What to-you should-go I saying
Bele fu e bien atornee.
Fair she-was and well arrayed
D'un fil d'or estoit galonee;
With-a thread of-gold she-was braided
s'ot un chapel d'orfrois tot nuef.
and-she-had a garland of-gold-braid all new
Je, qu'en ai veü vint e nuef,
I who-thereof have seen twenty and nine
a nul jor mais veü n'avoie
on any day ever seen not-had
chapel si bien ovré de soie.
a-garland so well wrought of silk
D'un samit qui iert toz dorez
Of-a samite which was all gilded
fu ses cors vestuz e parez,
was her body clad and adorned
de quoi ses amis avoit robe,
of which her friend had a-gown
si en estoit assez plus gobe.
and thereby she-was much more proud

A li se tint de l'autre part
By her himself held on the-other side
li deus d'Amors, cil qui depart
the god of-Love he who deals-out
amoretes a sa devise.
little-loves at his pleasure
C'est cil qui les amanz jostise,
This-is he who the lovers rules
e qui abat l'orgueil des genz,
and who beats-down the-pride of-the folk
e si fait des seignors sergenz,
and so makes of-the lords servants
e des dames refait baesses,
and of-the ladies makes-in-turn handmaids
quant il les trueve trop engresses.
when he them finds too haughty
Li deus d'Amors de la façon
The god of-Love in the fashion
ne resembla mie garçon;
not resembled at-all a-lackey
de biauté fist mout a prisier.
in beauty he-was much to prize
Mais de sa robe devisier
But of his gown to-describe
crien durement qu'encombrez soie;
I-fear greatly that-burdened I-may-be
qu'il n'avoit pas robe de soie,
for-he not-had at-all a-gown of silk
ainz avoit robe de floretes,
rather he-had a-gown of little-flowers

faite par fines amoretes.
made by fine little-loves
A losenges, a escuciaus,
With lozenges with escutcheons
a oiselez, a lionciaus,
with little-birds with lion-cubs
e a bestes e a leparz
and with beasts and with leopards
fu la robe de toutes parz
was the gown on all sides
portraite, e ovree de flors
figured and wrought with flowers
par diverseté de colors.
by diversity of colors
Flors i avoit de maintes guises,
Flowers there were of many kinds
qui furent par grant sen assises.
which were by great skill arranged
Nule flor en esté ne naist
Any flower in summer not is-born
qui n'i fust, nes flor de genest,
which not-there were not-even flower of broom
ne violete ne parvenche,
nor violet nor periwinkle
ne flor jaune n'inde ne blanche.
nor flower yellow nor-blue nor white
S'i ot par leus entremellees
And-there were in places intermingled
fueilles de roses granz e lees.
leaves of roses great and wide

Il ot ou chief un chapelet
He had on-the head a little-garland
de roses; mais rossignolet,
of roses but little-nightingales
qui entor son chief voletoient,
which about his head fluttered
les fueilles jus en abatoient;
the leaves down thereof beat
qu'il estoit toz coverz d'oisiaus,
for-he was all covered with-birds
de papegauz, de rossigniaus,
with parrots with nightingales
de calandres e de mesenges.
with larks and with titmice
Il sembloit que ce fust uns anges
It seemed that this were an angel
qui fust tot droit venuz dou ciel.
who were all straight come from-the sky
Amors avoit un jovenciel
Love had a young-man
qu'il faisoit estre iluec delez;
whom-he made to-be there beside
Douz Regarz estoit apelez.
Sweet Looks he-was called
Icil bachelers regardoit
That bachelor watched
les queroles, e si gardoit
the carols and so kept
au deu d'Amors deus ars turcois.
for-the god of-Love two bows Turkish

Li uns des ars si fu d'un bois
The one of-the bows so was of-a wood
don li fruiz est mal savorez.
of-which the fruit is ill savored
Toz pleins de neuz e bocerez
All full of knots and gnarled
fu cil ars desoz e deseure,
was that bow below and above
e si estoit plus noirs que meure.
and so it-was more black than a-mulberry
Li autres ars fu d'un plançon
The other bow was of-a sapling
longuet e de gente façon;
longish and of comely fashion
si fu bien faiz e bien dolez,
and it-was well made and well smoothed
e si fu mout bien pipolez.
and so it-was very well painted
Dames i ot de toz sens pointes,
Ladies there were on all sides painted
e vallez envoisiez e cointes.
and young-men merry and elegant
O ces deus ars tint Douz Regarz,
With these two bows held Sweet Looks
qui ne sembla pas estre garz,
who not seemed at-all to-be a-knave
jusqu'a dis des floiches son maistre.
up-to ten of-the arrows his master's
Il en tint cinc en sa main destre;
He thereof held five in his hand right

925 mais mout orent ices cinc floiches
but much had these five arrows
les penons bien faiz e les coiches,
the feathers well made and the notches
si furent toutes a or pointes;
and they-were all with gold painted
forz e trenchanz orent les pointes
strong and cutting had the points
e agües por bien percier;
and sharp for well piercing
930 mais il n'i ot fer ne acier:
but it not-there was iron nor steel
onc n'i ot rien qui d'or ne fust,
ever not-there was anything which of-gold not were
fors que les penons e le fust,
except that the feathers and the shaft
car eus furent encarrelees
for they were tipped
de saietes d'or barbelees.
with arrow-points of-gold barbed
935 La meillor e la plus isnele
The best and the most swift
de ces floiches, e la plus bele,
of these arrows and the most fair
e cele ou li meillor penon
and that where the best feathers
furent enté, Biautez ot non.
were grafted Beauty had name

Une de celes qui plus blece
One of those which most wounds
rot non, ce m'est avis, Simplece.
had-in-turn name this to-me-is seeming Simplicity
Une autre en i ot, apelee
An other thereof there was called
Franchise; cele iert empenee
Franchise that was feathered
de valor e de cortoisie.
with worth and with courtesy
La quarte avoit non Compaignie;
The fourth had name Company
en cele ot mout pesant saiete;
in that was very heavy an-arrow
el n'estoit pas d'aler loing prete;
it not-was at-all for-going far ready
mais qui de près en vosist traire,
but who from near thereof would-wish to-draw
il en peüst assez mal faire.
he thereby could much harm do
La cinquieme ot non Biaus Semblanz:
The fifth had name Fair Seeming
ce fu toute la moins grevanz;
that was wholly the least grievous
neporquant el fait mout grant plaie;
nevertheless it makes very great a-wound
mais cil atent bone menaie
but he awaits good mercy
qui de cele floiche est plaiez;
who by that arrow is wounded

ses maus si est bien empleiez,
his ill so is well bestowed
car il puet tost santé atendre,
for he can soon health await
s'en doit estre sa dolor mendre.
and-thereby ought be his grief less
Cinc floiches i ot d'autre guise,
Five arrows there were of-other kind
qui furent laides a devise;
which were ugly beyond measure
li fust estoient e li fer
the shafts were and the irons
plus noir que deables d'enfer.
more black than devils of-hell
La premiere avoit non Orguiauz;
The first had name Pride
l'autre, qui ne valoit pas miauz,
the-other which not was-worth at-all better
fu apelee Vilanie:
was called Villainy
cele si fu de felonie
that-one so was with felony
toute teinte e envenimee.
wholly stained and envenomed
La tierce fu Honte clamee,
The third was Shame called
e la quarte Desesperance;
and the fourth Despair

Noviaus Pensers fu senz doutance
New Thought was without doubt
apelee la derreniere.
called the last
Ces cinc floiches d'une maniere
These five arrows of-one fashion
furent e toutes resemblables.
were and all alike
Mout par lor estoit covenables
Very much to-them was suited
li uns des ars, qui fu hisdeus
the one of-the bows which was hideous
e pleins de neuz e bocereus;
and full of knots and gnarled
il devoit bien teus floiches traire.
it ought well such arrows to-shoot
Ces cinc floiches force contraire
These five arrows force contrary
as autres cinc orent senz doute;
to-the other five had without doubt
mais ne dirai ore pas toute
but not I-shall-say now at-all all
lor force ne lor poesté;
their force nor their power
bien vos en iert la verité
well to-you thereof will-be the truth
contee e la senefiance,
told and the meaning
nou metrai pas en obliance,
not-it I-shall-put at-all in oblivion

ainz vos dirai que tot ce monte,
rather to-you I-shall-say what all this amounts-to
ançois que je fine mon conte.
before that I end my tale

Beauty, Wealth, and Largesse

VII

Beauty, clear as the moon among stars, stands with the god of Love. Beside her is Wealth, whom all fear and serve, her purple embroidered with the histories of dukes and kings and her circlet set with a carbuncle that lights a league of road; she holds a youth who loves great spending. Then Largesse of Alexander's lineage, who knows no joy like giving, her neck bare because she has just given her brooch away; she holds a knight of Arthur's line. A miser, the poet says, wins neither lordship nor land, for gifts draw hearts as the lodestone draws iron.

Or revendrai a ma parole:
Now I-shall-return to my word
des nobles genz de la querole
of-the noble folk of the carol
m'estuet dire les contenances
me-behooves to-say the bearings
e les façons e les semblances.
and the fashions and the semblances
Li deus d'Amors se fu bien pris;
The god of-Love himself was well placed
a une dame de haut pris
to a lady of high worth
se fu de mout près ajostez.
himself was of very near joined

Icele dame ot non Biautez,
That-same lady had name Beauty
ausi come une des cinc floiches.
just as one of-the five arrows
En li ot mout de bones toiches:
In her there-were many of good qualities
el ne fu oscure ne brune,
she not was dark nor brown
ainz fu clere come la lune,
rather was clear as the moon
envers cui les autres estoiles
compared-to which the other stars
resemblent petites chandoiles.
resemble little candles
Tendre ot la char come rosee;
Tender she-had the flesh as dew
simple fu come une esposee,
simple she-was as a bride
e blanche come flor de lis.
and white as flower of lily
Ele ot le vis cler e alis,
She had the face bright and smooth
s'estoit graillete e aligniee.
and-she-was slender and shapely
Ne fu fardee ne guigniee,
Not she-was painted nor penciled
car el n'avoit mie mestier
for she not-had at-all need
de soi tifer ne afaitier.
of herself to-trick-out nor to-dress

Les cheveus ot blondez e lons,
The hair she-had blond and long
qui li batoient as talons.
which to-her beat at-the heels
Nés ot bien fait e iauz e bouche.
Nose she-had well made and eyes and mouth
Mout grant douçor au cuer me touche,
Very great sweetness at-the heart me touches
si m'aïst Deus, quant il me membre
so me-help God when it to-me recalls
de la façon de chascun membre,
of the fashion of each limb
qu'il n'ot si bele fame ou monde.
for-there not-was so fair a-woman in-the world
Briement el fu jonete e blonde,
Briefly she was youthful and blond
sade, plaisant, aperte e cointe,
sweet pleasing open and elegant
grasse, graillete, gente e jointe.
plump slender comely and shapely
Delez Biauté se tint Richece,
Beside Beauty herself stood Wealth
une dame de grant hautece,
a lady of great loftiness
de grant pris e de grant afaire.
of great worth and of great estate
Qui a li ne as siens mesfaire
Who to her nor to-the her-own to-harm
osast rien par faiz ne par diz,
should-dare anything by deeds nor by words

il fust mout fiers e mout hardiz;
he were very bold and very hardy
qu'ele puet mout nuire e aidier.
for-she can much harm and help
Ce n'est mie ne d'ui ne d'ier
This not-is at-all neither of-today nor of-yesterday
que riches genz ont grant poissance
that rich folk have great power
de faire e aïde e grevance.
of doing both help and hurt
Tuit li graignor e li menor
All the greater and the lesser
portoient a Richece enor;
bore to Wealth honor
tuit beoient a li servir
all sought to her serve
por l'amor de li deservir;
for the-love of her to-deserve
chascuns sa dame la clamoit,
each his lady her called
car toz li mondes la cremoit;
for all the world her feared
toz li monz iert en son dangier.
all the world was in her power
A sa cort ot maint losengier,
At her court there-was many-a flatterer
maint traïtor, maint envieus:
many-a traitor many-an envious

ce sont cil qui sont curieus
these are they who are eager
de desprisier e de blasmer
to disparage and to blame
toz ceus qui miauz font a amer.
all those who best are to be-loved
Par devant, por aus losengier,
By before to them flatter
loent les genz li losengier,
praise the folk the flatterers
e tot le mont par parole oignent;
and all the world by word anoint
mais lor losenges les genz poignent
but their flatteries the folk prick
par derriere jusques a l'os;
by behind even to the-bone
qu'il abaissent des bons les los
for-they lower of-the good the praises
e desloent les alosez.
and dispraise the renowned
Mainz prodomes ont encusez
Many worthy-men have accused
li losengier par lor losenges,
the flatterers by their flatteries
car il font ceus de cort estranges
for they make those from court estranged
qui deüssent estre privé.
who ought be intimate
Mal puissent il estre arivé,
Ill may they be come-to-land

icil losengier plein d'envie!
those flatterers full of-envy
Car nus prodon n'aime lor vie.
For any worthy-man not-loves their life
Richece ot d'une porpre robe,
Wealth had of-a purple gown
nou tenez ore pas a lobe;
not-it hold now at-all for a-jest
que je vos di bien e afiche
for I to-you say well and affirm
qu'il n'ot si bele ne si riche
that-there not-was so fair nor so rich
ou monde ne si envoisiee.
in-the world nor so splendid
La porpre fu toute orfroisiee;
The purple was all gold-embroidered
s'i ot portraites a orfrois
and-there there-were figured in gold-braid
estoires de dus e de rois.
histories of dukes and of kings
D'une bande d'or neelee
Of-a band of-gold niello-worked
a esmaus fu au col orlee
with enamels was at-the neck edged
mout richement la cheveçaille.
very richly the neck-band
E s'i ot, ce sachiez senz faille,
And so-there there-was this know without fail
de riches pierres grant plenté,
of rich stones great plenty

qui mout rendoient grant clarté.
which much gave-out great brightness
Richece ot un mout riche ceint
Wealth had a very rich girdle
par desus cele porpre ceint;
by above that purple girt
la bocle d'une pierre fu
the buckle of-a stone was
qui ot grant force e grant vertu;
which had great force and great virtue
car cil qui sor soi la portoit
for he who upon himself it bore
de nul venin rien ne doutoit:
of any venom anything not feared
nus nou pooit envenimer.
anyone not-him could envenom
Bien faisoit tel pierre a amer:
Well made such a-stone to be-loved
ele vausist a un riche ome
it would-be-worth to a rich man
miauz que trestoz li ors de Rome.
better than wholly-all the gold of Rome
D'une autre pierre iert li mordanz,
Of-an other stone was the tongue
qui guerissoit dou mal des denz,
which healed of-the ache of-the teeth

e si avoit un tel eür
and so it-had a such fortune
que cil pooit estre asseür
that he could be assured
trestot le jor de sa veüe
wholly-all the day of his sight
qui a jeün l'avoit veüe.
who at fasting it-had seen
Li clou furent d'or esmeré
The studs were of-gold refined
qui furent ou tessu doré;
which were on-the tissue gilded
si estoient gros e pesant:
and they-were thick and heavy
en chascun ot bien un besant.
in each there-was fully a bezant
Richece ot sus ses treces sores
Wealth had upon her tresses golden
un cercle d'or; onques encores
a circlet of-gold ever yet
ne fu veüz si biaus, ce cuit.
not was seen so fair this I-think
Li cercles fu d'or fin recuit;
The circlet was of-gold fine refined
mais cil seroit bons devisierres
but he would-be a-good describer
qui vos savroit toutes les pierres
who to-you would-know all the stones
qui i estoient devisier;
which there were to-describe

car l'en ne porroit pas prisier
for one not could at-all appraise
l'avoir que les pierres valoient
the-wealth which the stones were-worth
qui en l'or assises estoient:
which in the-gold set were
rubiz i ot, saphirs, jagonces,
rubies there were sapphires jacinths
esmeraudes plus de deus onces.
emeralds more than two ounces
Mais devant ot par grant maistrise
But in-front there-was by great mastery
une escarbocle ou cercle assise;
a carbuncle in-the circlet set
e la pierre si clere estoit
and the stone so bright was
que, maintenant qu'il anuitoit,
that the-moment that-it grew-dark
l'en s'en veoit bien au besoing
one and-thereby saw well at need
conduire d'une live loing.
to-guide-oneself of-a league far
Tel clarté des pierres issoit
Such brightness from-the stones came
que Richece en resplendissoit
that Wealth thereby shone
durement li vis e la face,
greatly the countenance and the face
e entor li toute la place.
and about her all the place

Richece tint par mi la main
Wealth held by midst the hand
un vallet de grant biauté plein,
a young-man of great beauty full
qui fu ses amis veriteus.
who was her friend true
C'est uns on qui en biaus osteus
This-is a man who in fair houses
maintenir mout se delitoit.
to-keep much himself delighted
Il se chauçoit bien e vestoit;
He himself shod well and clad
si avoit les chevaus de pris.
and he-had the horses of worth
Il cuidast bien estre repris
He would-think well to-be blamed
ou de murtre ou de larrecin
either of murder or of theft
se en s'estable eüst roncin.
if in his-stable he-had a-nag
Por ce amoit mout l'acointance
For this he-loved much the-acquaintance
de Richece e la bienvoillance
of Wealth and the good-will
qu'il avoit toz jorz son espens
for-he had all days his intent
a demener les granz despens,
on carrying-on the great expenses
e el les pooit bien fornir,
and she them could well furnish

e ses despenses maintenir;
and his expenditures maintain
qu'el li donoit autant deniers
for-she to-him gave as-many pence
con s'el les puisast en greniers.
as if-she them drew in granaries
Après se fu Largece prise,
Next herself was Largesse placed
qui bien fu duite e bien aprise
who well was trained and well taught
de faire enor e de despendre.
in doing honor and in spending
El fu dou lignage Alixandre,
She was of-the lineage of-Alexander
si n'avoit tel joie de rien
and not-she-had such joy of anything
con quant el pooit dire: «tien».
as when she could say take
Nes Avarice la chaitive
Not-even Avarice the wretched
n'iert pas si a prendre ententive
not-was at-all so at taking intent
con Largece estoit de doner;
as Largesse was at giving
e Deus li faisoit foisoner
and God to-her made increase
toz ses biens, qu'ele ne savoit
all her goods that-she not knew
tant doner come el plus avoit.
so-much to-give as she more had

Mout ot Largece pris e los;
Much had Largesse worth and praise
ele ot les sages e les fos
she had the wise and the foolish
outreement a son bandon,
utterly at her bidding
tant avoit fait par son bel don.
so-much she-had done by her fair gift
S'ensi fust qu'aucuns la haïst,
If-so were that-anyone her hated
si cuit je que ele en feïst
so think I that she thereof would-make
son ami par son grant servise;
her friend by her great service
e por ce ot ele a devise
and for this had she at pleasure
l'amor des povres e des riches.
the-love of-the poor and of-the rich
Mout est fos hauz on qui est chiches.
Very is foolish a-high man who is niggardly
Hauz on ne puet avoir nul vice
A-high man not can have any vice
qui tant li griet come avarice;
which so-much him grieve as avarice
car avers on ne puet conquerre
for a-covetous man not can win
ne seignorie ne grant terre,
neither lordship nor great land

car il n'a pas d'amis plenté
for he not-has at-all of-friends plenty
don il face sa volenté.
of-whom he do his will
Mais qui amis voudra avoir,
But who friends will-wish to-have
si n'ait mie chier son avoir;
so not-let-him-hold at-all dear his wealth
mais par biaus dons amis aquiere;
but by fair gifts friends let-him-win
car trestot en autel maniere
for wholly in such fashion
con la pierre de l'aïmant
as the stone of the-magnet
trait a soi le fer soutilment,
draws to itself the iron subtly
ausi atrait le cuer des genz
so draws the heart of-the folk
li ors qu'en done e li argenz.
the gold which-one gives and the silver
Largece ot robe toute fresche
Largesse had a-gown all fresh
d'une porpre sarradinesche.
of-a purple Saracen
S'ot le vis bel e bien formé;
And-she-had the face fair and well formed
mais ele ot son col desfermé;
but she had her neck unfastened

qu'ele avoit iluec en present
for-she had there at present
a une dame fait present,
to a lady made a-gift
n'avoit guieres, de son fermal;
not-it-had much of her brooch
mais ce ne li seoit pas mal
but this not to-her sat at-all ill
que la cheveçaille iert overte,
that the neck-band was open
e la gorge estoit descoverte
and the throat was uncovered
si que par outre la chemise
so that through beyond the shift
li blancheioit la char alise.
to-her shone-white the flesh smooth
Largece la vaillant, la sage,
Largesse the worthy the wise
tint un chevalier dou lignage
held a knight of-the lineage
le bon roi Artu de Bretaigne;
of-the good king Arthur of Britain
ce fu cil qui porta l'enseigne
this was he who bore the-ensign
de valor e le gonfanon.
of worth and the gonfanon

Encore est il de tel renon
Yet is he of such renown
que l'en conte de lui les contes
that one tells of him the tales
e devant rois e devant contes.
both before kings and before counts
Cil chevaliers novelement
That knight newly
fu venuz d'un tornoiement,
was come from-a tournament
ou il ot faite por s'amie
where he had made for his-friend
mainte joste e mainte envaïe;
many-a joust and many-an onset
maint vert hiaume i ot descerclé
many-a green helm there had unbanded
e percié maint escu boclé,
and pierced many-a shield bossed
e maint chevalier abatu
and many-a knight beaten-down
e pris par force e par vertu.
and taken by force and by valor

Franchise, Courtesy, and Youth

VIII

Franchise is white as snow and so tender that she would think it villainy not to help a man who suffered for her; Courtesy, a bright brunette worthy to be empress or queen, is the one who called the lover into the dance; and Youth, barely twelve years old, is kissed by her beloved before the whole carol without shame. When the dancing breaks up and the couples go off under the trees, the lover leaves to walk the garden, square and planted with fruit trees, spices, and great timber. Sweet Looks bends the bow, and the god of Love follows the lover with it.

Après toz ceus se tint Franchise,
After all those herself held Franchise
qui n'estoit pas brune ne bise,
who not-was at-all brown nor swarthy
ainz estoit blanche come nois;
rather was white as snow
e si n'ot pas nés orlenois,
and so not-she-had at-all nose Orleans
ançois ot nés lonc e traitiz, 1195
rather she-had nose long and well-drawn
iauz vairs, rianz, sorciz voutiz;
eyes bright-gray laughing eyebrows arched
s'ot les cheveus blondez e lons;
and-she-had the hair golden and long
e fu simple come uns colons.
and was simple as a dove
Le cuer ot douz e debonaire:
The heart she-had sweet and gracious

ele n'osast dire ne faire
she not-would-dare to-say nor to-do
a nului rien qu'el ne deüst;
to anyone anything which-she not ought
e s'ele un ome coneüst
and if-she a man knew
qui fust destroiz por s'amitié,
who were distressed for her-love
tost en eüst, ce cuit, pitié;
soon thereof would-have this I-think pity
qu'ele ot le cuer si piteable
for-she had the heart so compassionate
e si douz e si amiable
and so sweet and so friendly
que, se nus por li mal traisist,
that if anyone for her ill suffered
s'el ne li aidast, el crainsist
if-she not to-him helped she would-fear
qu'el feïst mout grant vilanie.
that-she should-do very great villainy
El fu en une sorquenie
She was in a surcoat
qui ne fu mie de borraz:
which not was at-all of coarse-cloth
n'ot si riche jusqu'a Arraz;
not-there-was so rich as-far-as Arras

e si fu si cuillie e jointe
and so it-was so gathered and fitted
qu'il n'i ot une seule pointe
that-it not-there was a single stitch
qui a son droit ne fust assise.
which at its due not were set
Mout fu bien vestue Franchise,
Very was well clad Franchise
car nule robe n'est si bele
for any gown not-is so fair
con sorquenie a damoisele;
as a-surcoat on a-damsel
fame est plus cointe e plus mignote
a-woman is more elegant and more dainty
en sorquenie que en cote.
in a-surcoat than in a-tunic
La sorquenie, qui fu blanche,
The surcoat which was white
senefioit que douce e franche
signified that sweet and free
estoit cele qui la vestoit.
was she who it wore
Uns bachelers juenes s'estoit
A bachelor young himself-had
pris a Franchise lez a lez.
taken to Franchise side to side
Ne sai coment iert apelez;
Not I-know how he-was called

mais biaus iert e genz s'il fust ores
but fair he-was and noble as-if-he were now
fiz au seignor de Guindesores.
son of-the lord of Windsor
Après se tenoit Cortoisie,
After herself held Courtesy
qui mout estoit de toz proisie,
who greatly was by all prized
qu'el n'iere orguilleuse ne fole.
for-she not-was proud nor foolish
C'est cele qui a la querole,
This-is she who at the carol
la seue merci, m'apela
the her grace me-called
ainz que nule, quant je vin la.
before than any when I came there
El ne fu ne nice n'ombrage,
She not was neither silly nor-skittish
mais sage e entre, senz outrage,
but wise and shrewd without excess
de biaus respons e de biaus diz;
of fair answers and of fair sayings
onc ne fu nus par li laidiz,
ever not was anyone by her insulted
ne ne porta autrui rancune.
nor not bore to-another rancor
Ele fu une clere brune;
She was a bright brunette
le vis avoit cler e luisant:
the face she-had bright and shining

je ne sai fame plus plaisant.
I not know a-woman more pleasing
Ele iere en toutes corz bien dine
She was in all courts well worthy
d'estre empereriz ou reïne.
to-be an-empress or a-queen
A li se tint uns chevaliers
By her himself held a knight
acointables e biaus parliers,
affable and a-fair speaker
qui bien sot faire enor as genz.
who well knew to-do honor to-the folk
Li chevaliers fu biaus e genz,
The knight was fair and noble
e as armes bien acesmez,
and at arms well equipped
e de s'amie bien amez.
and by his-friend well loved
La bele Oiseuse vint après,
The fair Idleness came after
qui se tint de moi assez près.
who herself held from me quite near
De cele vos ai je senz faille
Of that-one to-you have I without fail
dite la façon e la taille;
told the fashion and the figure
ja plus ne vos en iert conté,
ever more not to-you thereof will-be told

car ce fu cele qui bonté
for this was she who kindness
me fist si grant qu'ele m'ovri
me did so great that-she to-me-opened
le guichet dou vergier flori.
the wicket of-the garden flowering
Après se tint, mien escient,
After herself held to-my knowledge
Jonece au vis cler e riant,
Youth with-the face bright and laughing
qui n'avoit encore passez,
who not-had yet passed
si con je cuit, doze anz d'assez.
so as I think twelve years by-much
Nicete fu, si ne pensoit
Naive she-was and-so not thought
nul mal ne nul engin qui soit;
any evil nor any guile that be
mais mout iert envoisiee e gaie,
but much she-was merry and gay
car juene chose ne s'esmaie
for a-young thing not itself-troubles
fors de joer, bien le savez.
except about playing well it you-know
Ses amis fu de li privez
Her friend was with her intimate
en tel guise qu'il la baisoit
in such wise that-he her kissed
toutes les foiz qu'il li plaisoit,
all the times that-it to-him pleased

veianz toz ceus de la querole;
seeing all those of the carol
car qui tenist d'aus deus parole,
for who should-hold of-them two talk
il n'en fussent ja vergondeus;
they not-thereof were ever ashamed
ainz les veïssiez entr'aus deus
rather them you-would-see between-them two
baisier come deus colombiaus.
kiss as two doves
Li vallez fu juenes e biaus,
The young-man was young and fair
si estoit bien d'autel aage
and he-was fully of-such age
con s'amie e d'autel corage.
as his-friend and of-such heart
Ensi queroloient ilueques,
Thus caroled there
cestes genz, e autres avueques,
these folk and others with-them
qui estoient de lor maisnies;
who were of their households
franches genz e bien enseignies
free folk and well taught
e genz de bel afaitement
and folk of fair breeding
estoient tuit comunement.
were all alike

Quant j'oi veües les semblances
When I-had seen the appearances
de ceus qui menoient les dances,
of those who led the dances
j'oi lors talent que le vergier
I-had then desire that the garden
alasse veoir e cerchier,
I-should-go to-see and to-search
e remirer ces biaus loriers,
and to-gaze-on those fair laurels
ces pins, ces cedres, ces moriers.
those pines those cedars those mulberries
Les queroles ja remanoient,
The carols already broke-up
car tuit li plusor s'en aloient
for all the greater-part themselves-thence went
o lor amies ombreier
with their friends to-take-shade
soz ces arbres, por doneier.
under those trees for courting
Deus! com menoient bone vie!
God how they-led good life
Fos est qui n'a de tel envie.
Foolish is who not-has of such desire
Qui autel vie avoir porroit
Who such-a life have could
de meillor bien se soferroit,
of better good himself would-do-without

qu'il n'est nus graindres parevis
for-there not-is any greater paradise
d'avoir amie a son devis.
than-to-have a-friend at his pleasure
D'ilueques me parti atant,
From-there myself I-parted thereupon
si m'en alai seus esbatant
and myself-thence I-went alone disporting
par le vergier de ça en la;
through the garden from here to there
e li deus d'Amors apela
and the god of-Love called
trestot maintenant Douz Regart.
wholly at-once Sweet Looks
N'a or plus cure qu'il li gart
Not-has now more care that-he to-him keep
son arc doré; senz plus atendre
his bow gilded without more waiting
li a comandé l'arc a tendre,
to-him has commanded the-bow to bend
e cil guieres n'i atendi:
and he much not-there delayed
tot maintenant l'arc li tendi,
all at-once the-bow to-him bent
si li bailla, e cinc saietes,
and to-him gave and five arrows
forz e luisanz, de traire pretes.
strong and shining for shooting ready

Li deus d'Amors tantost de loing
The god of-Love forthwith from afar
me prist a sivre, l'arc ou poing.
me began to follow the-bow in-the hand
Or me gart Deus de mortel plaie,
Now me keep God from mortal wound
se il fait tant que a moi traie!
if he does so-much that at me he-shoot
Je, qui de ce ne soi neient,
I who of this not knew anything
m'alai adès esbaneiant
myself-went ever disporting
par le vergier tot a delivre;
through the garden all at liberty
e cil pensa bien de moi sivre,
and he took-care well of me to-follow
mais en nul leu ne m'arestai
but in any place not myself-I-stopped
tant que j'oi par trestot esté.
until that I-had through all-of-it been
Li vergiers par compasseüre
The garden by compass
fu toz de droite carreüre,
was all of straight squareness
s'ot autant de lonc con de large.
and-it-had as-much of length as of breadth
Il n'est nus arbres qui fruit charge,
There not-is any tree which fruit bears
se n'est aucuns arbres hisdeus,
if not-it-is some tree hideous

don il n'i ait ou un ou deus
of-which it not-there be either one or two
ou vergier, ou plus, se devient.
in-the garden or more if it-happens
Pomiers i ot, bien m'en sovient,
Apple-trees there were well to-me-thereof remembers
qui charjoient pomes grenades:
which bore apples pomegranates
c'est uns mangiers bons a malades.
this-is a food good for sick-folk
De noiers i ot grant foison
Of nut-trees there was great abundance
qui charjoient en la saison
which bore in the season
tel fruit come sont noiz musgades,
such fruit as are nuts nutmegs
qui ne sont ameres ne fades.
which not are bitter nor insipid
D'alemandiers i ot planté;
Of-almond-trees there was planty
e si ot ou vergier planté
and so there-was in-the garden planted
maint fier e maint biau datier;
many-a fig-tree and many-a fair date-tree
si trovast, qu'en eüst mestier,
and-one would-find who-thereof had need
ou vergier mainte bone espice:
in-the garden many-a good spice
clos de girofle e ricalice,
nails of clove and licorice

graine de parevis novele,
grain of paradise new
citoal, anis e canele,
zedoary anise and cinnamon
e mainte espice delitable
and many-a spice delightful
que bon mangier fait après table.
which good eating makes after table
Ou vergier ot arbres domesches
In-the garden there-were trees domestic
qui charjoient e coinz e pesches,
which bore both quinces and peaches
chastaignes, noiz, pomes e poires,
chestnuts nuts apples and pears
nesfles, prunes blanches e noires,
medlars plums white and black
cerises fresches vermeilletes,
cherries fresh ruddy
cormes, alies e noisetes.
sorbs service-berries and hazelnuts
De granz loriers e de hauz pins
With great laurels and with tall pines
refu pueplez toz li jardins,
was-in-turn peopled all the garden
e d'oliviers e de ciprès,
and with-olive-trees and with cypresses
don il n'a guieres ici près.
of-which there not-is much here near
Ormes i ot branchuz e gros,
Elms there were branching and thick

e avuec ce charmes e fos,
and besides this hornbeams and beeches
coudres droites, trembles e fresnes,
hazels straight aspens and ashes
esrables, hauz sapins e chesnes.
maples tall firs and oaks
Qu'iroie je ci arestant?
Why-should-go I here lingering
De divers arbres i ot tant
Of divers trees there were so-many
que mout en seroie encombrez
that much thereby I-should-be encumbered
ainz que les eüsse nombrez.
before that them I-had numbered
Mais li arbre, ce sachiez, furent
But the trees this know were
si loing a loing come estre durent:
so far to far as be they-ought
li uns fu loing de l'autre assis
the one was far from the-other set
plus de cinc toises ou de sis;
more than five fathoms or than six
mais li rain furent lonc e haut,
but the boughs were long and high
e, por le leu garder de chaut,
and for the place to-keep from heat

furent si espès par deseure
they-were so thick by above
que li solauz en nes une eure
that the sun in not-even one hour
ne pooit a terre descendre,
not could to earth come-down
ne faire mal a l'erbe tendre.
nor do harm to the-grass tender

The Fountain of Narcissus

IX

Deer, rabbits, and squirrels are in the garden, and Mirth's conduits carry the water off in little brooks. Going right and left, the lover comes on a spring beneath the tallest pine, set in marble, with an inscription saying that the fair Narcissus died there. Echo loved him and he refused her out of pride; she died of it, praying first that he might one day love where he could have no joy. Narcissus, thirsty from hunting, took his reflection for a child's face and lost his reason and his life; ladies are bidden to take warning.

Ou vergier ot dains e chevriaus;
In-the garden there-were fallow-deer and roe-deer
s'i ot grant plenté d'escuriaus,
and-there there-was great plenty of-squirrels
qui par ces arbres gravissoient;
which through those trees climbed
conins i avoit, qui issoient
rabbits there were which came-out
toute jor hors de lor tesnieres,
all day out of their burrows

e en plus de trente manieres
and in more than thirty fashions
aloient entr'aus torneiant
went among-themselves turning
sor l'erbe fresche verdeiant.
on the-grass fresh growing-green
Il ot par leus cleres fontaines,
There were in places clear springs
senz barbelotes e senz raines,
without water-flies and without frogs
cui li arbre faisoient ombre,
to-which the trees made shade
mais n'en sai pas dire le nombre.
but not-thereof I-know at-all to-say the number
Par petiz ruissiaus, que Deduiz
By little brooks which Mirth
i ot fait faire par conduiz,
there had had made through conduits
s'en aloit l'eve aval, faisant
itself-thence went the-water down making
une noise douce e plaisant.
a noise sweet and pleasing
Entor les ruissiaus e les rives
About the brooks and the banks
des fontaines cleres e vives
of-the springs clear and living
poignoit l'erbe bassete e drue:
sprang the-grass low and thick

ausi i peüst l'en sa drue
likewise there could one his mistress
couchier come sor une coite,
lay as upon a quilt
car la terre estoit douce e moiste
for the earth was soft and moist
por les fontaines, s'i venoit
because-of the springs and-there came
tant d'erbe come il covenoit.
as-much of-grass as it was-needful
Mais mout embelissoit l'afaire
But much embellished the-matter
li leus, qui estoit de tel aire
the place which was of such nature
qu'il i avoit de flors plenté
that-it there was of flowers plenty
toz jorz e iver e esté.
all days both winter and summer
Violete i avoit trop bele
Violet there was exceedingly fair
e parvenche fresche e novele,
and periwinkle fresh and new
s'i ot flors blanches e vermeilles,
and-there were flowers white and red
de jaunes en i ot merveilles:
of yellow thereof there were marvels
trop par estoit la terre cointe,
exceedingly much was the earth elegant

qu'ele estoit pipolee e pointe
for-it was speckled and painted
de flors de diverses colors,
with flowers of divers colors
don mout estoit bone l'olors.
of-which much was good the-fragrance
Ne vos tendrai pas longue fable
Not to-you I-shall-hold at-all long fable
dou leu plaisant e delitable;
of-the place pleasing and delightful
orendroit m'en covendra taire,
just-now to-me-thereof it-will-behoove to-be-silent
car je ne porroie retraire
for I not could relate
dou vergier toute la biauté
of-the garden all the beauty
ne la grant delitableté;
nor the great delightfulness
mais j'alai tant destre e senestre
but I-went so-much right and left
que j'oi tot l'afaire e tot l'estre
that I-had all the-matter and all the-state
dou vergier cerchié e veü.
of-the garden searched and seen
E li deus d'Amors m'a seü,
And the god of-Love me-has followed
endementieres agaitant,
meanwhile lying-in-wait

con li venierres qui atent
as the hunter who waits
que la beste en bon leu se mete
that the beast in good place itself put
por laissier aler la saiete.
to let go the arrow
En un trop bel leu arivai
In an exceedingly fair place I-arrived
au derrenier, ou je trovai
at-the last where I found
une fontaine soz un pin;
a spring under a pine
mais puis Charle ne puis Pepin
but since Charlemagne nor since Pepin
ne fu ausi biaus pins veüz;
not was so fair a-pine seen
e si estoit si hauz creüz
and so it-was so high grown
qu'ou vergier n'ot nul plus haut arbre.
that-in-the garden not-was any more tall tree
Dedenz une pierre de marbre
Within a stone of marble
ot Nature par grant maistrise
had Nature by great mastery
soz le pin la fontaine assise;
under the pine the spring set
si ot dedenz la pierre escrites,
and there-were within the stone written
ou bort amont, letres petites,
on-the rim above letters little

qui disoient qu'iluec desus
which said that-there above
se mori li biaus Narcisus.
himself died the fair Narcissus
Narcisus fu uns damoisiaus
Narcissus was a young-man
cui Amors tint en ses roisiaus,
whom Love held in his nets
e tant le sot Amors destreindre,
and so-much him knew Love to-press
e tant le fist plorer e plaindre,
and so-much him made weep and lament
qu'il li covint a rendre l'ame;
that-it to-him behooved to yield the-soul
car Echo, une haute dame,
for Echo a high lady
l'avoit amé plus que rien nee,
him-had loved more than anything born
e fu por lui si mal menee
and was for him so ill used
qu'ele li dist qu'il li donroit
that-she to-him said that-he to-her would-give
s'amor, ou ele se morroit.
his-love or she herself would-die
Mais cil fu, por sa grant biauté,
But he was for his great beauty
pleins de desdein e de fierté,
full of disdain and of haughtiness
si ne la li vost otreier,
and-so not it to-her wished to-grant

ne por plorer ne por preier.
neither for weeping nor for praying
Quant ele s'oï escondire,
When she herself-heard refused
si en ot tel duel e tel ire
and-so thereof had such grief and such wrath
e le tint a si grant despit
and it held at so great scorn
qu'ele fu morte senz respit.
that-she was dead without respite
Mais, tot avant qu'ele morist,
But all before that-she should-die
ele pria Deu e requist
she prayed God and besought
que Narcisus au cuer farasche,
that Narcissus with-the heart fierce
qu'ele ot trové d'amor si lasche,
whom-she had found of-love so slack
fust aspreiez encore un jor,
were tormented yet one day
e eschaufez de tel amor
and heated with such love
don il ne peüst joie atendre;
of-which he not could joy await
si porroit savoir e entendre
so-he would-be-able know and understand
quel duel ont li leial amant
what grief have the loyal lovers
que l'en refuse si vilment.
whom one refuses so basely

Cele priere fu raisnable,
That prayer was reasonable
e por ce la fist Deus estable;
and for this it made God fixed
que Narcisus par aventure
that Narcissus by chance
a la fontaine clere e pure
to the spring clear and pure
se vint soz le pin ombreier,
himself came under the pine to-take-shade
un jor qu'il venoit de chacier,
one day when-he came from hunting
qu'il avoit sofert grant traval
for-he had suffered great labor
de corre e amont e aval,
in running both up and down
tant qu'il ot soif, por l'aspreté
so-much that-he had thirst for the-harshness
dou chaut, e por la lasseté,
of-the heat and for the weariness
qui li ot tolue l'aleine.
which to-him had taken-away the-breath
E quant il vint a la fontaine,
And when he came to the spring
que li pins de ses rains covroit,
which the pine with its boughs covered
iluec pensa que il bevroit:
there he-thought that he would-drink

sor la fontaine toz adenz
over the spring all prone
se mist lors por boivre dedenz,
himself he-put then for to-drink within
si vit en l'eve clere e nete
and-so he-saw in the-water clear and pure
son vis, son nés e sa bouchete,
his face his nose and his little-mouth
e cil maintenant s'esbaï,
and he at-once himself-marveled
car ses ombres si le traï
for his shadow so him betrayed
qu'il cuida veoir la figure
that-he thought to-see the figure
d'un enfant bel a desmesure.
of-a child fair beyond measure
Lors se sot bien Amors vengier
Then himself knew well Love to-avenge
dou grant orgueil e dou dangier
of-the great pride and of-the disdain
que Narcisus li ot mené.
which Narcissus to-him had shown
Bien li fu lors guerredoné;
Well to-him was then requited
qu'il musa tant a la fontaine
for-he mused so-long at the spring
qu'il ama son ombre demaine,
that-he loved his shadow own
si en fu morz a la parclose:
and-so thereof was dead at the close

ce fu la some de la chose,
this was the sum of the matter
car, quant il vit qu'il ne porroit
for when he saw that-he not could
acomplir ce qu'il desiroit,
accomplish that which-he desired
e qu'il estoit si pris par fort
and that-he was so taken by force
qu'il n'en pooit avoir confort
that-he not-thereof could have comfort
en nule fin ne en nul sen,
in any end nor in any way
il perdi d'ire tot le sen,
he lost from-wrath all the sense
e fu morz en poi de termine.
and was dead in little of time
Ensi si ot de la meschine,
Thus and-so had of the maiden
qu'il avoit devant escondite,
whom-he had before refused
son guerredon e sa merite.
his requital and his desert
Dames, cest essemple aprenez,
Ladies this example learn
qui vers voz amis mesprenez;
who toward your friends transgress
car, se vos les laissiez morir,
for if you them let die
Deus le vos savra bien merir.
God it to-you will-know well to-requite

The Mirror Perilous, and the Rosebush

x

Frightened by the inscription, the lover looks in all the same. Two crystals at the bottom, struck by the sun, show half the garden at a time and everything in it, however hidden. This is the Mirror Perilous, where Narcissus saw his face and eyes; Cupid sowed Love's seed about it and set his snares there. In the crystals he sees rosebushes shut in by a little hedge and goes to them, and when he is near their scent goes to his heart. Fear of the garden's lord keeps him from picking one; the closed buds please him most.

Quant li escriz m'ot fait savoir
When the writing to-me-had made know
que ce estoit trestot por voir
that this was wholly for truth
la fontaine au bel Narcisus,
the spring of-the fair Narcissus
je me trais lors un poi en sus;
I myself drew then a little in aside
que dedenz n'osai regarder,
so-that within not-I-dared to-look
ainz començai a coarder,
rather I-began to be-a-coward
quant de Narcisus me sovint,
when of Narcissus to-me came-to-mind
cui malement en mesavint;
to-whom evilly thereof it-befell
mais je me pensai qu'asseür,
but I myself thought that-securely
senz peor de mauvais eür,
without fear of ill fortune

a la fontaine aler pooie;
to the spring go I-could
por folie m'en esmaioie.
for folly myself-thereof I-dismayed
De la fontaine m'apressai;
To the spring myself-I-approached
quant je fui près, si m'abaissai,
when I was near and-so myself-I-stooped
por veoir l'eve qui coroit,
to see the-water which ran
e la gravele qui paroit
and the gravel which appeared
au fonz, plus clere qu'argenz fins.
at-the bottom more bright than-silver fine
De la fontaine c'est la fins:
Of the spring this-is the end
en tot le monde n'ot si bele.
in all the world not-was so fair
L'eve est toz jorz fresche e novele,
The-water is all days fresh and new
qui nuit e jor sort a granz ondes
which night and day springs in great waves
par deus doiz crueses e parfondes.
through two channels hollow and deep
Tot entor croist l'erbe menue,
All around grows the-grass fine
qui vient, por l'eve, espesse e drue;
which comes because-of the-water thick and dense

e en iver ne puet morir
and in winter not can die
ne que l'eve ne puet tarir.
no-more than the-water — can dry-up
Ou fonz de la fontaine aval
In-the bottom of the spring below
avoit deus pierres de cristal,
there-were two stones of crystal
qu'a grant entente remirai;
which-at great attention I-gazed
mais une chose vos dirai,
but one thing to-you I-shall-say
qu'a merveille, ce cuit, tendroiz
which-at marvel this I-think you-will-hold
maintenant que vos l'entendroiz:
at-once that you it-will-hear
quant li solauz, qui tot aguiete,
when the sun which all spies
ses rais en la fontaine giete
his rays into the spring casts
e la clarté aval descent,
and the brightness below descends
lors perent colors plus de cent
then appear colors more than a-hundred
es cristaus, qui, por le soleil,
in-the crystals which because-of the sun
devienent jaune, inde, vermeil.
become yellow indigo vermilion

Si sont li cristal merveilleus
So are the crystals marvelous
e tel force ont que toz li leus,
and such force they-have that all the place
arbre e flors, e quanque aorne
tree and flowers and whatever adorns
le vergier, i pert tot a orne.
the garden there appears all in order
E por faire la chose entendre,
And to make the thing understood
un essemple vos vueil aprendre:
an example to-you I-wish to-teach
ausi con li miroers montre
just as the mirror shows
les choses qui sont a l'encontre,
the things which are at the-opposite
e i voit l'en senz coverture
and there sees one without covering
e lor color e lor figure,
both their color and their figure
trestot ausi vos di de voir
wholly likewise to-you I-say for truth
que li cristal, senz decevoir,
that the crystals without deceiving
tot l'estre dou vergier encusent
all the-state of-the garden disclose
a ceus qui dedenz l'eve musent,
to those who within the-water muse
car toz jorz, quelque part qu'il soient,
for all days whatever part that-they be

l'une moitié dou vergier voient,
the-one half of-the garden they-see
e s'il se tornent, maintenant
and if-they themselves turn at-once
pueent veoir le remenant;
they-can see the remainder
si n'i a si petite chose,
and-so not-there is so little a-thing
tant soit reposte ne enclose,
however be hidden nor enclosed
don demontrance n'i soit faite,
of-which a-showing not-there be made
con s'ele iert es cristaus portraite.
as if-it were in-the crystals portrayed
C'est li miroers perilleus,
This-is the mirror perilous
ou Narcisus li orguilleus
where Narcissus the proud
mira sa face e ses iauz vairs,
beheld his face and his eyes bright-gray
don il jut puis morz toz envers.
of-which he lay afterward dead all on-his-back
Qui en cel miroer se mire
Who in that mirror himself beholds
ne puet avoir garant ne mire
not can have warrant nor physician
que tel chose a ses iauz ne voie
that such a-thing with his eyes not he-see
qui d'amer l'a tost mis en voie.
which of-loving him-has soon put on way

Maint vaillant ome a mis a glaive
Many-a worthy man has put to slaughter
cil miroers, car li plus saive,
that mirror for the most wise
li plus preu, li miauz afaitié
the most worthy the best bred
i sont tost pris e agaitié.
there are soon taken and ensnared
Ci sort as genz novele rage,
Here springs for-the folk a-new madness
ici se changent li corage,
here themselves change the hearts
ci n'a mestier sens ne mesure,
here not-has use sense nor measure
ci est d'amer volenté pure,
here is of-loving a-will pure
ci ne se set conseillier nus;
here not himself knows to-counsel anyone
car Cupido, li fiz Venus,
for Cupid the son of-Venus
sema ici d'Amors la graine,
sowed here of-Love the seed
qui toute a teinte la fontaine,
which wholly has stained the spring
e fist ses laz environ tendre,
and made his snares around stretch
e ses engins i mist, por prendre
and his traps there put for taking
damoiseles e damoisiaus,
damsels and young-men

qu'Amors ne viaut autres oisiaus.
for-Love not wishes other birds
Por la graine qui fu semee
Because-of the seed which was sown
fu cele fontaine clamee
was that spring called
la Fontaine d'Amors par droit,
the Spring of-Love by right
don plusor ont en maint endroit
of-which many have in many-a place
parlé en romanz e en livre;
spoken in romance and in book
mais jamais n'orroiz miauz descrivre
but ever not-you-will-hear better describe
la verité de la matere
the truth of the matter
quant j'avrai espons le mistere.
when I-shall-have expounded the mystery
Adès me plot a demorer
Ever me it-pleased to linger
a la fontaine remirer,
at the spring to-gaze
e as cristaus, qui me montroient
and at-the crystals which to-me showed
cent mile choses qui paroient;
a-hundred thousand things which appeared
mais de fort eure m'i mirai.
but at an-ill hour myself-there I-beheld
Las! tant en ai puis sospiré!
Alas so-much thereof I-have since sighed

Cil miroers m'a deceü.
That mirror me-has deceived
Se j'eüsse avant coneü
If I-had before known
queus sa force iert e sa vertuz,
what its force was and its virtue
ne m'i fusse ja embatuz,
not myself-there I-should-have ever cast
car maintenant ou laz chaï
for at-once into-the snare I-fell
qui maint ome a pris e traï.
which many-a man has taken and betrayed
Ou miroer, entre mil choses,
In-the mirror among a-thousand things
choisi rosiers chargiez de roses,
I-espied rosebushes laden with roses
qui estoient en un destor,
which were in a corner
d'une haiete clos entor;
by-a little-hedge closed around
e lors m'en prist si grant envie
and then me-thereof took so great a-desire
que ne laissasse por Pavie
that not I-should-forbear for Pavia
ne por Paris que je n'alasse
nor for Paris that I not-should-go
la ou je vi la graignor tasse.
there where I saw the greatest heap
Quant cele rage m'ot sorpris,
When that madness me-had seized

don maint autre ome ont esté pris,
by-which many-an other man has been taken
vers les rosiers tantost me trais;
toward the rosebushes at-once myself I-drew
e sachiez bien, quant je fui près,
and know well when I was near
l'odor des roses savoree
the-odor of-the roses fragrant
m'entra jusques en la coree,
me-entered even into the heart
que por neient fusse embasmez.
so-that for nothing I-were embalmed
Se assailliz ou mesamez
If assailed or ill-loved
ne cremisse estre, j'en cuillisse
not I-feared to-be I-thereof should-gather
au moins une, que je tenisse
at least one which I might-hold
en ma main, por l'odor sentir;
in my hand for the-odor to-smell
mais peor oi dou repentir,
but fear I-had of-the repenting
car il en peüst de legier
for it thereof could with ease
peser au seignor dou vergier.
displease to-the lord of-the garden
Des roses i ot granz monciaus,
Of-the roses there were great heaps
ausi beles n'avoit soz ciaus;
so fair not-there-were under heaven

s'i ot boutons petiz e clos,
and-there were buds little and closed
e teus qui sont un poi plus gros;
and such as are a little more big
si en i a d'autre moison,
and-so thereof there are of-other measure
qui se traient a lor saison
which themselves draw at their season
e s'aprestent d'espaneïr.
and themselves-make-ready to-open
Icil ne font pas a haïr:
Those not are at-all to be-hated
les roses overtes e lees
the roses open and wide
sont en un jor toutes alees,
are in one day all gone
mais li bouton durent tuit frois
but the buds last all fresh
a tot le moins deus jorz ou trois.
at all the least two days or three
Icil bouton mout m'abelurent:
Those buds much me-pleased
onques si bel nul leu ne crurent;
ever so fair in-any place not grew
qui en porroit un acrochier,
who thereof could one pluck-off
il le devroit avoir mout chier;
he it ought have very dear

se chapel en peüsse avoir,
if a-garland thereof I-could have
je n'amasse tant nul avoir.
I not-should-love so-much any wealth

The God of Love Shoots

XI

The chosen bud stands on a straight stem with four pairs of leaves, but thistles, nettles, and brambles keep the lover from it. The god of Love, watching from beside a fig tree, draws his bow to the ear and sends Beauty through the lover's eye into his heart; he swoons, though the wound is dry and draws no blood. He pulls out the shaft but the head stays in. Four more follow, Simplicity, Courtesy, Company, and Fair Seeming, the last anointed so that it heals as much as it hurts. He must keep beside the thorn hedge, wounded five times.

Entre ces boutons en eslui
Among these buds thereof I-chose
un si trés bel qu'envers celui
one so very fair that-beside that-one
nul des autres rien ne prisai,
any of-the others anything not I-prized
puis que je l'oi bien avisé,
since that I it-had well observed
car une color l'enlumine
for a color it-illumines
qui est si vermeille e si fine
which is so red and so fine
con Nature la pot plus faire.
as Nature it could most make

De fueilles i ot quatre paire,
Of leaves there were four pairs
que Nature par grant maistire
which Nature by great mastery
i ot assises tire a tire;
there had set row by row
la queue est droite come jons,
the stem is straight as a-rush
e par desus siet li boutons
and by above sits the bud
si qu'il ne cline ne ne pent.
so that-it not bends nor not hangs
L'odor de lui entor s'espant:
The-odor of it around itself-spreads
la soatume qui en ist
the sweetness which thereof issues
toute la place replenist.
all the place fills
E quant jou senti si flairier,
And when I-it smelled so give-scent
je n'oi talent de repairier,
I not-had desire to return
ainz m'aprochasse por le prendre,
rather I-should-approach for it to-take
se j'i osasse la main tendre;
if I-there dared the hand stretch
mais chardon agu e poignant
but thistles sharp and pricking
m'en aloient mout esloignant;
me-thereof went much distancing

espines trenchanz e agües,
thorns cutting and sharp
orties e ronces crochues
nettles and brambles hooked
ne me laissoient avant traire,
not me let forward draw
car je me cremoie mal faire.
for I myself feared harm to-do
Li deus d'Amors, qui, l'arc tendu,
The god of-Love who the-bow bent
avoit toz jorz mout entendu
had all days much been-intent
a moi porsivre e espier,
on me to-pursue and to-spy
s'iert arestez lez un fier;
and-he-was stopped beside a fig-tree
e quant il ot aperceü
and when he had perceived
que j'avoie ensi esleü
that I-had thus chosen
ce bouton, qui plus me plaisoit
that bud which most me pleased
que nus des autres ne faisoit,
than any of-the others — did
il a tantost pris une floiche,
he has forthwith taken an arrow
e quant la corde fu en coiche,
and when the cord was in notch

il entesa jusqu'a l'oreille
he drew-back even-to the-ear
l'arc, qui estoit forz a merveille,
the-bow which was strong to a-marvel
e traist a moi par tel devise
and shot at me with such aim
que par mi l'ueil m'a ou cuer mise
that through midst the-eye me-has in-the heart put
la saiete par grant roidor.
the arrow with great violence
E lors me prist une froidor,
And then me took a chill
don j'ai desoz chaut peliçon
of-which I-have beneath a-warm fur-coat
sentie puis mainte friçon.
felt since many-a shudder
Quant j'oi ensi esté bersez,
When I-had thus been shot
a terre fui tantost versez;
to earth I-was forthwith overturned
li cuers me faut, li cuers me ment:
the heart me fails the heart me lies
pasmez jui iluec longuement;
swooning I-lay there long
e quant je vin de pasmoison
and when I came from swooning
e j'oi mon sen e ma raison,
and I-had my sense and my reason

je fui mout vains e si cuidiai
I was very faint and so I-thought
grant fais de sanc avoir vuidié;
a-great mass of blood to-have voided
mais la saiete qui m'ot point
but the arrow which me-had pricked
ne traist onques sanc de moi point,
not drew ever blood from me at-all
ainz fu la plaie toute soiche.
rather was the wound wholly dry
Je pris lors a deus mains la floiche
I took then with two hands the arrow
e començai fort a tirer
and I-began strongly to pull
e en tirant a sospirer;
and in pulling to sigh
e tant tirai que j'amenai
and so-much I-pulled that I-brought
le fust a moi tot empené.
the shaft to me all feathered
Mais la saiete barbelee,
But the arrow barbed
qui Biauté estoit apelee,
which Beauty was called
fu si dedenz mon cuer fichiee
was so within my heart fixed
qu'el n'en pot estre hors sachiee,
that-it not-thereof could be out drawn
ainz remest enz, encor l'i sens,
rather it-remained within still it-there I-feel

e si n'en issi onques sans.
and so not-thereof issued ever blood
Angoisseus fui mout e troblez
Anguished I-was very and troubled
por le perill qui fu doblez:
because-of the peril which was doubled
ne soi que faire ne que dire
not I-knew what to-do nor what to-say
ne de ma plaie ou trover mire,
nor of my wound where to-find a-physician
que par erbe ne par racine
for by herb nor by root
n'en atendoie medecine;
not-thereof I-awaited medicine
mais vers le bouton me traioit
but toward the bud me drew
mes cuers, qui aillors ne beoit:
my heart which elsewhere not aimed
se je l'eüsse en ma baillie,
if I it-had in my keeping
il m'eüst rendue la vie.
it me-would-have given-back the life
Li veoirs senz plus e l'olors
The seeing without more and the-odor
m'alejoit mout de mes dolors.
me-lightened much of my griefs
Je me començai lors a traire
I myself began then to draw
vers le bouton, qui soef flaire.
toward the bud which sweetly gives-scent

E Amors ot ja recovree
And Love had already procured
une autre floiche a or ovree;
an other arrow with gold wrought
Simplece ot non, c'est la segonde,
Simplicity had name this-is the second
qui maint ome par mi le monde
which many-a man through midst the world
e mainte fame a fait amer.
and many-a woman has made love
Quant Amors me vit aprimer,
When Love me saw approach
il traist a moi, senz menacier,
he shot at me without threatening
la floiche, ou n'ot fer ne acier,
the arrow where not-was iron nor steel
si que par l'ueil ou cuer m'entra
so that through the-eye in-the heart me-entered
la saiete, qui n'en istra
the arrow which not-thereof will-issue
jamais, ce cuit, par ome né,
ever this I-think by man born
car au tirer en amenai
for at-the pulling thereof I-brought
le fust a moi senz grant contenz,
the shaft to me without great struggle
mais la saiete remest enz.
but the arrow remained within

Or sachiez bien de verité
Now know well for truth
que, se j'avoie avant esté
that if I-had before been
dou bouton bien entalentez,
of-the bud well desirous
or fu graindre la volentez;
now was greater the desire
e quant li maus plus m'angoissoit,
and when the ill most me-anguished
e la volentez me croissoit
and the desire to-me grew
toz jorz d'aler vers la rosete,
all days of-going toward the little-rose
qui oloit miauz que violete;
which smelled better than a-violet
si m'en venist miauz reüser,
and-so to-me-thereof it-would-come better to-draw-back
mais ne pooie refuser
but not I-could refuse
ce que mes cuers me comandoit:
that which my heart me commanded
tot adès la ou il tendoit
all ever there where it tended
me covenoit aler par force.
me it-behooved to-go by force
Mais li archiers, qui mout s'esforce
But the archer who much himself-exerts
de moi grever e mout se poine,
of me to-grieve and much himself pains

ne m'i lait pas aler senz poine;
not me-there lets at-all to-go without pain
ainz m'a fait, por miauz afoler,
rather me-has made for better to-madden
la tierce floiche au cuer voler,
the third arrow to-the heart fly
qui Cortoisie iert apelee.
which Courtesy was called
La plaie fu parfonde e lee,
The wound was deep and wide
si me covint cheoir pasmé,
and-so me it-behooved to-fall swooning
desoz un olivier ramé.
under an olive-tree leafy
Grant piece i jui senz remuer.
Great while there I-lay without stirring
Quant je me poi esvertuer,
When I myself could exert
je pris la floiche e si ostai
I took the arrow and so I-drew-out
tantost le fust de mon costé,
forthwith the shaft from my side
mais la saiete n'en poi traire
but the arrow not-thereof I-could draw
por rien que je peüsse faire.
for anything that I could do
En mon seant lores m'assis,
On my sitting-posture then myself-I-sat
mout angoisseus e mout pensis.
very anguished and very pensive

Mout me destreint icele plaie
Much me torments that-same wound
e me semont que je me traie
and me summons that I myself draw
vers le bouton qui m'atalente.
toward the bud which me-attracts
Mais li archiers me respoente,
But the archer me frightens
e me doit bien espoenter,
and me ought well frighten
qu'eschaudez doit eve doter.
for-a-scalded-man ought water fear
Mais grant chose a en estovoir:
But a-great thing there-is in necessity
se je veïsse iluec plovoir
if I should-see there rain
carriaus e pierres pelle melle,
bolts and stones pell mell
ausi espès come la grelle,
as thick as the hail
s'esteüst il que j'i alasse;
and-so-would-behoove it that I-there should-go
qu'Amors, qui toutes choses passe,
for-Love who all things surpasses
me donoit cuer e hardement
me gave heart and boldness
de faire son comandement.
of doing his commandment
Je me sui lors en piez dreciez,
I myself am then on feet raised

foibles e vains come on bleciez,
feeble and faint as a-man wounded
e m'esforçai mout de marchier,
and myself-I-forced much to walk
nou laissai onques por l'archier,
not-it I-left ever for the-archer
vers le rosier ou mes cuers tent;
toward the rosebush where my heart tends
mais espines i avoit tant,
but thorns there were so-many
chardons e ronces, qu'onques n'oi
thistles and brambles that-ever not-I-had
pooir de passer l'espinoi,
power of passing the-thorn-brake
si qu'au bouton peüsse ataindre.
so that-at-the bud I-might reach
Lez la haie m'estut remaindre
Beside the hedge me-it-behooved to-remain
qui estoit as rosiers joignanz,
which was to-the rosebushes adjoining
faite d'espines mout poignanz.
made of-thorns very pricking
Mais bel me fu que je estoie
But fair to-me it-was that I was
si près que dou bouton sentoie
so near that of-the bud I-felt
la douce olor qui en issoit,
the sweet odor which thereof issued

e durement m'abelissoit
and greatly me-pleased
ce que jou veoie a bandon;
this that I-it saw at liberty
s'en avoie tel guerredon
and-thereof I-had such recompense
que mes maus en entroblioie,
that my ills thereof I-half-forgot
por le delit e por la joie.
for the delight and for the joy
Mout fui gueriz, mout fui aaise,
Much I-was healed much I-was at-ease
jamais n'iert rien qui tant me plaise
ever not-will-be anything which so-much me please
come estre ilueques a sejor:
as being there at sojourn
n'en queïsse partir nul jor.
not-thereof I-should-wish to-part any day
Mais quant j'i oi esté grant piece,
But when I-there had been great while
li deus d'Amors, qui tot despiece
the god of-Love who all shatters
mon cuer, don il a fait bersaut,
my heart of-which he has made a-target
me redone un novel assaut,
me gives-again a new assault
e trait, por moi metre a meschief,
and shoots to me to-put to mischief
une autre floiche de rechief,
an other arrow once again

si que ou cuer soz la mamele
so that in-the heart under the breast
me fait une plaie novele.
me makes a wound new
Compaignie ot non la saiete;
Company had name the arrow
il n'est nule qui plus tost mete
there not-is any which more soon puts
a merci dame ou damoisele.
to mercy lady or damsel
La grant dolor me renovele
The great grief me renews
de mes plaies tot maintenant;
of my wounds all at-once
trois foiz me pasme en un tenant.
three times myself I-swoon in one stretch
Au revenir plaing e sospire,
At-the reviving I-lament and sigh
car ma dolor croist e empire
for my grief grows and worsens
si que je n'ai mais esperance
so that I not-have more hope
de guerison ne d'alejance.
of healing nor of-easing
Miauz voudroie estre morz que vis,
Better I-should-wish to-be dead than alive
car en la fin, ce m'est avis,
for in the end this to-me-is seeming
fera Amors de moi martir.
will-make Love of me a-martyr

Je ne m'en puis par el partir.
I not myself-thereof can by anything-else part
Il a endementieres prise
He has meanwhile taken
une autre floiche, que mout prise
an other arrow which much he-prizes
e que je tieng a mout poissant,
and which I hold for very powerful
c'est Biaus Semblanz, qui ne consent
this-is Fair Seeming which not consents
a nul amant qu'il se repente
to any lover that-he himself repent
d'Amors servir, por mal qu'il sente.
of-Love to-serve for any-ill that-he feel
Ele est agüe por percier,
It is sharp for piercing
e trenchant con rasoirs d'acier;
and cutting as razors of-steel
mais Amors a mout bien la pointe
but Love has very well the point
d'un oignement precieus ointe,
with-an ointment precious anointed
por ce qu'el ne peüst trop nuire;
for this that-it not could too-much harm
car il ne viaut pas que je muire,
for he not wishes at-all that I die
ainz viaut que j'aie alegement
rather he-wishes that I-have easing
par l'ointure de l'oignement,
by the-anointing of the-ointment

qui estoit toz de confort pleins.
which was all of comfort full
Amors l'avoit fait a ses mains,
Love it-had made with his hands
por les fins amanz conforter,
for the fine lovers to-comfort
e por lor maus miauz deporter.
and for their ills better to-bear
Il a cele floiche a moi traite,
He has that arrow at me shot
si m'a ou cuer grant plaie faite;
and-so me-has in-the heart a-great wound made
mais li oignemenz s'espandi
but the ointment itself-spread
par les plaies, si me rendi
through the wounds and-so me gave-back
le cuer qui m'estoit toz failliz.
the heart which to-me-was wholly failed
Je fusse morz e mal bailliz
I should-have-been dead and ill handled
se li douz oignemenz ne fust.
if the sweet ointment not were
Lors ai a moi tiré le fust,
Then I-have to me pulled the shaft
mais la saiete est enz remese,
but the arrow is within remained
qui ot esté de novel rese.
which had been of new shorn
S'en i ot cinc bien encrotees,
And-thereof there were five well embedded

qui jamais n'en seront ostees.
which ever not-thereof will-be taken-out
Li oignemenz mout me valut;
The ointment much me availed
mais toutesvoies me dolut
but nevertheless me pained
la plaie si que la dolor
the wound so that the grief
me faisoit muer la color.
me made to-change the color
Ceste floiche a fiere costume:
This arrow has a-fierce custom
douçor i a e amertume.
sweetness there is and bitterness
J'ai bien senti e coneü
I-have well felt and known
qu'el m'a aidié e m'a neü.
that-it me-has helped and me-has harmed
Il a angoisse en la pointure,
There is anguish in the piercing
si me rassoage l'ointure;
and-so me eases the-anointing
d'une part m'oint, d'autre me cuit,
of-one part me-anoints of-other me burns
ensi m'aïde, ensi me nuit.
thus me-helps thus me harms

The Lover's Homage

XII

Love comes up at a run and bids the lover yield, since resistance is folly; he yields at once, offering heart and body, and Love takes his homage and kisses him on the mouth. Asked for pledges, the lover answers that Love holds his heart already under garrison, and offers a key instead; Love draws a little gold key from his pouch and locks the heart so softly it is scarcely felt. He promises a medicine for the wounds, and warns that a disciple who does not set his heart on remembering wastes his master's labor.

Lors est tot maintenant venuz
Then is all at-once come
Amors vers moi les sauz menuz.
Love toward me with-the leaps short
En ce qu'il vint si m'escria:
In that that-he came and-so me-cried-out
«Vassaus, pris es, neient n'i a
Vassal taken thou-art nothing not-there is
1885 dou destorner ne dou defendre;
of-the turning-aside nor of-the defending
ne fai pas dangier de toi rendre:
not make at-all resistance of thyself to-yield
quant plus volentiers te rendras,
when more willingly thyself thou-wilt-yield
e plus tost a merci vendras;
and the-more soon to mercy thou-wilt-come

il est fos qui moine dangier
he is foolish who makes resistance
vers celui qu'il doit losengier
toward him whom-he ought flatter
e qu'il covient a soupleier:
and whom-it behooves to entreat
tu ne puez vers moi forceier;
thou not canst against me use-force
e si te vueil bien enseignier
and so to-thee I-wish well to-teach
que tu ne puez rien gaaignier
that thou not canst anything gain
en la folie n'en orgueil;
in the folly nor-in pride
mais rent toi pris, que je le vueil,
but yield thyself taken since I it wish
en pais e debonairement.
in peace and graciously
E je respondi simplement:
And I answered simply
«Sire, volentiers me rendrai,
Lord willingly myself I-shall-yield
ja vers vos ne me defendrai;
ever against you not myself I-shall-defend
ja Deu ne plaise que je pense
ever to-God not may-it-please that I think
que j'aie ja vers vos defense,
that I-have ever against you defense
car il n'est pas raison ne droiz;
for it not-is at-all reason nor right

vos poez ce que vos voudroiz
you can this which you will-wish
faire de moi, pendre ou tuer;
to-do with me to-hang or to-kill
bien sai que je nou puis muer,
well I-know that I not-it can alter
car ma vie est en vostre main:
for my life is in your hand
ne puis vivre jusqu'a demain
not I-can live even-to tomorrow
se n'est par vostre volenté.
if not-is by your will
J'atent par vos joie e santé,
I-await from you joy and health
que ja par autre ne l'avrai;
for ever by another not it-I-shall-have
se vostre main, qui m'a navré,
if your hand which me-has wounded
ne me done la guerison,
not me gives the healing
e se de moi vostre prison
and if of me your prisoner
volez faire ne ne deigniez,
you-wish to-make nor not deign
ne m'en tieng pas a engigniez;
not myself-thereof I-hold at-all for cheated
e sachiez que n'en ai point d'ire.
and know that not-thereof I-have at-all of-wrath

Tant ai oï de vos bien dire
So-much I-have heard of you well to-say
que metre vueil tot a devise
that to-put I-wish wholly at pleasure
cuer e cors en vostre servise,
heart and body in your service
car, se je faz vostre voloir,
for if I do your will
je ne m'en puis de rien doloir;
I not myself-thereof can in anything grieve
encor, ce cuit, en aucun tens
still this I-think in some time
avrai la merci que j'atens;
I-shall-have the mercy which I-await
e par tel covent me rent gié.»
and by such covenant myself yield I
A cest mot vos baisier son pié,
At this word I-wished to-kiss his foot
mais il m'a par mi la main pris,
but he me-has by midst the hand taken
e me dist: «Je t'ain mout e pris
and to-me said I thee-love much and prize
don tu as respondu issi.
since thou hast answered thus
Onques tel response n'issi
Ever such answer not-issued
d'ome vilain mal enseignié;
from-a-man churlish ill bred

e si i as tant gaaignié
and so thereat thou-hast so-much gained
que je vueil, por ton avantage,
that I wish for thy advantage
qu'orendroit me faces omage;
that-just-now to-me thou-do homage
si me baiseras en la bouche,
and-so me thou-wilt-kiss on the mouth
a cui nus vilains on ne touche.
to which any churlish man not touches
Je n'i laisse mie touchier
I not-there let at-all to-touch
chascun vilain, chascun bouchier,
every churl every butcher
ainz doit estre cortois e frans
rather ought be courteous and noble
cil que j'ensi a ome prens.
he whom I-thus as man take
Senz faille il i a poine e fais
Without fail it there is toil and burden
en moi servir, mais je te fais
in me to-serve but I to-thee do
enor mout grant, e si doiz estre
honor very great and so thou-oughtest be
mout liez don tu as si bon maistre
very glad since thou hast so good a-master
e seignor de si haut renon,
and lord of so high renown

qu'Amors porte le gonfanon
for-Love bears the gonfalon
de Cortoisie e la baniere;
of Courtesy and the banner
si est de si bone maniere,
and-so is of so good a-manner
si douz, si frans e si gentis
so sweet so noble and so gentle
que, quiconques est ententis
that whoever is intent
a li servir e enorer,
on him to-serve and to-honor
dedenz lui ne puet demorer
within him not can dwell
Vilanie ne mesprison
Villainy nor wrongdoing
ne nule mauvaise aprison.»
nor any evil teaching
Atant devin ses on mains jointes.
Thereupon I-became his man with-hands joined
E sachiez que mout me fis cointes
And know that very myself I-made proud
don sa bouche baisa la moie:
since his mouth kissed the mine
ce fu ce don j'oi graignor joie.
this was that of-which I-had greater joy
Il m'a lores requis ostages:
He me-has then asked pledges

«Amis», fait il, «j'ai mainz omages
Friend says he I-have many homages
e d'uns e d'autres receüz,
both of-some and of-others received
don j'ai puis esté deceüz;
of-which I-have since been deceived
li felon, plein de fausseté,
the felons full of falsehood
m'ont par maintes foiz bareté.
me-have by many times cheated
D'aus ai oïe mainte noise;
Of-them I-have heard many-an outcry
mais il savront come il m'en poise:
but they will-know how it to-me-thereof grieves
se je les puis a mon droit prendre,
if I them can at my right take
je lor voudrai chierement vendre.
I to-them shall-wish dearly to-sell
Or vueil je, por ce que je t'ains,
Now wish I for this that I thee-love
de toi estre si bien certains,
of thee to-be so well certain
e te vueil si a moi lier
and thee I-wish so to me to-bind
que tu ne me puisses nier
that thou not me canst deny
ne promesse ne covenant,
neither promise nor covenant
ne faire nul desavenant:
nor do any unseemliness

pechiez seroit se tu trichoies,
a-sin it-would-be if thou didst-cheat
qu'il me semble que leiaus soies.
for-it to-me seems that loyal thou-art
— Sire», fis je, «or m'entendez:
Lord said I now me-hear
ne sai por quoi vos demandez
not I-know for what you ask
pleges de moi ne seürté:
pledges of me nor surety
ja savez vos de verité
already know you for truth
que mon cuer m'avez si toloit
that my heart me-you-have so taken-away
e si pris que, s'il bien voloit,
and so taken that if-it well wished
ne puet il rien faire por moi,
not can it anything do for me
se ce n'estoit par vostre otroi.
if this not-were by your grant
Li cuers est vostres, non pas miens,
The heart is yours not at-all mine
car il covient, soit maus ou biens,
for it behooves be-it ill or good
que il face vostre plaisir:
that it do your pleasure
nus ne vos en puet dessaisir;
anyone not you thereof can dispossess

tel garnison i avez mise
such a-garrison there you-have put
qui le garde bien e jostise;
which it guards well and rules
e sor tot ce, se rien dotez,
and over all this if anything you-doubt
faites i clef, si l'emportez,
make there a-key and-so it-carry-away
e la clef soit en leu d'ostages.
and the key be in place of-pledges
— Par mon chief, ce n'est mie outrages»,
By my head this not-is at-all an-outrage
respont Amors, «je m'i acors:
answers Love I myself-there agree
il est assez sires dou cors
he is quite lord of-the body
qui a le cuer en sa comande.
who has the heart in his command
Outrageus est qui plus demande.»
Outrageous is who more asks
Lors a de s'aumosniere traite
Then he-has from his-pouch drawn
une petite clef bien faite,
a little key well made
qui fu de fin or esmeré:
which was of fine gold refined
«A ceste», dist il, «fermerai
With this says he I-shall-lock
ton cuer, n'en quier autre apoial;
thy heart not-thereof I-seek other prop

soz ceste clef sont mi joial.
under this key are my jewels
Ele est mendre de ton doi mame,
It is smaller than thy finger little
mais ele est de mon escrin dame,
but it is of my casket mistress
e si a mout grant poesté.»
and so has very great power
Lors la me toucha au costé,
Then it to-me he-touched at-the side
e ferma mon cuer si soef
and locked my heart so softly
qu'a grant poine senti la clef.
that-with great trouble I-felt the key
Ensi fis sa volenté toute;
Thus I-did his will wholly
e quant je l'oi mis hors de doute:
and when I him-had put out of doubt
«Sire», fis je, «grant talent ai
Lord said I great desire I-have
de faire vostre volenté;
of doing your will
mais mon servise recevez
but my service receive
en gré, foi que vos me devez.
in favor by-the-faith that you to-me owe
Nou di pas por recreantise,
Not-it I-say at-all out-of faintheartedness
car point ne dot vostre servise,
for at-all not I-fear your service

mais sergenz en vain se travaille
but a-servant in vain himself labors
de faire servise qui vaille,
in doing service which avails
se li servises n'atalente
if the service not-pleases
au seignor cui l'en le presente.»
to-the lord to-whom one it presents
Amors respont: «Or ne t'esmaie;
Love answers Now not thyself-trouble
puis que mis t'es en ma menaie,
since that put thyself-art in my power
ton servise prendrai en gré
thy service I-shall-take in favor
e te metrai en haut degré,
and thee I-shall-put in high degree
se mauvaistié ne le te tost;
if wickedness not it to-thee take-away
mais espoir ce n'iert mie tost:
but perhaps this not-will-be at-all soon
granz biens ne vient pas en poi d'eure;
great good not comes at-all in little of-time
il i covient poine e demeure.
it there behooves toil and delay
Atent e suefre la destrece
Await and suffer the distress
qui orendroit te cuit e blece,
which just-now thee burns and wounds

car je sai bien par quel poison
for I know well by what draft
tu seras traiz a guerison.
thou wilt-be drawn to healing
Se tu te tiens en leiauté,
If thou thyself holdest in loyalty
je te donrai tel deauté
I to-thee shall-give such an-electuary
qui de tes plaies te garra;
which of thy wounds thee will-heal
mais, par mon chief, or i parra
but by my head now there will-appear
se tu de bon cuer serviras,
if thou with good heart wilt-serve
e coment tu acompliras
and how thou wilt-fulfill
nuit e jor les comandemenz
night and day the commandments
que je comant as fins amanz.
which I command to-the fine lovers
— Sire», fis je, «por Deu merci,
Lord said I for God's mercy
avant que vos movez de ci,
before that you move from here
voz comandemenz m'enchargiez;
your commandments to-me-charge
je sui dou faire encoragiez,
I am of-the doing emboldened
mais espoir, se je nes savoie,
but perhaps if I not-them knew

tost porroie issir hors de voie;
soon I-could issue out of way
por ce sui en grant de l'aprendre
for this I-am in eagerness of the-learning
que je n'i vueil de rien mesprendre.»
for I not-there wish in anything to-transgress
Amors respont: «Tu dis mout bien.
Love answers Thou sayest very well
Or les entent e les retien.
Now them hear and them retain
Li maistres pert sa poine toute
The master loses his toil wholly
quant li deciples qui escoute
when the disciple who listens
ne met son cuer au retenir
not puts his heart at-the retaining
si qu'il l'en puisse sovenir.»
so that-he thereof may remember
Li deus d'Amors lors m'encharja,
The god of-Love then to-me-charged
tot ensi con vos orroiz ja,
all thus as you will-hear presently
mot a mot ses comandemenz:
word by word his commandments
bien les devise cist romanz.
well them describes this romance
Qui amer viaut or i entende,
Who to-love wishes now there let-him-attend
que li romanz des or amende;
for the romance from now improves

des or le fait bon escouter,
from now it makes good to-listen
s'il est qui le sache conter,
if-there is who it know to-tell
car la fin dou songe est mout bele
for the end of-the dream is very fair
e la matire en est novele;
and the matter thereof is new
qui dou songe la fin orra,
who of-the dream the end will-hear
je vos di bien que il porra
I to-you say well that he will-be-able
des jeus d'Amors assez aprendre,
of-the games of-Love enough to-learn
por quoi il vueille tant atendre
provided that he wish so-long to-wait
que j'espoigne e que j'enromance
until I-expound and until I-put-in-romance
dou songe la senefiance:
of-the dream the meaning
la verité, qui est coverte,
the truth which is covered
vos sera lores toute aperte
to-you will-be then wholly open
quant espondre m'orroiz le songe,
when to-expound me-you-will-hear the dream
car il n'i a mot de mençonge.
for it not-there is a-word of falsehood

The Commandments of Love

XIII

Love's rule, given at length. Forsake villainy, which makes churls; speak no foul word; greet people first; serve and honor all women and rebuke anyone who slanders them; avoid pride, but keep yourself elegant according to your income, in a well-cut gown, fresh shoes, clean nails, and combed hair. Be merry, since Love has no use for a gloomy man; use whatever skill you have in riding, singing, or dancing; and be open-handed, never miserly. Set your whole heart in one place, and give it outright rather than lend it.

«Vilanie premierement»,
Villainy firstly
ce dist Amors, «vueil e comant
this says Love I-wish and command
que tu guerpisses senz reprendre,
that thou forsake without taking-back
se tu ne viaus vers moi mesprendre.
if thou not wishest against me to-offend
Si maudi e escomenie
And-so I-curse and excommunicate
toz ceus qui aiment vilanie:
all those who love villainy
Vilanie fait les vilains,
Villainy makes the churls
por ce n'est pas droiz que je l'ains.
for this not-is at-all right that I it-love
Vilains est fel e senz pitié,
A-churl is felon and without pity
senz servise e senz amitié.
without service and without friendship

Or te garde bien de retraire
Now thyself keep well from repeating
chose des genz qui face a taire:
a-thing of-the folk which ought to be-hushed
n'est pas proece de mesdire.
not-is at-all prowess of slandering
A Keu le seneschal te mire,
At Kay the seneschal thyself mirror
qui jadis par son moqueïz
who formerly by his mockery
fu mal renomez e haïz.
was ill renowned and hated
Tant con Gauvains, li bien apris,
As-much as Gawain the well bred
par sa cortoisie ot de pris,
by his courtesy had of worth
autretant ot de blasme Keus
just-as-much had of blame Kay
por ce qu'il fu fel e crueus,
for this that-he was felon and cruel
ramponierres e mal parliers
a-jeerer and an-ill speaker
desus touz autres chevaliers.
above all other knights
Soies entres e acointables,
Be shrewd and affable
de paroles douz e raisnables
of words sweet and reasonable
e as granz genz e as menues;
both to-the great folk and to-the little

e quant tu iras par les rues,
and when thou wilt-go through the streets
gar que tu soies costumiers
see that thou be accustomed
de saluer les genz premiers;
to greeting the folk first
e s'aucuns avant te salue,
and if-anyone before thee greets
si n'aies pas ta bouche mue,
so not-have at-all thy mouth dumb
ainz te garnis dou salu rendre
rather thyself provide of-the greeting to-return
senz demorer e senz atendre.
without delaying and without waiting
Après garde que tu ne dies
After take-heed that thou not say
ces orz moz ne ces ribaudies:
those foul words nor those ribaldries
ja por nomer vilaine chose
ever for naming a-base thing
ne doit ta bouche estre desclose:
not ought thy mouth be opened
je ne tieng pas a cortois ome
I not hold at-all for a-courteous man
qui orde chose e laide nome.
who a-foul thing and ugly names
Toutes fames serf e eneure,
All women serve and honor
en eus servir poine e labeure;
in them serving toil and labor

e se tu oz nul mesdisant
and if thou hearest any slanderer
qui aille fames despisant,
who go women despising
blasme le e di qu'il se taise.
blame him and say that-he himself be-silent
Fai, se tu puez, chose qui plaise
Do if thou canst a-thing which please
as dames e as damoiseles,
to-the ladies and to-the damsels
si qu'eus oient bones noveles
so that-they hear good tidings
de toi e dire e raconter:
of thee both to-say and to-recount
par ce porras en pris monter.
by this thou-wilt-be-able in worth rise
Après tot ce d'orgueil te garde,
After all this from-pride thyself keep
car, qui entent bien e esgarde,
for who understands well and considers
Orguiauz est folie e pechiez;
Pride is folly and sin
e qui d'orgueil est entechiez,
and who of-pride is stained
il ne puet son cuer apleier
he not can his heart bend
a servir ne a soupleier:
to serve nor to submit

orguilleus fait tot le contraire
a-proud-man does all the contrary
de ce que fins amanz doit faire.
of this that a-fine lover ought do
Mais qui d'amors se viaut pener,
But who of-love himself wishes to-take-pains
il se doit cointement mener:
he himself ought elegantly carry
on qui porchace druerie
a-man who pursues courtship
ne vaut neient senz cointerie.
not is-worth anything without elegance
Cointerie n'est pas orguiauz:
Elegance not-is at-all pride
qui est cointes il en vaut miauz,
who is elegant he thereby is-worth better
por quoi il soit d'orgueil vuidiez,
provided that he be of-pride emptied
qu'il ne soit fos n'outrecuidiez.
that-he not be foolish nor-presumptuous
Moine toi bel, selonc ta rente,
Carry thyself fairly according-to thy income
e de robe e de chaucemente:
both in gown and in footwear
bele robe e bel garnement
a-fair gown and fair garment
amendent ome durement;
improve a-man greatly

e si doiz ta robe baillier
and so thou-oughtest thy gown to-entrust
a tel qui sache bien taillier,
to such-a-one who know well to-cut
qui face bien seanz les pointes
who make well fitting the stitches
e les manches vestanz e cointes.
and the sleeves close and elegant
Solers a laz e estiviaus
Shoes with laces and half-boots
aies sovent frois e noviaus,
have often fresh and new
e gar qu'il soient si chauçant
and see that-they be so fitting
que cil vilain aillent tençant
that those churls go disputing
en quel guise tu i entras
in what wise thou into-them didst-enter
e de quel part tu en istras.
and by what part thou thereof wilt-issue
De ganz, d'aumosniere de soie
Of gloves of-a-pouch of silk
e de ceinture te cointoie;
and of a-girdle thyself adorn
e se tu n'es de la richece
and if thou not-art of the wealth
quel puisses faire, si t'estrece;
that-it mayest do so thee-straiten

mais au plus bel te doiz deduire
but at-the most fair thee thou-oughtest delight
que tu porras senz toi destruire:
that thou wilt-be-able without thyself destroy
chapel de flors, qui petit coste,
a-garland of flowers which little costs
ou de roses a Pentecoste,
or of roses at Pentecost
ice puet bien chascuns avoir,
that-same can well each have
qu'il n'i covient pas grant avoir.
for-it not-there behooves at-all great wealth
Ne suefre sor toi nule ordure;
Not suffer upon thee any filth
lave tes mains, tes denz escure;
wash thy hands thy teeth scour
s'en tes ongles pert point de noir,
if-in thy nails appears a-speck of black
ne l'i laisse pas remenoir.
not it-there let at-all to-remain
Cous tes manches, tes cheveus pigne,
Sew thy sleeves thy hair comb
mais ne te farde ne ne guigne:
but not thyself paint nor not trim
ce n'apartient s'as dames non,
this not-belongs except-to ladies alone
ou a ceus de mauvais renon,
or to those of ill renown

qui amors par male aventure
who loves by evil adventure
ont trovees contre Nature.
have found against Nature
Après ce te doit sovenir
After this thee ought remember
d'envoiseüre maintenir.
of-merriment to-keep-up
A joie e a deduit t'atorne:
To joy and to delight thyself-turn
amor n'a cure d'ome morne;
love not-has care of-a-man gloomy
c'est maladie mout courtoise,
this-is a-malady very courtly
ou l'en jeue e rit e envoise.
where one plays and laughs and makes-merry
Il est ensi que li amant
It is thus that the lovers
ont par eures joie e torment;
have by hours joy and torment
amant sentent le mal d'amer
lovers feel the ill of-loving
une eure douz e autre amer;
one hour sweet and another bitter
maus d'amer est mout corageus:
the-ill of-loving is very passionate
or est li amanz en ses jeus,
now is the lover in his games
or est destroiz, or se demente,
now is distressed now himself laments

une eure pleure e autre chante.
one hour he-weeps and another sings
Se tu sez nul bel deduit faire,
If thou knowest any fair pastime to-make
par quoi tu puisses as genz plaire,
by which thou mayest to-the folk please
je te comant que tu le faces:
I thee command that thou it do
chascuns doit faire en toutes places
each ought do in all places
ce qu'il set qui miauz li avient,
that which-he knows which best to-him befits
car los e pris e grace en vient.
for praise and worth and grace thereof comes
Se tu te senz viste e legier,
If thou thyself feelest nimble and light
ne fai pas de saillir dangier;
not make at-all of leaping a-difficulty
e se tu es bien a cheval,
and if thou art good on horse
tu doiz poindre amont e aval;
thou oughtest spur up and down
e se tu sez lances brisier,
and if thou knowest lances to-break
tu t'en puez faire mout prisier;
thou thyself-thereof canst make much be-prized
e s'as armes es acesmez,
and if-at arms thou-art accomplished
par ce seras dis tanz amez.
by this thou-wilt-be ten times loved

Se tu as la voiz clere e saine,
If thou hast the voice clear and sound
tu ne doiz mie querre essoine
thou not oughtest at-all seek excuse
de chanter, se l'en t'en semont,
of singing if one thee-thereof summons
car biaus chanters abelist mont.
for fair singing pleases much
Si avient bien a bacheler
And-so it-befits well to a-young-man
que il sache de vieler,
that he know of fiddling
de fleüter e de dancier:
of fluting and of dancing
par ce se puet mout avancier.
by this himself he-can much advance
Ne te fai tenir por aver,
Not thee make be-held for a-miser
car ce te porroit mout grever:
for this thee could much grieve
il avient bien que li amant
it befits well that the lovers
doignent dou lor plus largement
give of theirs more largely
que cil vilain entulle e sot.
than those churls dull and foolish
Onques on rien d'amer ne sot
Ever a-man anything of-loving not knew
cui il n'abelist a doner.
to-whom it not-pleases to give

Se nus se viaut d'amors pener,
If anyone himself wishes of-love to-take-pains
d'avarice trés bien se gart,
from-avarice very well himself let-him-keep
car cil qui a por un regart,
for he who has for one look
ou por un ris douz e serin,
or for one smile sweet and serene
doné son cuer tot enterin
given his heart wholly entire
doit bien, après si riche don,
ought well after so rich a-gift
doner l'avoir tot a bandon.
to-give the-wealth wholly at liberty
Or te vueil briement recorder
Now to-thee I-wish briefly to-recall
ce que t'ai dit, por remembrer,
this which to-thee-I-have said for remembering
car la parole moins engrieve
for the word less burdens
a retenir quant ele est brieve:
to retain when it is brief
qui d'Amors viaut faire son maistre
who of-Love wishes to-make his master
cortois e senz orgueil doit estre;
courteous and without pride ought be
cointes se teigne e envoisiez,
elegant himself let-him-hold and merry
e de largece soit proisiez.
and of largesse let-him-be prized

Après t'enjoing en penitence
After thee-I-enjoin in penance
que nuit e jor, senz repentance,
that night and day without repenting
en amors metes ton penser:
in love thou-put thy thought
toz jorz i pense senz cesser,
all days there think without ceasing
e te membre de la douce eure
and thee remember of the sweet hour
don la joie tant te demeure.
of-which the joy so-long thee tarries
E, por ce que fins amanz soies,
And for this that a-fine lover thou-be
vueil je e comant que tu aies
wish I and command that thou have
en un seul leu tot ton cuer mis,
in one single place all thy heart put
si qu'il n'i soit mie demis,
so that-it not-there be at-all halved
mais toz entiers, senz tricherie,
but wholly entire without cheating
car je n'ain pas moiteierie.
for I not-love at-all halving
Qui en mainz leus son cuer depart,
Who in many places his heart divides
par tot en a petite part;
in all thereof has little part

mais de celui point ne me dot
but of him at-all not myself I-fear
qui en un leu met son cuer tot;
who in one place puts his heart wholly
por ce vueil qu'en un leu le metes.
for this I-wish that-in one place it thou-put
Mais garde bien que tu nou pretes,
But take-heed well that thou not-it lend
car se tu l'avoies preté,
for if thou it-hadst lent
jou tendroie a chaitiveté;
I-it should-hold for wretchedness
mais done le en don tot quite,
but give it in gift wholly quit
si en avras graignor merite,
and-so thereof thou-wilt-have greater merit
car bonté de chose pretee
for the-kindness of a-thing lent
est tost rendue e aquitee;
is soon returned and discharged
mais de chose donee en dons
but of a-thing given in gifts
doit estre granz li guerredons.
ought be great the recompense
Done le donc tot quitement,
Give it therefore wholly freely
si le fai debonairement,
and-so it do graciously

car l'en doit chose avoir mout chiere
for one ought a-thing hold very dear
qui est donee a bele chiere,
which is given with fair countenance
e je ne pris le don un pois
and I not prize the gift a pea
que l'en done desus son pois.
which one gives against his will

The Torments of the Lover

XIV

The heart given, the torments follow, Love warns. The lover will withdraw from company, sigh and shudder, go hot and cold, and stand as still as a dumb image, then come to himself with a start. He will walk to her street, find nothing, and go again. Seeing her, he will feed his eyes and only feed the fire, and afterward reproach himself for never daring to speak; should he meet her and begin, two of three things will go unsaid. At night he will toss, dream her in his arms, build castles in Spain, weep, and beg the sun to rise.

Quant tu avras ton cuer doné, 2265
When thou wilt-have thy heart given
si con je t'ai ci sarmoné,
so as I to-thee-have here preached
lors te vendront les aventures
then to-thee will-come the adventures
qui as amanz sont griés e dures.
which to-the lovers are grievous and hard

Sovent, quant il te sovendra
Often when it to-thee will-remember
de tes amors, te covendra
of thy loves thee it-will-behoove
partir des genz par estovoir,
to-part from-the folk by necessity
qu'il ne puissent apercevoir
so-that-they not may perceive
le mal don tu es angoisseus.
the ill of-which thou art anguished
A une part iras toz seus:
To one part thou-wilt-go all alone
lors te vendront sospir e plaintes,
then to-thee will-come sighs and complaints
friçons e autres dolors maintes;
shudders and other griefs many
en plusors sens seras destroiz,
in several ways thou-wilt-be distressed
une eure chauz e autre froiz,
one hour hot and another cold
vermauz une eure, une autre pales:
red one hour an other pale
onques fievres n'eüs si males,
ever fevers not-thou-hadst so evil
ne cotidianes ne quartes.
neither quotidian nor quartan
Bien avras, ainz que tu t'en partes,
Well thou-wilt-have before that thou thyself-thence part
les dolors d'amors essaiees.
the griefs of-love tried

Or t'avendra maintes feiees
Now to-thee-will-happen many times
qu'en pensant t'entroblieras
that-in thinking thyself-thou-wilt-forget
e une grant piece seras
and a great while thou-wilt-be
ausi come une image mue,
just as an image dumb
qui ne se crole ne remue,
which not itself stirs nor moves
senz piez, senz mains, senz doiz croler,
without feet without hands without fingers to-stir
senz iauz movoir e senz parler.
without eyes to-move and without speaking
A chief de piece revendras
At end of a-while thou-wilt-come-again
en ta memoire e tressaudras
into thy memory and thou-wilt-start
au revenir en esfreor,
at-the returning in fright
ausi come on qui a peor,
just as a-man who has fear
e sospirras de cuer parfont,
and thou-wilt-sigh from heart deep
car bien saches qu'ensi le font
for well know that-thus it do
cil qui ont les maus essaiez
those who have the ills tried
don tu es or si esmaiez.
of-which thou art now so dismayed

Après est droiz qu'il te soveigne
After it-is right that-it thee remember
que t'amie t'est trop lointaigne;
that thy-friend to-thee-is too far-off
lors diras: «Deus! con sui mauvais
then thou-wilt-say God how I-am wretched
quant la ou mes cuers est ne vais!
when there where my heart is not I-go
Mon cuer seul por quoi i envoi?
My heart alone for what there I-send
Adès i pens e rien n'en voi:
Ever there I-think and anything not-thereof I-see
quant ne puis les iauz enveier
when not I-can the eyes send
après, por le cuer conveier,
after for the heart to-escort
se mi ueil mon cuer ne convoient,
if my eyes my heart not escort
je ne pris rien quanque il voient.
I not prize anything whatever they see
Doivent se il ci arester?
Ought themselves they here to-stop
Nenil, mais aillent visiter
No-indeed but let-them-go to-visit
ce don li cuers a tel talent.
that of-which the heart has such desire
Je me puis bien tenir a lent
I myself can well hold for slow
quant de mon cuer sui si lointiens;
when from my heart I-am so far-off

si m'aïst Deus, por fol m'en tiens.
so me-help God for fool myself-thereat I-hold
Or irai, plus nou laisserai;
Now I-shall-go more not-it I-shall-leave
jamais a aise ne serai
ever at ease not I-shall-be
devant qu'aucune enseigne en oie.»
before that-some token thereof I-hear
Lores te metras a la voie
Then thee thou-wilt-put on the way
e iras la par tel covent
and wilt-go there by such covenant
qu'a ton esme faudras sovent
that-at thy reckoning thou-wilt-fail often
e gasteras en vain tes pas;
and thou-wilt-waste in vain thy steps
ce que tu quiers ne verras pas,
that which thou seekest not thou-wilt-see at-all
si covendra que tu retornes,
and-so it-will-behoove that thou return
senz plus faire, pensis e mornes.
without more doing pensive and gloomy
Lores seras a grant meschief
Then thou-wilt-be at great distress
e te vendront tot de rechief
and to-thee will-come all of once-more
sospir e pointes e friçons,
sighs and pangs and shudders
qui poignent plus que heriçons.
which prick more than hedgehogs

Qui ne le set si le demant
Who not it knows so it let-him-ask
a ceus qui sont leial amant.
of those who are loyal lovers
Ton cuer ne porras apaier,
Thy heart not thou-wilt-be-able appease
ainz iras encore essaier
rather thou-wilt-go again to-try
se tu verras par aventure
whether thou wilt-see by chance
ce don tu es en si grant cure;
that of-which thou art in so great care
e se tu te puez tant pener
and if thou thyself canst so-much labor
qu'au veoir puisses assener,
that-at-the seeing thou-mayest attain
tu voudras mout ententis estre
thou wilt-wish very intent to-be
a tes iauz saouler e paistre.
on thy eyes to-sate and to-feed
Grant joie en ton cuer demerras
Great joy in thy heart thou-wilt-lead
de la biauté que tu verras,
of the beauty which thou wilt-see
e saches que dou regarder
and know that of-the looking
feras ton cuer frire e larder,
thou-wilt-make thy heart to-fry and to-baste

e tot adès en regardant
and all ever in looking
aviveras le feu ardent:
thou-wilt-quicken the fire burning
qui ce qu'il aime plus regarde,
who that which-he loves more looks-at
plus alume son cuer e larde;
more kindles his heart and bastes
cil larz alume e fait flamer
that basting kindles and makes blaze
le feu qui fait les genz amer.
the fire which makes the folk love
Chascuns amanz suit par costume
Each lover follows by custom
le feu qui l'art e qui l'alume;
the fire which him-burns and which him-kindles
quant il le feu de plus près sent,
when he the fire from more near feels
e il s'en vait plus apressant.
and he himself-thence goes more approaching
Li feus si est ce qu'il remire
The fire and-so is this that-he gazes-at
s'amie qui le fait defrire;
his-friend who him makes melt
quant il se tient de li plus près,
when he himself holds from her more near
e il plus est d'amer engrès.
and he more is of-loving eager

Ce sevent tuit sage e musart:
This know all wise and foolish
qui plus est près dou feu plus art.
who more is near of-the fire more burns
Tant con ta joie ensi verras,
As-long as thy joy thus thou-wilt-see
jamais movoir ne t'en querras;
ever to-move not thee-thence thou-wilt-seek
e quant partir t'en covendra,
and when to-part to-thee-thence it-will-behoove
tot le jor puis te sovendra
all the day after to-thee will-remember
de ce que tu avras veü;
of that which thou wilt-have seen
si te tendras a deceü
and-so thee thou-wilt-hold for deceived
d'une chose mout laidement:
of-one thing very foully
que onques cuer ne hardement
that ever heart nor boldness
n'eüs de li araisoner,
not-thou-hadst of her to-address
ainz as esté senz mot soner
rather thou-hast been without word sounding
lez li, con fos e entrepris.
beside her as a-fool and confounded

Bien cuideras avoir mespris
Well thou-wilt-think to-have transgressed
don tu n'as la bele aparlee
since thou not-hast the fair-one addressed
avant qu'ele s'en fust alee.
before that-she herself-thence were gone
Torner te doit a grant contraire,
Turn thee ought to great vexation
car se tu n'en peüsses traire
for if thou not-thereof couldst draw
fors solement un bel salu,
except only one fair greeting
si t'eüst il cent mars valu.
so thee-would-have it a-hundred marks been-worth
Lors te prendras a demaler,
Then thee thou-wilt-take to bestir
e querras achoison d'aler
and wilt-seek occasion of-going
de rechief encore en la rue
of once-more yet into the street
ou tu avras cele veüe
where thou wilt-have her seen
que tu n'osas metre a raison;
whom thou not-daredst to-put to speech
mout iroies en sa maison
much thou-wouldst-go into her house
volentiers, s'achoison avoies.
willingly if-occasion thou-hadst

Il est droiz que toutes tes voies
It is right that all thy ways
e tes alees e ti tor
and thy goings and thy turns
s'en reveignent par la entor.
themselves-thence come-again by there about
Mais vers la gent trés bien te cele,
But toward the folk very well thyself conceal
e quier autre achoison que cele
and seek other occasion than that
qui cele part te fait aler,
which that part thee makes go
qu'il est granz sens de soi celer.
for-it is great sense of oneself to-hide
S'il avient chose que tu trueves
If-it happens a-thing that thou find
la bele en point que tu la doives
the fair-one at a-point that thou her must
araisoner ne saluer,
address nor greet
lors t'estovra color muer,
then thee-it-will-behoove color to-change
si te fremira toz li sans;
and-so thee will-quiver all the blood
parole te faudra e sens
speech thee will-fail and sense
quant tu cuideras comencier;
when thou wilt-think to-begin

e se tant te puez avancier
and if so-much thyself thou-canst advance
que ta raison comencier oses,
that thy speech to-begin thou-darest
quant tu devras dire trois choses,
when thou wilt-have to-say three things
tu n'en diras mie les deus,
thou not-thereof wilt-say at-all the two
tant seras vers li vergondeus.
so-much thou-wilt-be toward her bashful
Il n'iert ja nus si apensez
There not-will-be ever any so collected
qui en ce point n'oblit assez,
who in this point not-forget much
se teus n'est que de guile serve;
if such not-is that of guile serve
mais faus amant content lor verve
but false lovers tell their tale
si come il vuelent, senz peor;
so as they wish without fear
icil sont fort losengeor:
those are great flatterers
il dient un e pensent el
they say one and think other
li traïtor felon mortel.
the traitors wicked deadly
Quant ta raison avras fenie,
When thy speech thou-wilt-have finished
senz dire mot de vilanie,
without saying word of villainy

mout te tendras a conchié
much thee thou-wilt-hold for befouled
quant tu avras rien oblié
when thou wilt-have anything forgotten
qui te fust avenant a dire;
which to-thee were fitting to say
lors reseras en grant martire.
then thou-wilt-be-again in great martyrdom
C'est la bataille, c'est l'ardure,
This-is the battle this-is the-burning
c'est li contenz qui toz jorz dure:
this-is the strife which all days lasts
amanz n'avra ja ce qu'il quiert,
a-lover not-will-have ever that which-he seeks
toz jorz li faut, ja en pais n'iert.
all days to-him it-fails ever in peace not-be-will-be
Ja fin ne prendra ceste guerre,
Ever end not will-take this war
tant que j'en vueille la pais querre.
until that I-thereof wish the peace to-seek
Quant ce vendra qu'il sera nuiz,
When this will-come that-it will-be night
lors avras plus de mil enuiz.
then thou-wilt-have more than a-thousand troubles
Tu te coucheras en ton lit,
Thou thyself wilt-lay in thy bed
ou tu avras poi de delit,
where thou wilt-have little of delight
car quant tu cuideras dormir,
for when thou wilt-think to-sleep

tu comenceras a fremir,
thou wilt-begin to shiver
a tressaillir, a demener;
to start to toss
sor costé t'estovra torner,
on side thee-it-will-behoove to-turn
e puis envers, e puis adenz,
and then on-back and then prone
come ome qui a mal as denz.
as a-man who has ache in-the teeth
Lors te vendra en remembrance
Then to-thee will-come in remembrance
e la façon e la semblance
both the fashion and the semblance
a cui nule ne s'apareille.
to which any not herself-matches
Si te dirai fiere merveille:
And-so to-thee I-shall-say a-mighty marvel
tel foiz sera qu'il t'iert avis
such a-time will-be that-it to-thee-will-be seeming
que tu tendras cele au cler vis
that thou wilt-hold her with-the bright face
entre tes braz trestoute nue,
between thy arms wholly naked
ausi con s'el fust devenue
just as if-she were become
dou tot t'amie e ta compaigne;
of all thy-friend and thy companion

lors feras chastiaus en Espaigne
then thou-wilt-make castles in Spain
e avras joie de neient
and wilt-have joy of nothing
tant con tu iras foleiant
as-long as thou wilt-go doting
en la pensee delitable
in the thought delightful
ou il n'a que mençonge e fable
where there not-has but falsehood and fable
mais poi i porras demorer.
but little there thou-wilt-be-able stay
Lors comenceras a plorer,
Then thou-wilt-begin to weep
e diras: «Deus, ai je songié?
and wilt-say God have I dreamed
Qu'est ice? Ou estoie gié?
What-is this Where was I
Ceste pensee don me vint?
This thought whence to-me came
Certes le jor dis foiz ou vint
Certainly the day ten times or twenty
voudroie qu'ele revenist:
I-should-wish that-it should-come-again
el me paist tot e replenist
it me feeds wholly and fills
de joie e de bone aventure;
with joy and with good fortune
mais ce m'a mort que poi me dure.
but this me-has killed that little me lasts

Deus! verrai je ja que je soie
God shall-see I ever that I be
en itel point con je pensoie?
in such a-point as I thought
Jou voudroie par covenant
I-it should-wish by covenant
que je morisse maintenant.
that I should-die at-once
La mort ne me greveroit mie
The death not me would-grieve at-all
se je moroie es braz m'amie.
if I died in-the arms of-my-friend
Mout me grieve Amors e tormente;
Much me grieves Love and torments
sovent me plaing e me demente.
often myself I-lament and myself distress
Mais se tant fait Amors que j'aie
But if so-much does Love that I-have
de m'amie enterine joie,
of my-friend entire joy
bien seront mi mal acheté.
well will-be my ills bought
Las! je demant trop chier cheté;
Alas I demand too dear a-purchase
je ne me tieng mie por sage
I not myself hold at-all for wise
don je demandai tel outrage,
since I demanded such an-outrage
car, qui demande musardie,
for who demands foolishness

bien est droiz que l'en l'escondie.
well is right that one him-refuse
Ne sai coment dire l'osai:
Not I-know how to-say it-I-dared
maint plus preu e plus alosé
many-a more worthy and more renowned
de moi avroient grant enor
than me would-have great honor
en un loier assez menor.
in a reward quite lesser
Mais se, senz plus, d'un seul baisier
But if without more of-one single kiss
me deignoit la bele aaisier,
me deigned the fair-one to-ease
mout avroie riche deserte
much I-should-have rich recompense
de la poine que j'ai soferte;
of the toil which I-have suffered
mais fort chose est a avenir;
but a-hard thing it-is to happen
je me puis bien por fol tenir
I myself can well for fool hold
quant j'ai mis mon cuer en tel leu
when I-have put my heart in such a-place
don ja n'avrai joie ne preu.
whence ever not-I-shall-have joy nor profit
Si di je que fos e que garz,
And-so say I like a-fool and like a-knave

car miauz vaut de li uns regarz
for better is-worth of her one look
que d'autre li deduiz entiers.
than of-another the delight entire
Mout la verroie volentiers
Much her I-should-see willingly
orendroites, si Deus m'aïst;
just-now so God me-help
gueriz fust qui or la veïst.
healed he-were who now her should-see
Deus! quant sera il ajorné?
God when will-be it dawned
Trop ai en cest lit sejorné;
Too-long I-have in this bed sojourned
je ne pris guieres tel gesir
I not prize much such lying
quant je n'ai ce que je desir.
when I not-have that which I desire
Gesirs est enuieuse chose
Lying is a-wearisome thing
quant l'en ne dort ne ne repose.
when one not sleeps nor not rests
Mout m'enuie certes e grieve
Much me-wearies certainly and grieves
que l'aube orendroites ne crieve,
that the-dawn just-now not breaks
e que la nuit tost ne trespasse,
and that the night soon not passes
car, s'il fust jorz, je me levasse.
for if-it were day I myself should-rise

Ha! solauz! por Deu, car te heste,
Ha sun for God now thyself hasten
ne sejorne ne ne t'areste;
not sojourn nor not thyself-stay
fai departir la nuit oscure
make depart the night dark
e son enui qui trop me dure.»
and its trouble which too-long me lasts

Love's Remedies

XV

Before dawn he is to go secretly to her house, listen at the door, let her hear him grieve, kiss it on leaving, and be home before light. Such nights thin a man down and mark off the praters, who claim a lost appetite and are fatter than priors. He should be liberal to her maid, honor her friends, and stay near her. Asked how anyone endures it, Love answers that nothing good comes without a price, and that Hope keeps a lover alive as she keeps a prisoner in his dungeon.

La nuit ensi te contendras
The night thus thyself thou-wilt-conduct
e de repos petit prendras,
and of rest little thou-wilt-take
se j'onques mal d'amer conui;
if I-ever ill of-loving knew
e quant tu ne porras l'enui
and when thou not wilt-be-able the-trouble
sofrir en ton lit de veillier,
suffer in thy bed of waking
lors t'estovra apareillier,
then thee-it-will-behoove to-make-ready

vestir, chaucier e atorner,
to-dress to-shoe and to-array
ainz que tu voies ajorner.
before that thou see to-dawn
Lors t'en iras en recelee,
Then thyself-thence thou-wilt-go in secret
soit par pluie, soit par gelee,
be-it in rain be-it in frost
tot droit vers la maison t'amie,
all straight toward the house of-thy-friend
qui se sera bien endormie
who herself will-be well fallen-asleep
e a toi ne pensera guieres;
and of thee not will-think much
une eure iras a l'uis derrieres,
one moment thou-wilt-go to the-door behind
savoir s'il est remés desclos,
to-know whether-it is remained unlatched
e jucheras iluec defors,
and thou-wilt-perch there outside
toz seus, a la pluie e au vent;
all alone in the rain and in-the wind
après vendras a l'uis devant,
after thou-wilt-come to the-door in-front
e se tu trueves fendeüre
and if thou findest a-crack
ne fenestre ne serreüre,
or window or lock

oreille e escoute par mi
listen and hearken through midst
s'il se sont laienz endormi;
whether-they themselves are within fallen-asleep
e se la bele, senz plus, veille,
and if the fair-one without more wakes
ce te lo je bien e conseille
this to-thee advise I well and counsel
qu'el t'oie plaindre e doloser,
that-she thee-hear to-lament and to-grieve
si qu'el sache que reposer
so that-she know that to-rest
ne puez en lit por s'amitié:
not thou-canst in bed for her-love
bien doit fame aucune pitié
well ought a-woman some pity
avoir de celui qui endure
to-have of him who endures
tel mal por li, se mout n'est dure.
such ill for her if very not-she-is hard
Si te dirai que tu doiz faire
And-so to-thee I-shall-say what thou oughtest do
por l'amor dou haut saintuaire
for the-love of-the high sanctuary
de quoi tu ne puez avoir aise:
of which thou not canst have ease
au revenir la porte baise;
at-the returning the door kiss

e, por ce que l'en ne te voie
and for this that one not thee see
devant la maison n'en la voie,
before the house nor-in the way
gar que tu soies repairiez
see that thou be gone-back
ainz que li jorz soit esclairiez.
before that the day be lightened
Icil venirs, icil alers,
That coming that going
icil veilliers, icil parlers
that waking that speaking
fait as amanz soz les drapiaus
makes to-the lovers under the sheets
durement amaigrir les piaus.
greatly grow-lean the skins
Bien le savras par toi meïsmes:
Well it thou-wilt-know by thee thyself
il covient que tu t'essaïmes,
it behooves that thou thyself-thin
car bien saches qu'amors ne laisse
for well know that-love not leaves
sor fins amanz color ne graisse;
on fine lovers color nor fat
a ce sont bien cil parissant
at this are well those apparent
qui vont les dames traïssant:
who go the ladies betraying
il dient, por eus losengier,
they say to them flatter

qu'il ont perdu boivre e mangier,
that-they have lost drinking and eating
e je les voi, les jangleors,
and I them see the praters
plus gras qu'abez ne que priors.
more fat than-abbots or than priors
Encor te comant e encharge
Still thee I-command and charge
que tenir te faces por large
that to-hold thee thou-make for liberal
a la pucele de l'ostel:
to the maid of the-household
un garnement li done tel
a garment to-her give such
qu'el die que tu es vaillanz.
that-she say that thou art worthy
T'amie e toz ses bienvoillanz
Thy-friend and all her well-wishers
doiz enorer e chiers tenir;
thou-oughtest honor and dear hold
granz biens te puet par aus venir:
great good thee can by them come
quant cil qui sont de li privé
when those who are of her intimate
li conteront qu'il t'ont trové
to-her will-tell that-they thee-have found
preu e cortois e afaitié,
worthy and courteous and well-bred
miauz t'en prisera la moitié.
better thee-thereof will-prize the half

Dou païs guieres ne t'esloigne;
From-the country much not thyself-distance
e se tu as si grant besoigne
and if thou hast so great business
que il esloignier te coveigne,
that it to-go-far thee behoove
garde bien que tes cuers remaigne,
take-heed well that thy heart remain
e pense dou tost retorner.
and think of-the soon returning
Tu ne doiz guieres sejorner;
Thou not oughtest much tarry
fai semblant qu'a veoir te tarde
make seeming that-to see to-thee is-long
celi qui ton cuer a en garde.
her who thy heart has in keeping
Or t'ai dit coment n'en quel guise
Now to-thee-I-have said how and-in what wise
amanz doit faire mon servise:
a-lover ought do my service
or le fai donques, se tu viaus
now it do therefore if thou wishest
de la bele avoir tes aviaus.»
of the fair-one to-have thy delights
Quant Amors m'ot ce comandé,
When Love to-me-had this commanded
je li ai lores demandé:
I to-him have then asked

«Sire, en quel guise ne coment
Lord in what wise or how
pueent endurer cil amant
can endure those lovers
les maus que vos m'avez contez?
the ills which you to-me-have told
Forment en sui espoentez.
Strongly thereof I-am terrified
Coment vit on e coment dure
How lives one and how lasts
qui est en poine e en ardure,
who is in toil and in burning
en duel, en sospirs e en lermes,
in grief in sighs and in tears
e en toz poinz e en toz termes
and in all points and in all terms
est en soussi e en esveil?
is in care and in wakefulness
Si m'aïst Deus, mout me merveil
So me-help God much myself I-marvel
coment on, s'il estoit de fer,
how a-man if-he were of iron
puet un an vivre en tel enfer.»
can one year live in such a-hell
Li deus d'Amors lors me respont
The god of-Love then me answers
e ma demande bien m'espont:
and my question well to-me-expounds
«Biaus amis, par l'ame mon pere,
Fair friend by the-soul of-my father

nus n'a bien s'il ne le compere;
anyone not-has good if-be not it pay-for
si aime l'en miauz le cheté
and-so loves one better the purchase
quant l'en l'a plus chier acheté,
when one it-has more dear bought
e plus en gré sont receü
and more in favor are received
li bien don l'en a mal eü.
the goods of-which one has ill had
Il est voirs que nus maus n'ataint
It is true that any ill not-reaches
a celui qui les amanz teint;
to that-one which the lovers stains
ne qu'en puet espuisier la mer
no-more than-one can drain the sea
ne porroit nus les maus d'amer
not could anyone the ills of-loving
conter en romanz ne en livre;
tell in romance nor in book
e toutesvoies covient vivre
and nevertheless it-behooves to-live
les amanz, qu'il lor est mestiers.
the lovers for-it to-them is needful
Chascuns fuit la mort volentiers.
Each flees the death willingly
Cil que l'en met en chartre oscure,
He whom one puts in a-dungeon dark
en verminier e en ordure,
in vermin and in filth

qui n'a que pain d'orge ou d'avoine,
who not-has but bread of-barley or of-oats
ne se muert mie por la poine:
not himself dies at-all for the toil
Esperance confort li livre,
Hope comfort to-him delivers
e se cuide veoir delivre
and himself thinks to-see free
encor par aucune cheance;
yet by some chance
trestoute autretele beance
wholly just-such-a longing
a cil qu'Amors tient en prison:
has he whom-Love holds in prison
il espoire sa guerison.
he hopes-for his healing
Ceste esperance le conforte,
This hope him comforts
e cuer e talent li aporte
and heart and will to-him brings
de son cors a martire ofrir;
of his body to martyrdom to-offer
Esperance li fait sofrir
Hope to-him makes suffer
les maus don nus ne set le conte,
the ills of-which anyone not knows the reckoning
por la joie qui cent tanz monte.
for the joy which a-hundred times amounts

Esperance par sofrir vaint
Hope by suffering conquers
e fait que li amant vivaint.
and makes that the lovers live
Beneoite soit Esperance,
Blessed be Hope
qui les amanz ensi avance!
who the lovers thus advances
Mout est Esperance cortoise:
Very is Hope courteous
el ne laira ja une toise
she not will-leave ever a fathom
nul vaillant ome jusqu'au chief,
any worthy man even-to-the end
ne por perill ne por meschief.
neither for peril nor for mischief
Nes au larron que l'en viaut pendre
Not-even to-the thief whom one wishes to-hang
fait ele adès merci atendre.
makes she ever mercy to-await
Iceste te garantira,
This-same thee will-protect
ne ja de toi ne partira
nor ever from thee not will-part
qu'el ne te secueure au besoing.
that-she not thee succor at-the need

E avueques ce je te doing
And besides this I to-thee give
trois autres biens qui granz solaz
three other goods which great solace
font a ceus qui sont en mes laz.
make to those who are in my snares

The Three Goods, and Love's Departure

XVI

Besides Hope, Love gives three comforts. Sweet Thought recalls what Hope promises and sets the lady's face before the lover. Sweet Speech is the joy of hearing her spoken of, so he should seek one wise and secret companion to whom he can tell everything, worth more still if the friend is a lover too. Sweet Looks belongs to the eyes, which carry news to the heart and drive out its darkness as light drives out night. Love vanishes the moment he has finished, and the lover, left alone and aching from his wounds, knows the bud can never be his unless Love takes a hand.

Li premiers biens qui solaz face
The first good which solace make
ceus que li laz d'Amors enlace,
to-those whom the snare of-Love entwines
c'est Douz Pensers, qui lor recorde
this-is Sweet Thought which to-them recalls
ce ou Esperance s'acorde.
that wherein Hope itself-agrees
Quant li amanz plaint e sospire,
When the lover laments and sighs
e est en duel e en martire,
and is in grief and in martyrdom

Douz Pensers vient a chief de piece,
Sweet Thought comes at end of a-while
qui l'ire e la dolor despiece,
which the-wrath and the grief shatters
e a l'amant en son venir
and to the-lover in his coming
fait de la joie sovenir
makes of the joy to-remember
que Esperance li promet;
which Hope to-him promises
e après au devant li met
and after at-the before to-him puts
les iauz rianz, le nés traitiz,
the eyes laughing the nose well-drawn
qui n'est trop granz ne trop petiz,
which not-is too great nor too little
e la bouchete coloree,
and the little-mouth colored
don l'aleine est si savoree;
of-which the-breath is so fragrant
si li plaist mout quant il li membre
and-so to-him it-pleases much when it to-him comes-to-mind
de la biauté de chascun membre.
of the beauty of each limb

Encor vait cil solaz doblant
Still goes that solace doubling
quant d'un ris ou d'un bel semblant
when of-a laugh or of-a fair look
li membre ou d'une bele chiere
to-him it-comes-to-mind or of-a fair countenance
que fait li a s'amie chiere.
which made to-him has his-friend dear
Douz Pensers ensi assoage
Sweet Thought thus assuages
la dolor d'amor e la rage.
the grief of-love and the madness
Icestui vueil bien que tu aies;
This-one I-wish well that thou have
e se tu l'autre refusoies,
and if thou the-other shouldst-refuse
qui n'est mie moins doucereus,
which not-is at-all less sweet
tu seroies mout dangereus.
thou wouldst-be very hard-to-please
Li autres biens est Douz Parlers,
The other good is Sweet Speech
qui a fait a mainz bachelers
which has rendered to many bachelors
e a maintes dames secors,
and to many ladies succor
car chascuns qui de ses amors
for each who of his loves
ot parler toz s'en esbaudist;
hears to-speak wholly himself-thereat gladdens

si me sovient que por ce dist
and-so to-me it-remembers that for this said
une dame qui bien amot,
a lady who well loved
en sa chançon, un cortois mot:
in her song a courtly word
«Mout sui», fait ele, «a bone escole,
Much I-am says she at good school
qui de mon ami me parole.
who of my friend to-me speaks
Si m'aïst Deus, il m'a guerie
So me-help God he me-has healed
qui m'en parole, quoi qu'il die.»
who to-me-thereof speaks whatever that-he say
Cele de Douz Parler savoit
That-one of Sweet Speech knew
quanqu'il en iert, car el l'avoit
whatever-it thereof was for she it-had
essaié en maintes manieres.
tried in many fashions
Or te lo e vueil que tu quieres
Now to-thee I-advise and wish that thou seek
un compaignon sage e celant
a companion wise and secret
cui tu dies tot ton talent
to-whom thou say all thy desire
e descuevres tot ton corage;
and uncover all thy heart
cil te fera grant avantage.
he to-thee will-do great advantage

Quant ti mal t'angoisseront fort,
When thy ills thee-will-anguish strongly
tu iras a lui por confort,
thou wilt-go to him for comfort
e parleroiz andui ensemble
and you-will-speak both together
de la bele qui ton cuer emble,
of the fair-one who thy heart steals
de sa biauté, de sa semblance
of her beauty of her semblance
e de sa simple contenance.
and of her simple bearing
Tot ton estre li conteras,
All thy condition to-him thou-wilt-tell
e conseil li demanderas
and counsel of-him thou-wilt-ask
coment tu porras chose faire
how thou wilt-be-able a-thing do
qui a t'amie puisse plaire.
which to thy-friend may please
Se cil qui tant iert tes amis
If he who so-much will-be thy friend
en bien amer son cuer a mis,
in well loving his heart has put
lors vaudra miauz la compaignie;
then will-be-worth better the company
si est raison qu'il te redie
and-so is reason that-be to-thee tell-in-turn
se s'amie est pucele ou non,
whether his-friend is a-maiden or not

qui ele est e coment a non:
who she is and how she-has name
si n'avras pas peor qu'il muse
and-so not-thou-wilt-have at-all fear that-he dally
a t'amie ne qu'il t'encuse;
with thy-friend nor that-he thee-accuse
ainz vos entreporteroiz foi,
rather you each-other-will-bear faith
e tu a lui e il a toi.
both thou to him and he to thee
Saches que c'est mout plaisant chose
Know that this-is a-very pleasing thing
quant l'en a ome a cui l'en ose
when one has a-man to whom one dares
son conseil dire e son segré.
his counsel to-say and his secret
Cel deduit prendras mout en gré,
That delight thou-wilt-take much in favor
e t'en tendras a bien paié
and thyself-thereof wilt-hold for well paid
puis que tu l'avras essaié.
after that thou it-wilt-have tried
Li tierz biens vient de regarder,
The third good comes from looking
c'est Douz Regarz, qui siaut tarder
this-is Sweet Looks which is-wont to-tarry
a ceus qui ont amors lointaignes;
to those who have loves far-off

mais je te lo que tu te teignes
but I to-thee advise that thou thyself hold
près des teues por Douz Regart,
near to-the thine for Sweet Looks
que ses solaz trop ne te tart,
so-that his solace too-much not to-thee tarry
car il est mout as amoreus
for it is very to-the amorous
delitables e savoreus;
delightful and savorous
mout ont au matin bone encontre
much have in-the morning good encounter
li ueil quant Damedeus lor montre
the eyes when Lord-God to-them shows
le saintuaire precieus
the sanctuary precious
de quoi il sont si envieus.
of which they are so desirous
Le jor qu'il le pueent veoir
The day that-they it can see
ne lor doit mie mescheoir:
not to-them ought at-all go-ill
il ne doutent poudre ne vent,
they not fear dust nor wind
ne nule autre chose grevant;
nor any other thing grievous
e quant li ueil sont en deduit,
and when the eyes are in delight

il sont si apris e si duit
they are so taught and so trained
que seul ne sevent avoir joie,
that alone not they-know to-have joy
ainz vuelent que li cuers s'esjoie,
rather they-wish that the heart itself-rejoice
e font ses maus rassoagier,
and make its ills be-eased
car li ueil, con droit messagier,
for the eyes as right messengers
tot maintenant au cuer envoient
all at-once to-the heart send
noveles de ce que il voient;
tidings of that which they see
e por la joie covient lors
and for the joy it-behooves then
que li cuers oblit ses dolors
that the heart forget its griefs
e les tenebres ou il iere.
and the darknesses where it was
Tot autresi con la lumiere
All just as the light
les tenebres devant soi chace,
the darknesses before itself chases
tot ausi Douz Regarz esface
all likewise Sweet Looks effaces
les tenebres ou li cuers gist
the darknesses where the heart lies
qui nuit e jor d'amors languist,
which night and day of-love languishes

car li cuers de rien ne se diaut
for the heart of anything not itself grieves
quant li ueil voient ce qu'il viaut.
when the eyes see that which-it wishes
Or t'ai, ce m'est vis, declaré
Now to-thee-I-have this to-me-is seeming declared
ce don je te vi esgaré,
that of-which I thee saw bewildered
car je t'ai conté, senz mentir,
for I to-thee-have told without lying
les biens qui pueent garantir
the goods which can protect
les amanz e garder de mort;
the lovers and keep from death
or sez qui te fera confort,
now thou-knowest what thee will-make comfort
qu'au moins avras tu Esperance,
for-at-the least wilt-have thou Hope
s'avras Douz Penser, senz doutance,
and-wilt-have Sweet Thought without doubting
e Douz Parler e Douz Regart.
and Sweet Speech and Sweet Looks
Chascuns de ceus vueil qu'il te gart
Each of these I-wish that-it thee keep
jusque tu puisses miauz atendre,
until thou mayest better await
qu'autres biens, qui ne sont pas mendre,
that-other goods which not are at-all lesser

mais graignor, avras ça avant;
but greater thou-wilt-have here after
mais je te doing a ja itant.»
but I to-thee give for now just-so-much
Tot maintenant que Amors m'ot
All at-once that Love to-me-had
son plaisir dit, je ne soi mot
his pleasure said I not knew word
que il se fu esvanoïz,
that he himself was vanished
si en fui mout essaboïz
and-so thereof I-was much astounded
quant je ne vi lez moi nului.
when I not saw beside me anyone
De mes plaies mout me dolui,
Of my wounds much myself I-grieved
e soi que guerir ne pooie
and I-knew that heal not I-could
fors par le bouton ou j'avoie
except by the bud whereon I-had
tot mon cuer mis e ma beance,
all my heart put and my longing
si n'avoie en nului fiance
and-so not-I-had in anyone trust
fors ou deu d'Amors de l'avoir;
except in-the god of-Love of the-having

ançois savoie bien de voir
rather I-knew well for truth
que de l'avoir neienz estoit
that of the-having nothing it-was
s'Amors ne s'en entremetoit.
if-Love not himself-thereof intervened

Fair Welcome, and the Rose

XVII

A young man named Fair Welcome, son of Courtesy, gives the lover leave to cross the hedge and picks him a leaf from beside the bud. But a churl lies hidden in the grass: Danger, keeper of the rosebushes, with Wicked Tongue, with Shame, whom Reason lent to Chastity against Venus, and with Fear, whom Jealousy brought; four guard the roses. Emboldened, the lover asks Fair Welcome for the bud; Fair Welcome refuses to strip the rosebush, and at that Danger leaps out and drives the lover back over the hedge. Fair Welcome flees, and the lover, ashamed that he ever spoke, grieves to be kept so far from the rose.

Li rosier d'une haie furent
The rosebushes with-a hedge were
clos environ si come il durent,
closed around so as they ought
mais je passasse la cloison
but I should-pass the enclosure
mout volentiers, por l'achoison
very willingly for the-occasion
dou bouton qui iaut miauz de basme,
of-the bud which smells better than balm
se je n'en crainsisse avoir blasme;
if I not-thereof feared to-have blame

mais assez tost peüst sembler
but quite soon it-could seem
que les roses vosisse embler.
that the roses I-wished to-steal
Ensi con je me porpensoie
Thus as I myself bethought
s'outre la haie passeroie,
whether-beyond the hedge I-should-pass
je vi vers moi tot droit venant
I saw toward me all straight coming
un vallet bel e avenant,
a young-man fair and comely
en cui il n'ot rien que blasmer:
in whom there not-was anything to blame
Bel Acueil se faisoit clamer,
Fair Welcome himself made to-be-called
fiz fu Cortoisie la sage.
son he-was of-Courtesy the wise
Cil m'abandona le passage
He to-me-gave-up the passage
de la haie mout doucement,
of the hedge very sweetly
e me dist amiablement:
and to-me said amiably
«Biaus amis chiers, se il vos plaist,
Fair friend dear if it to-you please
passez la haie senz arest,
pass the hedge without stay
pour l'odor des roses sentir;
for the-odor of-the roses to-smell

je vos i puis bien garantir
I to-you there can well warrant
n'i avroiz mal ne vilanie,
not-there you-will-have harm nor villainy
por quoi vos gardez de folie;
provided that you keep-yourself from folly
se de rien vos i puis aidier,
if in anything you there I-can help
ja ne m'en quier faire plaidier,
ever not myself-thereof I-seek to-make entreated
car prez sui de vostre servise:
for ready I-am of your service
je le vos di tot senz feintise.
I it to-you say all without feigning
— Sire», fis je a Bel Acueil,
Lord said I to Fair Welcome
«ceste promesse en gré recueil,
this promise in favor I-receive
si vous rent graces e merites
and-so to-you I-render thanks and merits
de la bonté que vos me dites,
of the kindness which you to-me say
car mout vos muet de grant franchise;
for much to-you it-comes of great generosity
e, quant vos plaist, vostre servise
and since to-you it-pleases your service
sui prez de prendre volentiers.»
I-am ready of to-take willingly
Par ronces e par aiglentiers,
By brambles and by wild-roses

don en la haie avoit assez,
of-which in the hedge there-were plenty
sui maintenant outre passez.
I-am at-once beyond passed
Vers le bouton m'en vois errant
Toward the bud myself-thence I-go hastening
qui miaudre odor des autres rent,
which better odor than-the others gives
e Bel Acueil me conveia;
and Fair Welcome me escorted
si vos di que mout m'agrea
and-so to-you I-say that much me-pleased
don je me poi si près remaindre
since I myself could so near remain
que au bouton peüsse ataindre.
that at-the bud I-might reach
Bel Acueil m'ot mout bien servi
Fair Welcome me-had very well served
quant le bouton de si près vi;
when the bud from so near I-saw
mais uns vilains, qui grant honte ait,
but a churl who great shame may-have
près d'ilueques repoz estoit:
near of-there hidden was
Dangiers ot non, si fu closiers
Danger had name and-so was gatekeeper
e garde de toz les rosiers.
and guardian of all the rosebushes
En un destor fu li cuverz,
In a corner was the base-one

d'erbe e de fueilles toz coverz,
with-grass and with leaves all covered
por ceus espier e sorprendre
to those spy-on and surprise
qu'il voit as roses la main tendre.
whom-he sees to-the roses the hand stretch
Ne fu mie seus li gaignons,
Not was at-all alone the mastiff
ançois avoit a compaignons
rather he-had for companions
Male Bouche le jangleor,
Wicked Tongue the prater
e avuec lui Honte e Peor.
and with him Shame and Fear
Li miauz vaillanz d'aus si fu Honte;
The best worthy of-them so was Shame
e sachiez que, qui a droit conte
and know that who at right counts
son parenté e son lignage,
her kindred and her lineage
el fu fille Raison la sage,
she was daughter of-Reason the wise
e ses peres ot non Mesfaiz,
and her father had name Misdeed
qui est si hisdeus e si laiz
who is so hideous and so ugly
qu'onques a lui Raison ne jut,
that-ever with him Reason not lay
mais dou veoir Honte conçut.
but of-the seeing Shame she-conceived

Quant Deus ot Honte faite naistre,
When God had Shame made to-be-born
Chasteé, qui dame doit estre
Chastity who lady ought be
e des roses e des boutons,
both of-the roses and of-the buds
iert assaillie des gloutons
was assailed by-the gluttons
si qu'ele avoit mestier d'aïe,
so that-she had need of-help
car Venus l'avoit envaïe,
for Venus her-had assailed
qui nuit e jor sovent li emble
who night and day often from-her steals
boutons e roses tot ensemble;
buds and roses all together
lors requist a Raison sa fille.
then she-besought of Reason her daughter
Chasteé, que Venus essille,
Chastity whom Venus harries
por ce que desconseilliee iere,
for this that helpless she-was
vost Raison faire sa priere
wished Reason to-do her prayer
e li preta, a sa requeste,
and to-her lent at her request
Honte, qui est simple e oneste;
Shame who is simple and honest
e, por les rosiers miauz garnir,
and for the rosebushes better to-furnish

i fist Jalosie venir
there made Jealousy come
Peor, qui bee durement
Fear who aspires greatly
a faire son comandement:
to doing her commandment
or sont as rosiers garder quatre,
now are at-the rosebushes to-guard four
qui se lairont avant bien batre
who themselves will-let sooner well beat
que nus bouton ne rose emport.
than anyone bud nor rose carry-off
Je fusse arivez a bon port
I should-have-been arrived at good port
se par aus ne fusse agaitiez,
if by them not I-were spied-on
car li frans, li bien afaitiez,
for the noble the well bred
Bel Acueil se poine de faire
Fair Welcome himself pains of doing
quanqu'il set qui me doie plaire.
whatever-he knows which to-me ought please
Sovent me semont d'aprochier
Often me he-summons to-approach
vers le bouton e d'atouchier
toward the bud and to-touch
au rosier qui l'avoit chargié;
to-the rosebush which it-had borne
de tot ce me done congié,
of all this to-me he-gives leave

por ce qu'il cuide que jou vueille;
for this that-he thinks that I-it wish
si a cuilli une vert fueille
and-so he-has plucked a green leaf
lez le bouton, qu'il m'a donee,
beside the bud which-he to-me-has given
por ce que près ot esté nee.
for this that near it-had been born
De la fueille me fis mout cointes,
Of the leaf myself I-made very proud
e quant je me senti acointes
and when I myself felt acquainted
de Bel Acueil e si privez,
with Fair Welcome and so intimate
je cuidai bien estre arivez;
I thought well to-be arrived
lors ai pris cuer e hardement
then I-have taken heart and boldness
de dire a Bel Acueil coment
of telling to Fair Welcome how
Amors m'avoit pris e navré:
Love me-had taken and wounded
«Sire», fis je, «jamais n'avrai
Lord said I ever not-I-shall-have
joie se n'est par une chose,
joy if not-it-is by one thing
que j'ai dedenz le cuer enclose
which I-have within the heart enclosed
une mout pesant maladie,
a very heavy malady

mais ne sai coment je la die,
but not I-know how I it say
car je vos crien trop corrocier;
for I you fear too-much to-anger
miauz voudroie a coutiaus d'acier
better I-should-wish with knives of-steel
piece a piece estre despeciez
piece by piece to-be hewn
que vos en fussiez corrociez.
than you thereof were angered
— Dites», fait il, «vostre voloir,
Say says he your will
que ja ne m'en feroiz doloir
for ever not me-thereof you-will-make to-grieve
de chose que vos voilliez dire.»
of a-thing which you may-wish to-say
Lors li ai dit: «Sachiez, biaus sire,
Then to-him I-have said Know fair lord
qu'Amors durement me tormente;
that-Love grievously me torments
ne cuidiez pas que je vos mente:
not think at-all that I to-you lie
il m'a ou cuer cinc plaies faites,
he me-has in-the heart five wounds made
ja les dolors n'en seront traites
ever the griefs not-thereof will-be drawn
se le bouton ne me bailliez
if the bud not to-me you-deliver
qui est des autres miauz tailliez.
which is of-the others best shaped

Ce est ma mort, ce est ma vie,
This is my death this is my life
de nule rien n'ai plus envie.»
of any thing not-I-have more desire
Lors s'est Bel Acueil esfreez,
Then himself-is Fair Welcome frightened
e me dist: «Frere, vos beez
and me said Brother you aspire
a ce qui ne puet avenir.
to that which not can happen
Coment! me volez vos honir?
How me wish you to-shame
Vos m'avriez bien assoté
You me-would-have well befooled
se le bouton avoie osté
if the bud I-had taken
de son rosier; n'est pas droiture
from its rosebush not-it-is at-all rightness
que l'en l'oste de sa nature.
that one it-take from its nature
Vilains estes dou demander;
Churlish you-are of-the asking
laissiez le croistre e amender.
let it grow and improve
Nou voudroie avoir deserté
Not-it I-should-wish to-have stripped
dou rosier qui l'a aporté
from-the rosebush which it-has borne
por nul ome vivant, tant l'ains.»
for any man living so-much it-I-love

Atant saut Dangiers li vilains
Thereupon leaps Danger the churl
de la ou il s'estoit muciez.
from there where he himself-had hidden
Granz fu e noirs e hericiez,
Great he-was and black and bristling
s'ot les iauz roges come feus,
and-he-had the eyes red as fire
le nés froncié, le vis hisdeus,
the nose wrinkled the face hideous
e s'escrie con forsenez:
and cries-out like a-madman
«Bel Acueil, por quoi amenez
Fair Welcome for what bring-you
entor ces rosiers cest vassaut?
around these rosebushes this fellow
Vos faites mal, si Deus me saut,
You do ill so God me save
qu'il bee a vostre avilement.
for-he aspires to your shaming
Dehé ait, senz vos solement,
Cursed be except you only
qui en cest vergier l'amena!
who into this garden him-brought
Qui felon sert itant en a.
Who a-felon serves just-so-much thereof has
Vos li cuidiez bonté faire
You to-him think kindness to-do
e il vos quiert honte e contraire.
and he to-you seeks shame and vexation

Fuiez, vassaus, fuiez de ci,
Flee fellow flee from here
par poi que je ne vos oci.
by little that I — you kill
Bel Acueil mal vos conoissoit
Fair Welcome ill you knew
qui de vos servir s'angoissoit;
who of you to-serve himself-troubled
si le beez a conchier.
and-so him you-aspire to befoul
Ne me quier plus en vos fier,
Not me I-seek more in you to-trust
car bien est ores esprovee
for well is now proved
la traïson qu'avez covee.»
the treason which-you-have hatched
N'osai iluec plus remenoir,
Not-I-dared there more to-remain
por le vilain hisdeus e noir,
because-of the churl hideous and black
qui me menace a assaillir.
who me threatens to assail
La haie me fait tressaillir
The hedge me he-makes to-leap-over
a grant peor e a grant heste;
with great fear and with great haste
e li vilains crole la teste,
and the churl shakes the head

e dit se jamais i retor
and says if ever there I-return
il me fera prendre un mal tor.
he me will-make take an ill turn
Lors s'en est Bel Acueil foïz,
Then himself-thence is Fair Welcome fled
e je remés essaboïz,
and I remained astounded
honteus e maz, si me repens
ashamed and downcast and-so myself I-repent
don onques dis ce que je pens.
that ever I-said that which I think
De ma folie me recors,
Of my folly myself I-recall
si voi que livrez est mes cors
and-so I-see that delivered is my body
a duel, a poine e a martire.
to grief to toil and to martyrdom
E de ce ai la plus grant ire
And of this I-have the most great wrath
que je n'osai passer la haie.
that I not-dared to-pass the hedge
Nus n'a mal qui Amors n'essaie.
Anyone not-has ill whom Love not-tries
Ne cuidiez pas que nus conoisse,
Not think at-all that anyone know
s'il n'a amé, qu'est grant angoisse.
if-he not-has loved what-is great anguish

Amors vers moi mout bien s'aquite
Love toward me very well himself-acquits
de la poine qu'il m'avoit dite.
of the toil which-he to-me-had said
Cuers ne porroit mie penser
A-heart not could at-all think
ne bouche d'ome recenser
nor mouth of-a-man reckon
de ma dolor la quarte part;
of my grief the fourth part
par poi que li cuers ne me part
by little that the heart — me splits
quant de la rose me sovient,
when of the rose to-me it-remembers
que si esloignier me covient.
which so to-leave-behind me it-behooves

Reason's Rebuke

XVIII

Reason sees him from her tower and comes down: neither young nor old, made by God in his image. Folly brought him here; Idleness let him into Mirth's garden, and he should forget this love. Danger means war on him, and her own daughter Shame guards the roses with Fear and Wicked Tongue. Love is folly, a lover toils more than a hermit for a joy soon over, and he must rein his heart.

En cest point ai grant piece esté,
In this point I-have great while been
tant que me vit ensi maté
until that me saw thus checkmated
la dame de la haute angarde,
the lady of the high watch-tower
qui de sa tor aval esgarde;
who from her tower below looks
Raison fu la dame apelee.
Reason was the lady called
Lors est de sa tor devalee,
Then is from her tower come-down
si est tot droit a moi venue.
and-so is all straight to me come
El ne fu juene ne chenue,
She not was young nor hoary
ne fu trop haute ne trop basse,
nor was too tall nor too short
ne fu trop graille ne trop grasse,
nor was too slender nor too plump

li ueil qui en son chief estoient
the eyes which in her head were
con deus estoiles reluisoient;
as two stars shone
si ot ou chief une corone:
and-so she-had on-the head a crown
bien resembloit haute persone.
well she-resembled a-high person
A son semblant e a son vis
By her semblance and by her face
pert qu'el fu faite en parevis,
appears that-she was made in paradise
car Nature ne seüst pas
for Nature not would-know at-all
uevre faire de tel compas.
a-work to-make of such compass
Sachiez, se la lettre ne ment,
Know if the letter not lies
que Deus la fist demainement,
that God her made in-person
a sa semblance e a s'image,
in his likeness and in his-image
e li dona tel avantage
and to-her gave such an-advantage
qu'ele a pooir e seignorie
that-she has power and lordship
de garder ome de folie,
of keeping a-man from folly
por quoi il soit teus qu'il la croie.
provided that he be such that-he her believe

Ensi con je me dementoie,
Thus as I myself lamented
atant es vos Raison comence:
thereupon behold you Reason begins
«Biaus amis, folie e enfance
Fair friend folly and childishness
t'ont mis en poine e en esmai;
thee-have put in toil and in dismay
mar veïs le bel tens de mai
in-an-ill-hour thou-sawest the fair season of May
qui fist ton cuer trop esgaier;
which made thy heart too-much to-rejoice
mar t'alas onques ombreier
in-an-ill-hour thou-wentest ever to-take-shade
ou vergier don Oiseuse porte
in-the garden of-which Idleness bears
la clef don el t'ovri la porte;
the key with-which she to-thee-opened the gate
fos est qui s'acointe d'Oiseuse:
foolish is who himself-acquaints with-Idleness
s'acointance est trop perilleuse.
her-acquaintance is too perilous
El t'a traï e deceü;
She thee-has betrayed and deceived
Amors ne t'eüst ja veü
Love not thee-would-have ever seen
s'Oiseuse ne t'eüst conduit
if-Idleness not thee-had led
ou bel vergier qui est Deduit.
into-the fair garden which is Mirth's

Se tu as folement ovré,
If thou hast foolishly wrought
or fai tant qu'il soit recovré,
now do so-much that-it be recovered
e garde bien que plus ne croies
and take-heed well that more not thou-believe
le conseil par quoi tu foloies.
the counsel by which thou playest-the-fool
Bel foloie qui se chastie;
Fairly plays-the-fool who himself chastises
e quant juenes on fait folie,
and when a-young man does folly
l'en ne s'en doit pas merveillier.
one not himself-thereat ought at-all marvel
Or te vueil dire e conseillier
Now to-thee I-wish to-say and to-counsel
que l'amor metes en obli
that the-love thou-put in forgetting
don je te voi si afoibli
of-which I thee see so weakened
e si conquis e tormenté.
and so overcome and tormented
Je ne voi mie ta santé
I not see at-all thy health
ne ta guerison autrement,
nor thy healing otherwise
car mout te bee durement
for much thee aspires grievously
Dangiers li fel a guerreier:
Danger the felon to make-war

tu ne l'as mie a essaier.
thou not him-hast at-all to try
E de Dangier neient ne monte
And of Danger nothing not amounts
envers que de ma fille Honte,
beside what of my daughter Shame
qui les roses defent e garde
who the roses defends and guards
con cele qui n'est pas musarde,
as she who not-is at-all a-dawdler
si en doiz avoir grant Peor,
and-so thereof thou-oughtest have great Fear
car a ton ues n'i voi peor.
for at thy need not-there I-see fear
Avueques ceus est Male Bouche,
With those is Wicked Tongue
qui ne suefre que nus i touche;
who not suffers that anyone there touch
avant que la chose soit faite
before that the thing be done
l'a il ja en cent leus retraite.
it-has he already in a-hundred places retold
Mout as a faire a dure gent.
Much thou-hast to do with hard folk
Or garde lequel est plus gent
Now consider which is more noble
ou dou laissier ou dou porsivre
either of-the leaving or of-the pursuing
ce qui te fait a dolor vivre,
that which thee makes in grief to-live

c'est li maus qui amors a non,
this-is the ill which love has for-name
ou il n'a se folie non.
wherein there not-has except folly not
Folie, si m'aïst Deus, voire!
Folly so me-help God truly
On qui aime ne puet bien faire
A-man who loves not can well do
ne a nul preu dou monde entendre: 3045
nor to any profit of-the world attend
s'il est clers, il pert son aprendre,
if-he is a-clerk he loses his learning
e se il fait autre mestier,
and if he does other trade
il n'en puet guieres esploitier.
he not-thereof can much prosper
Ensorquetot il a plus poine
Above-all-else he has more toil
que n'ont ermite ne blanc moine. 3050
than have a-hermit nor a-white monk
La poine en est desmesuree
The toil thereof is beyond-measure
e la joie a corte duree.
and the joy has a-short duration
Qui joie en a, petit li dure,
Who joy thereof has little to-him lasts
e de l'avoir est aventure,
and of the-having it-is chance

car je voi que maint s'en travaillent
for I see that many-a-one themselves-thereat labor
qui en la fin dou tot i faillent.
who in the end of all there fail
Onques mon conseil n'atendis
Ever my counsel not-thou-didst-await
quant au deu d'Amors te rendis;
when to-the god of-Love thyself thou-yieldedst
li cuers que tu as trop volage
the heart which thou hast too flighty
te fist entrer en tel folage.
thee made enter into such madness
La folie fu tost emprise,
The folly was soon undertaken
mais a l'issir a grant maistrise.
but at the-issuing there-is great mastery
Or met l'amor en nonchaloir,
Now put the-love in disregard
qui te fait vivre e non valoir,
which thee makes live and not to-be-worth
car la folie adès engraigne,
for the folly ever grows-greater
qui ne fait tant qu'ele remaigne.
who not does so-much that-it cease
Pren durement as denz le frein,
Take firmly in-the teeth the bridle
si dente ton cuer e refrain.
and-so tooth thy heart and restrain

Tu doiz metre force e defense
Thou oughtest put force and defense
encontre ce que tes cuers pense:
against that which thy heart thinks
qui toutes eures son cuer croit,
who all hours his heart believes
ne puet estre qu'il ne foloit.»
not can be that-he not play-the-fool

Friend's Counsel, and Danger Appeased

XIX

The lover answers angrily that his heart is Love's outright and that Reason is wasting her French, and she leaves him. Remembering Love's advice to seek a companion, he goes to Friend, who has long known Danger: rough with lovers at first, but soft to coaxing. Coached, the lover comes to Danger, standing with a thorn staff, and begs pardon. Danger grants it grudgingly, on condition he keep far from the roses, and Friend bids him wait his moment. But at the hedge the lover weeps, and Danger, though he sees no feigning in him, will not yet relent.

Quant j'oï cest chastiement,
When I-heard this chastisement
je respondi irieement:
I answered angrily
«Dame, je vos vueil mout prier
Lady I you wish much to-beg
que me laissiez a chastier.
that me you-leave off chastising

Vos me dites que je refraigne
You me say that I restrain
mon cuer, qu'Amors plus nou sorpreigne
my heart so-that-Love more not-it surprise
cuidiez vos donc qu'Amors consente
think you then that-Love consent
que je refraigne e que je dente
that I restrain and that I tooth
le cuer qui est siens trestoz quites?
the heart which is his wholly quit
Ce ne puet estre que vos dites:
This not can be which you say
Amors a si mon cuer denté
Love has so my heart toothed
qu'il n'est mais a ma volenté;
that-it not-is more at my will
il le jostise si forment
he it rules so strongly
qu'il i a faite clef fermant.
that-he there has made a-key locking
Or me laissiez trestot ester,
Now me leave wholly to-be
car vos porriez bien gaster
for you could well waste
en oiseuse vostre françois.
in idleness your French

Je voudroie morir ançois
I should-wish to-die sooner
qu'Amors m'eüst de fausseté
than-Love me-had of falsehood
ne de traïson areté.
nor of treason accused
Je me vueil loer ou blasmer,
I myself wish to-praise or to-blame
au derrenier, de bien amer;
at-the last of well loving
si m'enuie qui me chastie.»
and-so me-wearies who me chastises
Atant Raison s'est departie,
Thereupon Reason herself-is departed
qui voit bien que por sarmoner
who sees well that by preaching
ne me porroit de ce torner.
not me could from this turn
Je remés d'ire e de duel pleins,
I remained of-wrath and of grief full
sovent plorai, sovent me plains,
often I-wept often myself I-lamented
car de moi ne soi chevissance,
for of myself not I-knew remedy

tant qu'il me vint en remembrance
until that-it to-me came in remembrance
qu'Amors me dist que je queïsse
that-Love to-me said that I should-seek
un compaignon cui je deïsse
a companion to-whom I should-tell
mon conseil tot outreement:
my counsel wholly utterly
ce m'osteroit de grant torment.
this would-take-me-away from great torment
Lors me porpensai que j'avoie
Then myself I-bethought that I-had
un compaignon que je savoie
a companion whom I knew
a mout leial: Amis ot non;
for very loyal Friend he-had name
onques n'oi meillor compaignon.
ever not-I-had better a-companion
A lui m'en vin grant aleüre,
To him myself-thence I-came at-great pace
si li desclos l'encloeüre
and-so to-him I-disclosed the-wound
don je me sentoie encloé,
of-which I myself felt pierced
si come Amors m'avoit loé,
so as Love me-had counseled
e me plains a lui de Dangier,
and myself I-lamented to him of Danger
qui par poi ne me vost mangier,
who by little — me wished to-eat

e Bel Acueil en fist aler
and Fair Welcome thence made go
quant il me vit a lui parler
when he me saw to him to-speak
dou bouton a cui je beoie,
of-the bud to which I aspired
e me dist que jou comparroie
and me said that I-it should-pay-for
se jamais por nule achoison
if ever for any occasion
me veoit passer la cloison.
me he-saw to-pass the enclosure
Quant Amis sot la verité,
When Friend knew the truth
il ne m'a mie espoenté,
he not me-has at-all frightened
ainz me dist: «Compainz, or seiez
rather me said Comrade now be
seürs e ne vos esmaiez;
assured and not yourself dismay
je conois bien pieç'a Dangier:
I know well long-since Danger
il a apris a laidengier,
he has learned to abuse
a laidir e a menacier
to insult and to threaten
ceus qui aiment, au comencier;
those who love at-the beginning
pieç'a que je l'ai esprové.
long-since that I him-have proved

Se vos l'avez felon trové,
If you him-have felon found
il iert autres au derrenier;
he will-be other at-the last
je le conois come un denier:
I him know as a penny
il se set bien amoleier
he himself knows well to-soften
par chuer e par soupleier.
by wheedling and by entreating
Or vos dirai que vos feroiz:
Now to-you I-shall-say what you will-do
je lo que vos li requeroiz
I advise that you to-him will-ask
qu'il vos pardoint sa malvoillance
that-he to-you pardon his ill-will
par amor e par acordance;
by love and by agreement
e li metez bien en covent
and to-him put well in covenant
que jamais des ore en avant
that ever from now in forward
ne feroiz rien qui li desplaise;
not you-will-do anything which to-him displease
c'est une rien qui mout l'apaise,
this-is a thing which much him-appeases
qui le chue e qui le blandist.»
who him cajoles and who him flatters

Tant parla Amis e tant dist
So-much spoke Friend and so-much said
qu'il m'a auques reconforté,
that-he me-has somewhat comforted
e hardement e volenté
and boldness and will
me dona d'aler essaier
me gave of-going to-try
se Dangier porroie apaier.
whether Danger I-could appease
A Dangier sui venuz honteus,
To Danger I-am come ashamed
de ma pais faire covoiteus;
of my peace to-make desirous
mais la haie ne passai pas,
but the hedge not I-passed at-all
por ce qu'il m'ot veé le pas.
for this that-he to-me-had forbidden the passage
Je le trovai en piez drecié,
I him found on feet raised
fel par semblant e corrocié,
felon by seeming and angered
en sa main un baston d'espine.
in his hand a staff of-thorn
Je tin vers lui la teste encline,
I held toward him the head bowed
e li dis: «Sire, je sui ci
and to-him said Lord I am here
venuz por vos crier merci;
come for you to-cry mercy

mout me poise s'il peüst estre
much me it-grieves if-it could be
don je vos fis onques iraistre,
that I you made ever be-angry
mais or sui prez de l'amender
but now I-am ready of it-to-amend
si con vos savroiz comander.
so as you will-know to-command
Senz faille Amors le me fist faire,
Without fail Love it me made do
don je ne puis mon cuer retraire;
from-whom I not can my heart withdraw
mais jamais jor n'avrai beance
but ever a-day not-I-shall-have longing
a rien don vos aiez pesance;
to anything whence you have vexation
je vueil miauz sofrir ma mesaise
I wish better to-suffer my discomfort
que faire rien qui vos desplaise.
than to-do anything which you displease
Or vos requier que vos aiez
Now you I-beg that you have
Pitié de moi e apaiez
Pity of me and appease
vostre ire, qui trop m'espoente,
your wrath which too-much me-frightens

e je vos jur e acreante
and I you swear and promise
que vers vos si me contendrai
that toward you so myself I-shall-conduct
que ja de rien n'i mesprendrai,
that ever in anything not-there I-shall-transgress
por quoi vos me voilliez greer
provided that you to-me be-willing to-grant
ce que ne me poez veer.
that which not to-me you-can refuse
Voilliez que j'ain tant solement,
Be-willing that I-love so only
autre chose ne vos demant,
other thing not you I-ask
toutes voz autres volentez
all your other wishes
ferai se ce me consentez;
I-shall-do if this to-me you-consent
si ne me poez destorber,
and-so not me you-can hinder
ja ne vos quier de ce lober,
ever not you I-seek of this to-deceive
car j'amerai puis qu'il me siet,
for I-shall-love since that-it to-me suits
cui qu'il soit bel ne cui qu'il griet;
to-whomsoever that-it be fair nor to-whomsoever that-it grieve
mais ne voudroie, por mon pois
but not I-should-wish for my weight
d'argent, qu'il fust sor vostre pois.»
of-silver that-it were against your weight

Mout trovai Dangier dur e lent
Very I-found Danger hard and slow
de pardoner son mautalent;
of pardoning his ill-will
e si le m'a il pardoné
and yet it to-me-has he pardoned
en la fin, tant l'ai sarmoné,
in the end so-much him-I-have preached
e me dist par parole brieve:
and me said by word brief
«Ta requeste rien ne me grieve,
Thy request anything not me grieves
si ne te vueil pas escondire.
and-so not thee I-wish at-all to-refuse
Saches je n'ai vers toi point d'ire,
Know I not-have toward thee at-all of-wrath
e se tu aimes, moi que chaut?
and if thou lovest to-me what matters
Ce ne me fait ne froit ne chaut.
This not me makes neither cold nor hot
Adès aime, mais que tu soies
Ever love provided that thou be
loing de mes roses toutesvoies.
far from my roses nevertheless
Ja ne te porterai menaie
Ever not thee I-shall-bear mercy
se tu passes jamais la haie.»
if thou passest ever the hedge

Ensi m'otreia ma requeste,
Thus he-granted-me my request
e je l'alai conter en heste
and I it-went to-tell in haste
a Ami, qui s'en esjoï,
to Friend who himself-thereat rejoiced
con bons compainz, quant il l'oï.
as a-good comrade when he it-heard
«Or vait», fait il, «bien vostre afaire:
Now goes says he well your business
encor vos sera debonaire
yet to-you will-be gracious
Dangiers, qui fait a mainz lor bon
Danger who does to many their pleasure
quant il a montré son bobon.
when he has shown his bluster
S'il iere pris en bone voine,
If-he were taken in good vein
Pitié avroit de vostre poine;
Pity he-would-have of your toil
or devez sofrir e atendre
now you-must suffer and wait
tant qu'en bon point le puissiez prendre;
until that-in good point him you-may take
j'ai bien esprové que l'en vaint
I-have well proved that one conquers
par sofrir felon e refraint.»
by suffering a-felon and restrains

Mout me conforta doucement
Much me comforted sweetly
Amis, qui mon avancement
Friend who my advancement
vosist autresi bien con gié.
would-wish as well as I
Atant ai pris de lui congié.
Thereupon I-have taken of him leave
A la haie que Dangiers garde
To the hedge which Danger guards
sui retornez, que mout me tarde
I-am returned for much me it-seems-long
que je le bouton au moins voie,
that I the bud at least see
des qu'avoir n'en puis autre joie.
since that-to-have not-thereof I-can other joy
Dangiers se prent garde sovent
Danger himself takes heed often
se je li tieng bien son covent;
whether I to-him keep well his covenant
mais je redot tant sa menace
but I dread so-much his threat
que n'ai talent que li mesface;
that not-I-have desire that to-him I-do-wrong
ainz me sui penez longuement
rather myself I-am labored long
de faire son comandement,
at doing his commandment
por lui acointier e atraire;
for him to-win-over and to-attract

mais ce me torne a grant contraire
but this me turns to great vexation
que sa merci trop me demeure.
that his mercy too-long me tarries
Il voit maintes foiz que je pleure
He sees many times that I weep
e que je me plaing e sospir,
and that I myself lament and sigh
por ce qu'il me fait trop cropir
for this that-he me makes too-much crouch
delez la haie, que je n'ose
beside the hedge which I not-dare
passer por aler a la rose,
to-pass for to-go to the rose
e tant qu'il a certainement
and so-much that-he has certainly
veü a mon contenement
seen by my bearing
qu'Amors malement me jostise,
that-Love evilly me rules
e qu'il n'i a point de feintise
and that-it not-there has a-whit of feigning
en moi ne de desleiauté;
in me nor of disloyalty
mais il est de tel cruauté
but he is of such cruelty
qu'il ne se deigne encor refraindre,
that-he not himself deigns yet to-relent
tant m'oie dementer ne plaindre.
however-much me-he-hear to-lament nor to-complain

Venus, and the Kiss
XX

Franchise and Pity come to plead with Danger, arguing that the lover has done him no wrong and that harshness is conquered by humility. Danger gives way and allows Fair Welcome's company again; Franchise fetches Fair Welcome, who greets the lover warmly and leads him inside the enclosure. The rose has grown and opened a little, and the lover asks for a kiss. Fair Welcome dares not grant it for Chastity's sake. Then Venus, mother of the god of Love, comes with her flaming brand and argues the case.

Si con j'estoie en ceste poine,
So as I-was in this toil
atant es vos que Deus m'amoine
thereupon behold you that God me-brings
Franchise, e avuec li Pitié.
Franchise and with her Pity
N'i ot onques plus respitié:
Not-there was ever more delayed
a Dangier vont andeus tot droit,
to Danger go both all straight
car l'une e l'autre me voudroit
for the-one and the-other me would-wish
aidier, s'eus pueent, volentiers,
help if-they can willingly
qu'eus voient qu'il en est mestiers.
for-they see that-it thereof is needful
La parole a premiere prise,
The speech has first taken
seue merci, dame Franchise,
her-own mercy lady Franchise

e dist: «Dangiers, si Deus m'ament,
and said Danger so God me-mend
vos avez tort de cel amant,
you have wrong toward that lover
qui par vos est trop mal menez.
who by you is too ill used
Sachiez que vos avilenez,
Know that you degrade-yourself
car je n'ai mie encore apris
for I not-have at-all yet learned
qu'il ait de rien vers vos mespris.
that-he have in anything toward you transgressed
S'Amors le fait par force amer,
If-Love him makes by force love
devez le vos por ce blasmer?
must him you for this to-blame
Plus i pert il que vos ne faites,
More there loses he than you — do
qu'il en a poines maintes traites.
for-he thereof has toils many drawn
Mais Amors ne viaut consentir
But Love not wishes to-consent
que il s'en puisse repentir;
that he himself-thereof may repent
qui le devroit tot vif larder,
who him should all alive lard
ne s'en porroit il pas garder.
not himself-thereof could he at-all keep

Mais, biaus sire, que vos avance
But fair lord what you avails
de li faire enui e grevance?
of to-him to-do trouble and vexation
Avez vos guerre a lui emprise
Have you war against him undertaken
por ce qu'il vos redoute e prise,
for this that-he you fears and prizes
e que il est vostre sougiez?
and that he is your subject
S'Amors le tient pris en ses giez
If-Love him holds taken in his jesses
e le fait a vos obeïr,
and him makes to you to-obey
devez le vos por ce haïr?
must him you for this to-hate
Ainz le deüssiez espernier
Rather him you-should to-spare
plus qu'un orguilleus pautonier.
more than-a proud scoundrel
Cortoisie est que l'en secueure
Courtesy it-is that one succor
celui don l'en est au deseure;
him of-whom one is at-the upper-hand
mout a dur cuer qui ne se ploie
much has a-hard heart who not himself bends
quant il trueve qui le souploie.»
when he finds who him entreats

Pitiez respont: «C'est veritez
Pity answers This-is truth
qu'engrestié vaint umilitez;
that-harshness is-vanquished-by humility
e quant trop dure l'engrestiez,
and when too-long lasts the-harshness
c'est felonie e mauvaistiez:
this-is felony and wickedness
por ce, Dangiers, vos vueil requerre
for this Danger you I-wish to-beseech
que vos ne mainteniez plus guerre
that you not maintain more war
vers cel chaitif qui languist la,
against that wretch who languishes there
qui d'amors onques ne guila.
who of-love ever not beguiled
Avis m'est que vos le grevez
Seeming to-me-is that you him grieve
assez plus que vos ne devez;
quite more than you — must
il trait trop male penitence
he draws too evil a-penance
des lors en ça que l'acointance
from then in hither that the-acquaintance
Bel Acueil li avez toloite,
of-Fair Welcome to-him you-have taken-away
car c'est la rien qu'il plus covoite.
for this-is the thing which-he most covets
Il iere avant assez troblez,
He was before quite troubled

mais ore est ses enuiz doblez;
but now is his trouble doubled
or est il morz e mal bailliz
now is he dead and ill bested
quant Bel Acueil li est failliz.
when Fair Welcome to-him is failed
Por quoi li faites nul contraire?
For what to-him do-you any vexation
Trop li faisoit Amors mal traire.
Too-much to-him made Love ill to-draw
Il a tant mal que il n'eüst
He has so-much ill that he not-would-have
mestier de pis, s'il vos pleüst.
need of worse if-it you pleased
Or ne l'alez plus gordeiant,
Now not him-go more bullying
que vos n'i gaaigniez neient;
for you not-there gain anything
sofrez que Bel Acueil li face
suffer that Fair Welcome to-him do
des ore mais aucune grace:
from now onward some grace
de pecheor misericorde.
to a-sinner mercy
Puis que Franchise s'i acorde
Since that Franchise herself-there agrees
e le vos prie e amoneste,
and it you begs and admonishes
ne refusez pas sa requeste;
not refuse at-all her request

mout par est fel e deputaire
very much is felon and base
qui por nos deus ne viaut rien faire.»
who for us two not wishes anything to-do
Lors ne pot plus Dangiers durer,
Then not could more Danger endure
il le covint amesurer:
it him behooved to-moderate
«Dames», dist il, «je ne vos ose
Ladies said he I not you dare
escondire de ceste chose,
to-refuse of this thing
que trop seroit grant vilanie.
for too-much it-would-be great villainy
Je vueil qu'il ait la compaignie
I wish that-he have the company
Bel Acueil, puis que il vos plaist.
of-Fair Welcome since that it you pleases
Je n'i metrai jamais arest.»
I not-there shall-put ever a-stay
Lors est a Bel Acueil alee
Then is to Fair Welcome gone
Franchise, la bien emparlee,
Franchise the well spoken
e li a dit cortoisement:
and to-him has said courteously
«Trop vos estes de cel amant,
Too-much yourself you-are from that lover
Bel Acueil, grant piece esloigniez,
Fair Welcome a-great while distanced

qui regarder ne le deigniez.
who to-look-at not him you-deign
Mout a esté pensis e tristes
Much he-has been pensive and sad
des lors que vos ne le veïstes;
from then that you — him saw
or pensez de lui conjoïr,
now think of him to-welcome
se de m'amor volez joïr,
if of my-love you-wish to-enjoy
e de faire sa volenté.
and of doing his will
Sachiez que nos avons denté
Know that we have tamed
entre moi e Pitié Dangier,
between me and Pity Danger
qui vos en faisoit estrangier.
who you thereof made to-estrange
— Je ferai quanque vos voudroiz»,
I shall-do whatever you will-wish
fait Bel Acueil, «car il est droiz,
says Fair Welcome for it is right
puis que Dangiers l'a otreié.»
since that Danger it-has granted
Lors le m'a Franchise enveié.
Then him to-me-has Franchise sent
Bel Acueil au comencement
Fair Welcome at-the beginning
me salua mout doucement;
me greeted very sweetly

s'il ot esté vers moi iriez,
if-he had been toward me angered
ne se fu de rien empiriez,
not himself was in anything worsened
ainz me montra plus bel semblant
rather to-me showed more fair countenance
qu'il n'avoit onques fait devant.
than-he had ever done before
Il m'a lores par la main pris
He me-has then by the hand taken
por mener dedenz le porpris
for to-lead within the enclosure
que Dangiers m'avoit chalongié.
which Danger to-me-had disputed
Or ai d'aler par tot congié,
Now I-have of-going through all leave
or sui cheoiz, ce m'est avis,
now I-am fallen this to-me-is seeming
de grant enfer en parevis,
from great hell into paradise
car Bel Acueil par tot me moine,
for Fair Welcome through all me leads
qui de mon gré faire se poine.
who of my pleasure to-do himself pains
Si con j'oi la rose apressiee,
So as I-had the rose approached
un poi la trovai engroissiee,
a little her I-found grown-fuller

e vi qu'ele estoit puis creüe
and I-saw that-she was since grown
que je ne l'oi de près veüe;
that I — her-had from near seen
la rose auques s'eslargissoit
the rose somewhat herself-widened
par amont; si m'abelissoit
by above and-so me-pleased
ce qu'el n'iere pas si overte
this that-she not-was at-all so open
que la graine fust descoverte;
that the seed were uncovered
ançois estoit encore enclose
rather it-was still enclosed
entre les fueilles de la rose,
between the leaves of the rose
qui amont droites se levoient
which upward straight themselves raised
e la place dedenz emploient,
and the place within filled
si ne pooit paroir la graine,
and-so not could appear the seed
por la rose qui estoit pleine.
because-of the rose which was full
Ele fu, Deus la beneïe,
She was God her bless
assez plus bele espaneïe
quite more fair opened
qu'el n'iere avant e plus vermeille.
than-she was before and more red

Toz m'esbaï de la merveille:
Wholly myself-I-marveled at the marvel
e Amors plus e plus me lie
and Love more and more me binds
de tant come ele est embelie,
by as-much as she is grown-fairer
e tot adès estreint ses laz
and all ever tightens his snares
tant con je voi plus de solaz.
as-much as I see more of solace
Grant piece ai iluec demoré,
Great while I-have there lingered
qu'en Bel Acueil grant amor ai
for-in Fair Welcome great love I-have
e grant compaignie trovee;
and great company found
e quant je voi qu'il ne me vee
and when I see that-he not me refuses
ne son solaz ne son servise,
neither his solace nor his service
une chose li ai requise
a thing to-him I-have asked
qui bien fait a amentevoir:
which well is to be-mentioned

«Sire», fis je, «sachiez de voir
Lord said I know for truth
que durement sui envieus
that greatly I-am eager
d'avoir un baisier precieus
of-having a kiss precious
de la rose qui soef flaire,
of the rose which sweetly gives-scent
e, s'il ne vos devoit desplaire,
and if-it not you should displease
je le vos requerroie en dons.
I it you would-ask in gift
Por Deu, sire, dites moi dons
For God lord say to-me then
se il vos plaist que je la baise,
if it you pleases that I her kiss
car ce n'iert ja tant qu'il vos plaise.
for this not-will-be ever until that-it you please
— Amis», fait il, «si Deus m'aïst,
Friend says he so God me-help
se Chasteé ne m'enhaïst,
if Chastity not me-hated
ja ne vos fust par moi veé,
ever not to-you it-were by me refused
mais je n'ose por Chasteé,
but I not-dare because-of Chastity
vers cui je ne vueil pas mesprendre.
toward whom I not wish at-all to-transgress

Ele me siaut toz jorz defendre
She me is-wont all days to-forbid
que dou baisier congié ne doigne
that of-the kiss leave — I-give
a nul amant qui m'en semoigne,
to any lover who me-thereof summon
car qui au baisier puet ataindre
for who at-the kiss can attain
a poine puet atant remaindre;
with trouble can at-that-point remain
e sachiez bien cui l'en otroie
and know well to-whom one grants
le baisier, il a de la proie
the kiss he has of the prey
le miauz e le plus avenant,
the best and the most pleasing
si a erres dou remenant.»
and-so has earnest of-the remainder
Quant je l'oï ensi respondre,
When I him-heard thus to-answer
je nou vos plus de ce semondre,
I not-it wished more of this to-urge
car jou cremoie corrocier:
for I-him feared to-anger
l'en ne doit mie ome enchaucier
one not ought at-all a-man press
outre son gré n'angoissier trop.
beyond his pleasure nor-to-distress too-much

Vous savez bien qu'au premier cop
You know well that-at-the first stroke
ne cope l'en mie le chesne,
not cuts one at-all the oak
ne l'en n'a pas le vin de l'aisne
nor one not-has at-all the wine of the-vat
tant que li pressoirs soit estroiz.
until that the press be tight
Adès me tarda li otroiz
Ever me delayed the grant
dou baisier que je desiroie,
of-the kiss which I desired
mais Venus, qui toz jorz guerroie
but Venus who all days makes-war-on
Chasteé, me vint au secors:
Chastity to-me came to-the succor
ce est la mere au deu d'Amors,
this is the mother of-the god of-Love
qui a secoru maint amant.
who has succored many-a lover
Ele tint un brandon flamant
She held a brand flaming
en sa main destre, don la flame
in her hand right of-which the flame
a eschaufee mainte dame;
has heated many-a lady
si fu si cointe e si tifee
and-so she-was so elegant and so tricked-out
qu'el resembla deesse ou fee;
that-she resembled a-goddess or a-fairy

dou grant ator que ele avoit
by-the great array which she had
bien puet conoistre qui la voit
well can know who her sees
qu'el n'est pas de religion.
that-she not-is at-all of religion
Ne ferai or pas mencion
Not I-shall-make now at-all mention
de sa robe e de son oré,
of her gown and of her gold-work
ne de son treçoer doré,
nor of her hair-band gilded
ne de fermail, ne de corroie,
nor of brooch nor of belt
por ce que trop i demorroie;
for this that too-long there I-would-linger
mais bien sachiez certainement
but well know certainly
qu'ele fu cointe durement,
that-she was elegant greatly
e si n'ot point en li d'orgueil.
and so not-she-had at-all in her of-pride
Venus se trait vers Bel Acueil,
Venus herself draws toward Fair Welcome
si li a comencié a dire:
and-so to-him has begun to say
«Por quoi vos faites vos, biaus sire,
For what yourself make you fair lord

vers cel amant si dangereus
toward that lover so grudging
d'avoir un baisier doucereus?
of-having a kiss sweet
Ne li deüst estre veez,
Not to-him ought be refused
car vos savez bien e veez
for you know well and see
qu'il sert e aime en leiauté,
that-he serves and loves in loyalty
si a en lui assez biauté,
and-so has in him quite beauty
par quoi est dignes d'estre amez.
by which he-is worthy of-being loved
Veez come il est acesmez,
See how he is trim
come il est biaus, come il est genz
how he is fair how he is noble
e douz e frans vers toutes genz;
and sweet and frank toward all folk
e avuec ce il n'est pas viauz,
and besides this he not-is at-all old
ainz est enfes, don il vaut miauz.
rather is a-child whence he is-worth better
Il n'est dame ne chastelaine
There not-is a-lady nor a-chatelaine
que je ne tenisse a vilaine
whom I not should-hold for churlish
s'ele faisoit de lui dangier.
if-she made of him difficulty

Ses cors ne fait pas a changier
His body not makes at-all to be-exchanged
se le baisier li otreiez;
if the kiss to-him you-grant
mout iert en lui bien empleiez,
much it-will-be on him well bestowed
qu'il a, ce cuit, mout douce aleine;
for-he has this I-think very sweet breath
e sa bouche n'est pas vilaine,
and his mouth not-is at-all churlish
ainz semble estre faite a estuire
rather seems to-be made on purpose
por solacier e por deduire,
for solacing and for delighting
car les levres sont vermeillettes
for the lips are ruddy
e les denz blanches e si netes
and the teeth white and so clean
qu'il n'i a teigne ne ordure.
that-it not-there has stain nor filth
Bien est, ce m'est avis, mesure
Well is this to-me-is seeming measure
que uns baisiers lui soit greez.
that a kiss to-him be granted
Donez lui, se vos m'en creez,
Give to-him if you me-thereof believe
car tant con vos plus atendroiz,
for as-long as you more will-wait
tant, ce sachiez, de tens perdroiz.»
so-much this know of time you-will-lose

Wicked Tongue, Jealousy, Shame, and Fear

XXI

Fair Welcome grants the kiss, and a scent from the rose enters the lover's body, casting out his grief. But Wicked Tongue has watched, and puts it about that there is an evil acquaintance between them, waking Jealousy, who storms at Fair Welcome and threatens to bind him. Shame excuses him and blames her own slackness; Jealousy answers that she will wall the rosebushes in and raise a tower to imprison him. Fear and Shame find Danger dozing under a hawthorn: Shame wakes him and bids him stop every gap in the hedge, and Fear warns him of Jealousy's wrath.

Bel Acueil, qui senti l'aier
Fair Welcome who felt the-air
dou brandon, senz plus delaier,
of-the brand without more delaying
m'otreia un baisier en dons,
me-granted a kiss in gift
tant fist Venus e ses brandons;
so-much did Venus and her brands
n'i ot onques plus demoré:
not-there was ever more lingered
un baisier douz e savoré
a kiss sweet and savorous
ai pris de la rose erraument.
I-have taken of the rose straightway
Se j'oi joie nus nou demant,
If I-had joy anyone not-it let-ask

car une odor m'entra ou cors
for an odor me-entered into-the body
qui en geta la dolor hors
which thereof cast the grief out
e adouci les maus d'amer
and softened the ills of-loving
qui me soloient estre amer.
which me were-wont to-be bitter
Onques mais ne fui si aaise.
Ever before not I-was so at-ease
Mout est gueriz qui tel flor baise,
Greatly is healed who such a-flower kisses
qui est si sade e bien olanz.
which is so sweet and well smelling
Je ne serai ja si dolenz,
I not shall-be ever so doleful
s'il m'en sovient, que je ne soie
if-it me-thereof remembers that I not be
toz pleins de delit e de joie;
wholly full of delight and of joy
e neporquant j'ai mainz enuiz
and nevertheless I-have many troubles
soferz e maintes males nuiz
suffered and many evil nights
puis que j'oi la rose baisiee.
since that I-had the rose kissed
La mer n'iert ja si apaisiee
The sea not-will-be ever so calmed
qu'el ne soit troble a poi de vent;
that-it not be troubled at little of wind

Amors se rechange sovent,
Love himself changes-again often
il oint une eure e autre point,
he anoints one hour and another pricks
Amors n'est guieres en un point.
Love not-is much in one point
Des ore est droiz que je vos conte
From now it-is right that I to-you tell
coment je fui mellez a Honte,
how I was embroiled with Shame
par cui je fui puis mout grevez,
by whom I was afterward much grieved
e coment li murs fu levez
and how the wall was raised
e li chastiaus riches e forz,
and the castle rich and strong
qu'Amors prist puis par ses esforz.
which-Love took afterward by his efforts
Toute l'estoire vueil porsivre,
All the-story I-wish to-pursue
ja parece ne m'iert d'escrivre,
ever sloth not to-me-will-be of-writing
por quoi je cuit qu'il abelisse
for which I think that-it may-please
a la bele, que Deus guerisse,
to the fair-one whom God preserve
qui le guerredon m'en rendra
who the recompense to-me-thereof will-render
miauz que nule quant el voudra.
better than any when she will-wish

Male Bouche, qui le covine
Wicked Tongue who the doings
de mainz amanz pense e devine,
of many lovers thinks and divines
e tot le mal qu'il set retrait,
and all the ill that-he knows retells
se prist garde dou bel atrait
himself took heed of-the fair welcome
que Bel Acueil me deignoit faire,
which Fair Welcome to-me deigned to-do
e tant que il ne se pot taire,
and so-much that he not himself could be-silent
qu'il fu fiz d'une vieille iraise,
for-he was son of-an old-woman shrewish
si ot la langue mout punaise
and-so had the tongue very foul
e mout poignant e mout amere:
and very stinging and very bitter
bien en retraioit a sa mere.
well thereof he-took-after to his mother
Male Bouche des lors en ça
Wicked Tongue from then on hither
a encuser me comença,
at accusing me began
e dist que il metroit son ueil
and said that he would-put his eye
que entre moi e Bel Acueil
that between me and Fair Welcome
avoit mauvais acointement.
there-was an-evil acquaintance

Tant parla li gloz folement
So-much spoke the rogue foolishly
de moi e dou fill Cortoisie
of me and of-the son of-Courtesy
qu'il fist esveillier Jalosie,
that-he made awaken Jealousy
qui se leva en esfreor
who herself rose in fright
quant ele oï le jangleor.
when she heard the prater
E quant ele se fu levee,
And when she herself was risen
ele corut come desvee
she ran as a-mad-woman
vers Bel Acueil, qui vosist miauz
toward Fair Welcome who would-wish better
estre a Estampes ou a Miauz,
to-be at Étampes or at Meaux
lors l'a par parole assailli:
then him-has by word assailed
«Garz neienz, por quoi t'a failli
Knave worthless for what thee-has failed
sens, que bien fusses d'un garçon
sense that well thou-wert with-a lad
don j'ai mauvaise sospeçon?
of-whom I-have an-evil suspicion
Bien pert que tu croiz les losenges
Well appears that thou believest the flatteries
de legier as garçons estranges.
with ease of-the lads strange

Ne me vueil plus en toi fier.
Not myself I-wish more in thee to-trust
Certes, je te ferai lier,
Certainly I thee shall-make to-bind
ou enserrer en une tor,
or to-shut-up in a tower
car je n'i voi autre retor.
for I not-there see other resort
Trop s'est de toi Honte esloigniee
Too-much herself-is from thee Shame distanced
e si ne s'est pas bien poigniee
and so not herself-is at-all well pained
de toi garder e tenir cort;
of thee to-guard and to-hold short
si m'est avis qu'ele secort
and-so to-me-is seeming that-she succors
mout mauvaisement Chasteé,
very evilly Chastity
qui laisse un garçon desreé
who lets a lad unruly
en nostre porprise venir
into our enclosure to-come
por moi e li avilenir.»
for me and her to-degrade
Bel Acueil ne sot que respondre;
Fair Welcome not knew what to-answer
ançois se fust alez repondre,
rather himself would-have gone to-hide

s'el ne l'eüst iluec trové
if-she not him-had there found
e pris avuec moi tot prové.
and taken with me wholly proved
Mais quant je vi venir la grive,
But when I saw to-come the shrew
qui contre nos plaide e estrive,
who against us pleads and strives
je sui tantost tornez en fuie,
I am at-once turned in flight
por la riote qui m'enuie.
because-of the brawl which me-wearies
Honte s'est lores avant traite,
Shame herself-is then forward drawn
qui se crient mout estre forfaite;
who herself fears much to-be at-fault
si fu umeliant e simple,
and-so was humble and simple
e ot un voile en leu de guimple
and had a veil in place of wimple
ausi con none d'abaïe;
just as a-nun of-an-abbey
e, por ce qu'el fu esbaïe,
and for this that-she was abashed
començа a parler en bas:
she-began to speak in low
«Por Deu, dame, ne creez pas
For God lady not believe at-all
Male Bouche le losengier:
Wicked Tongue the flatterer

c'est uns on qui ment de legier,
this-is a man who lies with ease
e maint prodome a amusé.
and many-a worthy-man has deceived
S'il a Bel Acueil encusé,
If-he has Fair Welcome accused
ce n'est ore pas li premiers;
this not-is now at-all the first
Male Bouche est bien costumiers
Wicked Tongue is well accustomed
de raconter fausses noveles
of recounting false tidings
de vallez e de damoiseles.
of young-men and of damsels
Senz faille, ce n'est pas mençonge,
Without fail this not-is at-all falsehood
Bel Acueil a trop longue longe;
Fair Welcome has too long a-tether
l'en li a sofert a atraire
one to-him has suffered to attract
teus genz don il n'avoit que faire.
such folk of-whom he not-had what to-do
Mais certes je n'ai pas creance
But certainly I not-have at-all belief
que il ait eüe beance
that he have had longing
de mauvaistié ne de folie;
of wickedness nor of folly
mais il est voirs que Cortoisie,
but it is true that Courtesy

qui est sa mere, li enseigne
who is his mother to-him teaches
que d'acointier genz ne se feigne,
that of-acquainting folk not himself he-hold-back
qu'el n'ama onques ome entulle.
for-she not-loved ever a-man dull
En Bel Acueil n'a autre hulle,
In Fair Welcome not-has other flaw
ce sachiez, n'autre encloeüre,
this know nor-other hurt
fors qu'il est pleins d'envoiseüre
except that-he is full of-merriment
e qu'il jeue as genz e parole.
and that-he plays with-the folk and talks
Senz faille, j'ai esté trop mole
Without fail I-have been too soft
de lui garder e chastier,
of him to-guard and to-chastise
si vos en vueil merci crier.
and-so to-you thereof I-wish mercy to-cry
Se j'ai esté un poi trop lente
If I-have been a little too slow
de bien faire, j'en sui dolente;
of well doing I-thereof am sorry
de ma folie me repens;
of my folly myself I-repent

mais je metrai tot mon apens
but I shall-put all my care
des or en Bel Acueil garder;
from now on Fair Welcome to-guard
jamais ne m'en quier retarder.
ever not myself-thereof I-seek to-delay
— Honte, Honte», fait Jalosie,
Shame Shame says Jealousy
«grant peor ai d'estre traïe,
great fear I-have of-being betrayed
car Lecherie est tant montee
for Lechery is so-much risen
que tost porroie estre ahontee.
that soon I-might be shamed
N'est merveille se je me dot,
Not-is a-marvel if I myself fear
car Luxure reine par tot;
for Lust reigns through all
ses pooirs ne fine de croistre.
her power not ceases from growing
En abaïe ne en cloistre
In an-abbey nor in a-cloister
n'est mais Chasteé asseür:
not-is more Chastity secure
por ce ferai de novel mur
for this I-shall-make with new wall
clore les rosiers e les roses;
to-close the rosebushes and the roses
nes lairai plus ensi descloses,
not-them I-shall-leave more thus unclosed

qu'en vostre garde poi me fi,
for-in your guard little myself I-trust
car je voi bien e sai de fi
for I see well and know for certain
que en meillor garde pert l'en.
that in better guard loses one
Ja ne verroie passer l'an
Ever not I-should-see to-pass the-year
que l'en me tendroit por musarde
before one me would-hold for a-dawdler
se je ne m'en prenoie garde.
if I not myself-thereof took heed
Mestiers est que je m'en porvoie.
Needful it-is that I myself-thereof provide
Certes je lor clorrai la voie
Certainly I to-them shall-close the way
a ceus qui, por moi conchier,
to those who for me to-befoul
vienent mes roses espier.
come my roses to-spy-on
Il ne me sera ja parece
It not to-me will-be ever a-sloth
que ne face une forterece
that not I-make a fortress
qui les rosiers clorra entor.
which the rosebushes will-close around
Ou mileu avra une tor,
In-the middle there-will-be a tower
por Bel Acueil metre en prison,
for Fair Welcome to-put in prison

car j'ai peor de traïson.
for I-have fear of treason
Je cuit si bien garder son cors
I think so well to-guard his body
qu'il n'avra pooir d'issir hors
that-he not-will-have power of-issuing out
ne de compaignie tenir
nor of company to-keep
as garçons, qui, por lui honir,
with-the lads who for him to-shame
de paroles le vont chuant.
with words him go wheedling
Trop l'ont trové icil truant
Too-much him-have found those rascals
fol e bergier a decevoir;
foolish and a-shepherd to deceive
mais, se je vif, sache il de voir
but if I live let-know he for truth
mar lor fist onques bel semblant.»
in-an-ill-hour to-them he-made ever fair countenance
A ce mot vint Peor tremblant;
At this word came Fear trembling
mais ele fu si esbaïe
but she was so abashed
quant ele a Jalosie oïe
when she has Jealousy heard
qu'onques mot ne li osa dire,
that-ever a-word not to-her she-dared to-say
por ce qu'el la savoit en ire.
for this that-she her knew in wrath

En sus se trait a une part;
In aside herself draws to one part
e Jalosie atant s'en part:
and Jealousy thereupon herself-thence parts
Peor e Honte laisse ensemble.
Fear and Shame leaves together
Toz li maigres dou cul lor tremble.
All the lean of-the rump to-them trembles
Peor, qui tint la teste encline,
Fear who held the head bowed
parole a Honte sa cosine:
speaks to Shame her cousin
«Honte», fait ele, «mout me poise
Shame says she much me it-grieves
don il nos covient oïr noise
that it us behooves to-hear an-outcry
de ce don nos ne poon mais.
of that of-which we not can more
Maintes foiz est avris e mais
Many times is April and May
passez qu'onques n'eüsmes blasme;
passed that-ever not-we-had blame
or nos laidenge e nos mesasme
now us reviles and us blames
Jalosie, qui nos mescroit:
Jealousy who us mistrusts
alon a Dangier orendroit,
let-us-go to Danger just-now

si li montron bien e dison
and-so to-him let-us-show well and let-us-say
qu'il a faite grant mesprison
that-he has done great wrong
don il n'a graignor poine mise
in-that he not-has greater pains put
a bien garder ceste porprise;
at well guarding this enclosure
trop a a Bel Acueil sofert
too-much he-has to Fair Welcome suffered
a faire son gré en apert,
to do his pleasure in open
si covendra qu'il s'en ament,
and-so it-will-behoove that-he himself-thereof amend
ou sache il bien veraiement
or let-know he well truly
foïr l'en estuet de la terre,
to-flee him-thence it-behooves from the land
qu'il ne durroit pas a la guerre
for-he not would-last at-all at the war
Jalosie n'a l'ataïne,
of-Jealousy nor-at the-rancor
s'ele le cuilloit en haïne.»
if-she him took in hatred
A cel conseil se sont tenues,
At that counsel themselves are held
puis en sont a Dangier venues,
then thence are to Danger come

si ont trové le païsant
and-so have found the peasant
desoz un aubespin gisant.
under a hawthorn lying
Il ot, en leu de chevecel,
He had in place of a-pillow
a son chief, d'erbe un grant moncel,
at his head of-grass a great heap
e començoit a someillier;
and began to doze
mais Honte l'a fait esveillier,
but Shame him-has made awaken
qui le laidenge e li cort seure:
who him reviles and him runs upon
«Coment dormez vos a ceste eure»,
How sleep you at this hour
fait ele, «par male aventure?
says she by evil adventure
Fos est qui en vos s'asseüre
Foolish is who in you assures-himself
de garder rose ne bouton
of guarding rose nor bud
ne qu'en la queue d'un mouton.
no-more than-in the tail of-a sheep
Trop estes recreanz e lasches,
Too-much you-are craven and slack
qui deüssiez estre farasches
who ought be fierce
e tot le monde estouteier.
and all the world to-bully

Folie vos fist otreier
Folly you made grant
que Bel Acueil çaienz meïst
that Fair Welcome hither put
ome qui blasmer nos feïst.
a-man who to-blame us made
Quant vos dormez, nos en oon
When you sleep we thereof hear
la noise, qui mais n'en poon.
the outcry who more not-thereof we-can
Estiez vos ore couchiez?
Were you now lain-down
Levez tost sus, e si bouchiez
Rise quickly up and so stop
toz les pertuis de ceste haie,
all the gaps of this hedge
e ne portez nului menaie.
and not bear to-anyone mercy
Il n'afiert pas a vostre non
It not-belongs at-all to your name
que vos faciez se enui non.
that you do except trouble not
Se Bel Acueil est frans e douz,
If Fair Welcome is noble and sweet
e vos seiez fel e estouz,
then you be felon and haughty
pleins de rampones e d'outrage:
full of taunts and of-outrage
vilains qui est cortois enrage,
a-churl who is courteous goes-mad

ce oï dire en reprovier,
this I-heard to-say in a-proverb
ne l'en ne puet faire esprevier
nor one not can make a-sparrowhawk
en nule guise de busart.
in any wise of a-buzzard
Tuit cil vos tienent por musart
All those you hold for a-dawdler
qui vos ont trové debonaire.
who you have found gracious
Volez vos donques as genz plaire
Wish you then to-the folk to-please
ne faire bonté ne servise?
nor to-do kindness nor service
Ce vos muet de recreantise,
This to-you comes of cravenness
si avroiz mais par tot le los
and-so you-will-have henceforth through all the repute
que vos estes lasches e mos
that you are slack and soft
e que vos creez jangleors.»
and that you believe praters
Lors a après parlé Peors:
Then has afterward spoken Fear
«Certes, Dangiers, mout me merveil
Certainly Danger much myself I-marvel
que vos n'estes en grant esveil
that you not-are in great wakefulness
de garder ce que vos devez.
of guarding that which you must

Tost en porroiz estre grevez,
Soon thereof you-could be grieved
se l'ire Jalosie engraigne,
if the-wrath of-Jealousy grows
qu'ele est mout fiere e mout grifaigne,
for-she is very fierce and very grim
e de tencier apareillie.
and for chiding prepared
Ele a ui bien Honte assaillie,
She has today well Shame assailed
e a chacié par sa menace
and has chased by her threat
Bel Acueil hors de ceste place,
Fair Welcome out of this place
e juré qu'il ne puet durer
and sworn that-it not can last
qu'el nou face vif enmurer:
that-she not-him make alive be-immured
c'est tot par vostre mauvaistié,
this-is all by your wickedness
qu'en vos n'a mais point d'engrestié.
that-in you not-has more at-all of-harshness
Je cuit que cuers vos est failliz;
I think that heart to-you is failed
mais vos en seroiz mal bailliz,
but you thereof will-be ill handled
e en avroiz poine e enui,
and thereof will-have toil and trouble
s'onques Jalosie conui.»
if-ever Jealousy I-knew

The Castle of Jealousy

XXII

Danger wakes in a rage, swears no living man will get in again, and goes searching the enclosure for gaps to stop; the lover, shut out and remembering the kiss, would rather be dead. Jealousy sends for masons and pioneers: ditches, a wall of hewn ashlar on rock, squared, a hundred fathoms a side, turrets, four gates, mangonels and crossbows, and in the middle a round tower with the rosebushes inside its bailey. Danger, Shame, and Fear hold three gates, and Wicked Tongue the rear, slandering women from the battlements all night long.

Lors leva li vilains s'aumuce,
Then raised the churl his-hood
frote ses iauz, si s'esberuce,
rubs his eyes and-so himself-shakes
fronce le nés, les iauz roïlle,
wrinkles the nose the eyes rolls
e fu pleins d'ire e de roïlle
and was full of-wrath and of rust
quant il s'oï si mal mener:
when he himself-heard so ill to-handle
«Bien puis», fait il, «or forsener,
Well I-can says he now to-rage
quant vos me tenez por vaincu.
when you me hold for vanquished
Certes, or ai je trop vescu
Certainly now have I too-long lived
se cest porpris ne puis garder.
if this enclosure not I-can guard

Tot vif me face l'en larder
All alive me let one lard
se jamais on vivanz i entre.
if ever a-man living there enter
Mout ai irié le cuer dou ventre
Much I-have angered the heart of-the belly
don nus i mist onques les piez;
that anyone there put ever the feet
miauz amasse de deus espiez
better I-should-love with two spears
estre feruz par mi le cors.
to-be struck through midst the body
J'ai fait que fos, bien m'en recors,
I-have done like a-fool well me-thereof I-recall
or l'amenderai par vos deus;
now it-I-shall-amend by you two
jamais ne serai pareceus
ever not I-shall-be slothful
de ceste porprise defendre;
of this enclosure to-defend
se j'i puis nului entreprendre,
if I-there can anyone catch
miauz li vendroit estre a Pavie.
better to-him would-come to-be at Pavia
Jamais a nul jor de ma vie
Ever on any day of my life
ne me tendroiz por recreant,
not me you-will-hold for craven
je le vos jur e acreant.»
I it to-you swear and promise

Lors s'est Dangiers en piez dreciez,
Then himself-is Danger on feet raised
semblant fait d'estre corrociez.
seeming makes of-being angered
En sa main a un baston pris
In his hand has a staff taken
e vait cerchant par le porpris
and goes searching through the enclosure
s'il trovera sentier ne trace
whether-he will-find a-path or trace
ne pertuis qui a bouchier face.
or a-gap which to stopping calls
Des or est mout changiez li vers,
From now is much changed the verse
car Dangiers devient plus divers
for Danger becomes more crabbed
e plus fel qu'il ne soloit estre.
and more felon than-he — was-wont to-be
Mort m'a qui si l'a fait iraistre,
Killed me-has who so him-has made grow-angry
car je n'avrai jamais loisir
for I not-shall-have ever leisure
de veoir ce que je desir.
of seeing that which I desire
Mout ai le cuer dou ventre irié
Much I-have the heart of-the belly angered
don j'ai Bel Acueil adirié;
that I-have Fair Welcome lost

e bien sachiez que tuit li membre
and well know that all the limbs
me fremissent quant il me membre
me quiver when it me remembers
de la rose que je soloie
of the rose which I was-wont
veoir de près quant je voloie;
to-see from near when I wished
e quant dou baisier me recors,
and when of-the kiss myself I-recall
qui me mist une odor ou cors
which me put an odor into-the body
assez plus douce que de basme,
quite more sweet than of balm
par un poi que je ne me pasme,
by a little that I — myself swoon
qu'encor ai je ou cuer enclose
for-still have I in-the heart enclosed
la douce savor de la rose;
the sweet savor of the rose
e sachiez, quant il me sovient
and know when it to-me remembers
que a consirrer m'en covient,
that to forgo me-thereof it-behooves
miauz voudroie estre morz que vis.
better I-should-wish to-be dead than alive
Mar touchai la rose a mon vis
In-an-ill-hour I-touched the rose with my face
e a mes iauz e a ma bouche,
and with my eyes and with my mouth

s'Amors ne suefre que j'i touche
if-Love not suffers that I-there touch
tot de rechief autre feiee;
wholly of once-more an-other time
se j'ai la savor essaiee,
if I-have the savor tried
tant est graindre la covoitise
so-much is greater the covetousness
qui esprent mon cuer e atise.
which kindles my heart and fires
Or revendront plor e sospir,
Now will-come-again weeping and sighs
longues pensees senz dormir,
long thoughts without sleeping
friçons e pointes e complaintes.
shudders and pangs and complaints
De teus dolors avrai je maintes,
Of such griefs shall-have I many
car je sui en enfer cheoiz.
for I am into hell fallen
Male Bouche soit maleoiz!
Wicked Tongue be cursed
Sa langue desleial e fausse
His tongue disloyal and false
m'a porchaciee ceste sausse.
me-has procured this sauce
Des or est tens que je vos die
From now is time that I to-you tell
la contenance Jalosie,
the doings of-Jealousy

qui est en male sospeçon.
who is in evil suspicion
Ou païs ne remest maçon
In-the country not remained a-mason
ne pionier qu'ele ne mant,
nor a-pioneer that-she not send-for
si fait faire, au comencement,
and-so makes make at-the beginning
entor les rosiers uns fossez,
around the rosebushes a-set-of ditches
qui costeront argent assez,
which will-cost money plenty
qu'il sont mout lé e mout parfont.
for-they are very wide and very deep
Li maçon sor les fossez font
The masons over the ditches make
un mur de carriaus tailleïz,
a wall of ashlar hewn
qui ne siet pas sor croleïz,
which not sits at-all on quaking-ground
ainz est fondez sor roche dure.
rather is founded on rock hard
Li fondemenz tot a mesure
The foundation all in measure
jusqu'au pié des fossez descent
even-to-the foot of-the ditches descends
e vient amont en estreçant,
and comes upward in narrowing
s'en est l'uevre plus fort assez.
and-thereby is the-work more strong quite

Li murs si est si compassez
The wall so is so compassed
qu'il est de droite carreüre;
that-it is of true squareness
chascuns des pans cent toises dure,
each of-the sides a-hundred fathoms runs
si est autant lons come lez.
and-so is as-much long as wide
Les torneles sont lez a lez,
The turrets are side by side
qui sont richement batailliees,
which are richly battlemented
e faites de pierres taillïees.
and made of stones hewn
As quatre coignez en a quatre,
At-the four corners thereof has four
qui seroient forz a abatre;
which would-be hard to beat-down
e si i a quatre portauz,
and so there has four gateways
don li murs est espès e hauz.
of-which the wall is thick and high
Il en a un ou front devant,
There thereof has one in-the front before
bien defensable par covent,
well defensible by agreement
e deus de coste e un derriere,
and two at the-side and one behind
qui ne doutent cop de perriere;
which not fear a-blow of a-mangonel

s'i a bones portes colanz,
and-there has good gates sliding
por faire ceus dehors dolenz,
for to-make those outside doleful
e por aus prendre e retenir
and for them to-take and to-hold
s'il osoient avant venir.
if-they dared forward to-come
Enz ou mileu de la porprise
Right in-the middle of the enclosure
font une tor par grant maistrise
they-make a tower by great mastery
cil qui dou faire furent maistre:
those who of-the making were masters
nule plus bele ne pot estre,
any more fair not could be
qu'ele est e grant e lee e haute.
for-it is both great and wide and high
Li murs ne doit pas faire faute
The wall not ought at-all make failure
por engin qui sache getier,
for an-engine which know to-cast
car l'en destrempa le mortier
for one tempered the mortar
de fort vin aigre e de chauz vive.
of strong wine sharp and of lime quick
La pierre est de roche naïve
The stone is of rock native
de quoi l'en fist le fondement,
of which one made the foundation

si est dure come aïmant.
and-so is hard as adamant
La tor si fu toute roonde;
The tower so was wholly round
il n'ot si riche en tot le monde,
there not-was so rich in all the world
ne par dedenz miauz ordenee.
nor by within better ordered
Ele est dehors avironee
It is outside surrounded
d'un baile qui vait tot entor,
by-a bailey which goes all around
si qu'entre le baile e la tor
so that-between the bailey and the tower
sont li rosier espès planté,
are the rosebushes thickly planted
ou il a roses a plenté.
where there has roses in plenty
Dedenz le chastel a perrieres
Within the castle has mangonels
e engins de maintes manieres:
and engines of many fashions
vos peüssiez les mangoniaus
you could the catapults
veoir par desus les creniaus;
to-see by above the battlements
e as archieres tot entor
and at-the arrow-slits all around
sont les arbalestes a tor,
are the crossbows on winch

qu'armeüre ne puet tenir.
which-armor not can withstand
Qui près des murs voudroit venir,
Who near of-the walls would-wish to-come
il porroit bien faire que nices.
he could well do like a-fool
Hors des fossez a unes lices
Outside of-the ditches has a-set-of lists
de bons murs forz, a creniaus bas,
of good walls strong with battlements low
si que cheval ne pueent pas
so that horses not can at-all
jusqu'as fossez venir d'alee
even-to-the ditches to-come of-a-course
qu'il n'i eüst avant mellee.
that-it not-thereat were first a-mêlée
Jalosie a garnison mise
Jealousy has a-garrison put
ou chastel que je vos devise;
in-the castle which I to-you describe
si m'est avis que Dangiers porte
and-so to-me-is seeming that Danger bears
la clef de la premiere porte,
the key of the first gate
qui uevre devers orient;
which opens toward east
avuec lui, au mien escient,
with him to-the my knowledge
a trente sergenz tot a conte.
has thirty sergeants wholly at count

E l'autre porte garde Honte,
And the-other gate is-guarded-by Shame
qui uevre par devers midi;
which opens by toward south
el fu mout sage, e si vos di
she was very wise and so to-you I-say
qu'ele ot sergenz a grant plenté,
that-she had sergeants in great plenty
prez de faire sa volenté.
ready of doing her will
Peor rot grant conestablie,
Fear had-in-turn a-great constabulary
e fu a garder establie
and was to guard appointed
l'autre porte, qui est assise
the-other gate which is set
a main senestre, devers bise.
at hand left toward north-wind
Peor n'i sera ja seüre,
Fear not-there will-be ever secure
s'el n'est fermee a serreüre;
if-it not-is fastened with a-lock
e si ne l'uevre pas sovent,
and so not it-opens at-all often
car, quant ele ot bruire le vent,
for when she hears to-rustle the wind
ou el voit saillir deus langoutes,
or she sees to-leap two grasshoppers
si l'en prent il tel eure est soutes.
so her-thereof takes it such an-hour (she-)is loosed

Male Bouche, que Deus maudie,
Wicked Tongue whom God curse
ot soudeiers de Normandie:
had mercenaries from Normandy
cil garde la porte detrois;
he guards the gate behind
e si sachiez qu'as autres trois
and so know that-at-the other three
vait il e vient quant il li siet,
goes he and comes when it to-him suits
qu'il doit la nuit faire le guiet.
for-he must the night make the watch
Il monte le soir as creniaus
He mounts in-the evening to-the battlements
e atempre ses chalumiaus
and tunes his pipes
e ses buisines e ses corz:
and his trumpets and his horns
une foiz dit lais e descorz
one time he-says lays and descorts
e sons noviaus de controvaille,
and airs new of invention
as estives de Cornoaille;
on-the bagpipes of Cornwall
autre foiz dit a la fleüste
another time he-says on the flute
qu'onques ne trova fame juste:
that-ever not he-found a-woman true

«Il n'est nule qui ne se rie
There not-is any who not herself laugh
s'ele ot parler de lecherie;
if-she hears to-speak of lechery
ceste est pute, ceste se farde,
this-one is a-whore this-one herself paints
e ceste folement regarde,
and this-one foolishly looks
ceste est vilaine, ceste est fole,
this-one is churlish this-one is foolish
e ceste si a trop parole.»
and this-one so has too-much speech
Male Bouche, qui riens n'esperne,
Wicked Tongue who anything not-spares
trueve a chascune quelque herne.
finds in each some flaw

Fair Welcome in the Tower

XXIII

Jealousy garrisons the tower and shuts Fair Welcome in it, with an old woman to watch him. The lover, outside, compares himself to a peasant whose grain a cloud spoils as the ears flower, and to a man thrown off Fortune's wheel. He begs Fair Welcome to keep a heart of adamant against Jealousy, and Guillaume's poem breaks off on his fear of the flatterers and of being forgotten.

Jalosie, que Deus confonde,
Jealousy whom God confound
a garnie la tor roonde,
has garrisoned the tower round
e si sachiez qu'ele i a mis
and so know that-she there has put
des plus privez de ses amis
of-the most intimate of her friends
tant qu'il i ot grant garnison.
so-much that-it there was great garrison
E Bel Acueil est en prison,
And Fair Welcome is in prison
amont en la tor enserrez,
above in the tower shut-up
don li uis est si bien barrez
of-which the door is so well barred
qu'il n'a pooir que il en isse.
that-he not-has power that he thence issue
Une vieille, que Deus honisse,
An old-woman whom God shame
a avuec lui, por lui gaitier,
has with him for him to-watch

qui ne fait nul autre mestier
who not does any other office
fors espier tant solement
except to-spy so only
qu'il ne se moine folement.
that-he not himself conduct foolishly
Nus ne la porroit engignier
Anyone not her could outwit
ne de signier ne de guignier,
neither by signaling nor by winking
qu'il n'est baraz qu'el ne conoisse,
for-there not-is a-trick which-she not know
qu'ele ot des biens e de l'angoisse
for-she had of-the goods and of the-anguish
qu'Amors a ses sergenz depart
which-Love to his servants deals-out
en jonece eü bien sa part.
in youth had well her part
Bel Acueil se taist e escoute,
Fair Welcome himself is-silent and listens
por la vieille que il redoute,
because-of the old-woman whom he fears
e n'est si hardiz qu'il se mueve,
and not-is so bold that-he himself move
que la vieille en lui n'aperçoive
that the old-woman in him not-perceive
aucune fole contenance,
any foolish bearing
qu'el set toute la vieille dance.
for-she knows all the old dance

Tot maintenant que Jalosie
All at-once that Jealousy
se fu de Bel Acueil saisie,
herself was of Fair Welcome seized
e ele l'ot fait enmurer,
and she him-had made be-immured
don se prist a asseürer.
then herself took to be-assured
Ses chastiaus, qu'ele vit si fort,
Her castle which-she saw so strong
li a doné grant reconfort;
to-her has given great comfort
el n'a mais garde que glouton
she not-has more care that gluttons
li emblent rose ne bouton:
to-her steal rose nor bud
trop sont li rosier clos forment;
exceedingly are the rosebushes closed strongly
e en veillant e en dormant
and in waking and in sleeping
puet ele estre bien asseür.
can she be well secure
Mais je, qui sui dehors le mur,
But I who am outside the wall
sui livrez a duel e a poine.
am delivered to grief and to pain
Qui savroit quel vie je moine,
Who would-know what life I lead
il en devroit grant pitié prendre.
he thereof ought great pity take

Amors me set ore bien vendre
Love me knows now well to-sell
les biens que il m'avoit pretez;
the goods which he to-me-had lent
jes cuidoie avoir achetez,
I-them thought to-have bought
or les me vent tot de rechief,
now them to-me he-sells all of once-more
car je sui a plus grant meschief,
for I am at more great mischief
por la joie que j'ai perdue,
because-of the joy which I-have lost
que s'onques ne l'eüsse eüe.
than if-ever not it-I-had had
Que vos iroie je disant?
What to-you should-go I saying
Je resemble le païsant
I resemble the peasant
qui giete en terre sa semence,
who casts into earth his seed
e a joie quant el comence
and has joy when it begins
a estre bele e drue en erbe,
to be fair and thick in blade
mais, avant qu'il en cueille gerbe,
but before that-he thereof gather a-sheaf

l'empire tel eure est e grieve
it-spoils such an-hour is and grieves
une male nue qui lieve
an evil cloud which rises
quant li espi doivent florir,
when the ears must flower
si fait le grain dedenz morir,
and-so makes the grain within to-die
e l'esperance au vilain tost
and the-hope from-the churl takes-away
qu'il avoit eüe trop tost.
which-he had had too soon
Ge crien ausi avoir perdue
I fear likewise to-have lost
e m'esperance e m'atendue,
both my-hope and my-expectation
qu'Amors m'avoit tant avancié
for-Love me-had so-far advanced
que j'avoie ja comencié
that I-had already begun
a dire mes granz privetez
to tell my great secrets
a Bel Acueil, qui apretez
to Fair Welcome who prepared
estoit de recevoir mes jeus;
was of receiving my games
mais Amors est si corageus
but Love is so capricious
qu'il me toli tot en une eure,
that-he me took-away all in one hour

quant je cuidai estre au deseure.
when I thought to-be at-the above
Ce est ausi con de Fortune,
This is likewise as of Fortune
qui met ou cuer des genz rancune,
who puts into-the heart of-the folk rancor
autre eure les aplaigne e chue.
another hour them strokes and cajoles
En poi d'eure son semblant mue:
In little of-time her seeming she-changes
une eure rit, autre eure est morne;
one hour she-laughs another hour is gloomy
ele a une roe qui torne,
she has a wheel which turns
e quant ele viaut ele met
and when she wishes she puts
le plus bas amont ou somet,
the most low up in-the summit
e celui qui est sor la roe
and him who is on the wheel
reverse a un tor en la boe.
overturns at one turn into the mire
E je sui cil qui est versez!
And I am he who is overturned
Mar vi les murs e les fossez
In-an-ill-hour I-saw the walls and the ditches
que je n'os passer ne ne puis.
which I not-dare to-pass nor not can

Je n'oi bien ne joie onques puis
I not-had good nor joy ever since
que Bel Acueil fu en prison,
that Fair Welcome was in prison
car ma joie e ma guerison
for my joy and my healing
est toute en lui e en la rose,
is wholly in him and in the rose
qui est entre les murs enclose;
which is between the walls enclosed
e de la covendra qu'il isse
and from there it-will-behoove that-he issue
s'Amors viaut ja que je guerisse,
if-Love wishes ever that I be-healed
car ja d'aillors ne quier que j'aie
for ever from-elsewhere not I-seek that I-have
enor ne bien, santé ne joie!
honor nor good health nor joy
Ha! Bel Acueil, biaus douz amis,
Ha Fair Welcome fair sweet friend
se vos estes en prison mis,
if you are in prison put
gardez moi au moins vostre cuer,
keep for-me at least your heart

e ne sofrez a nes un fuer
and not suffer at not-even one price
que Jalosie la sauvage
that Jealousy the savage
mete vostre cuer en servage
put your heart in bondage
ensi come ele a fait le cors;
just as she has done the body
e s'el vos chastie defors,
and if-she you chastises outside
aiez dedenz cuer d'aïmant
have within a-heart of-adamant
encontre son chastiement.
against her chastisement
Se li cors en prison remaint,
If the body in prison remains
gardez au moins que li cuers m'aint:
take-heed at least that the heart me-love
frans cuers ne lait mie a amer
a-noble heart not ceases at-all from loving
por batre ne por mesamer.
for beating nor for ill-loving
Se Jalosie est vers vos dure
If Jealousy is toward you hard
e vos fait enui e laidure,
and you does trouble and outrage
faites li engrestié encontre;
do to-her harshness against

e dou dangier qu'ele vos montre
and of-the disdain which-she to-you shows
vos vengiez, au moins en pensant,
you avenge at least in thinking
quant vos ne poez autrement.
when you not can otherwise
Se vos ensi le faisiez,
If you thus it did
je m'en tendroie a bien paiez.
I myself-thereof should-hold for well paid
Mais je sui en mout grant soussi
But I am in very great care
que vos ne faciez pas ensi,
that you not do at-all thus
car, se devient, vos me savez
for if it-happens you me know
mal gré de ce que vos avez
ill thanks of this that you have
esté por moi mis en prison,
been for me put in prison
si n'est ce pas por mesprison
and-so not-is this at-all for wrongdoing
que j'aie encore vers vos faite,
which I-have yet toward you done
qu'onques par moi ne fu retraite
for-ever by me not was retold
chose qui a celer feïst,
a-thing which to conceal befitted
ainz me poise, si Deus m'aïst,
rather me it-grieves so God me-help

plus qu'a vos de la mescheance,
more than-to you of the mishap
car j'en suefre la penitence
for I-thereof suffer the penance
plus grant que nus ne porroit dire.
more great than anyone — could say
Par un poi que je ne font d'ire
By a little that I — melt with-wrath
quant il me membre de ma perte,
when it me remembers of my loss
qui est si grant e si aperte;
which is so great and so open
si ai peor e desconfort,
and-so I-have fear and discomfort
qui me donront, ce croi, la mort.
which me will-give this I-think the death
N'en doi je bien avoir peor
Not-thereof ought I well have fear
quant je sai que losengeor
when I know that flatterers
e traïtor e envieus
and traitors and envious-men
sont de moi nuire curieus?
are of me to-harm eager
Ha! Bel Acueil, je sai de voir
Ha Fair Welcome I know for truth
qu'il vos beent a decevoir,
that-they you aim to deceive

e faire tant par lor favele
and to-do so-much by their chatter
qu'il vos traient a lor cordele,
that-they you draw to their cord
e, se devient, si ont il fait.
and if it-happens so have they done
Je ne sai or coment il vait,
I not know now how it goes
mais durement sui esmaiez
but grievously I-am dismayed
que entroblié ne m'aiez,
that forgotten — me-you-have
si en ai duel e desconfort.
and-so thereof I-have grief and discomfort
Jamais n'iert rien qui me confort
Ever not-will-be anything which me comfort
se je pert vostre bienvoillance,
if I lose your good-will
que je n'ai mais aillors fiance.
for I not-have more elsewhere trust

The Lover's Lament

XXIV

Jean de Meun takes up the poem. Shut out of the castle where Jealousy holds Fair Welcome, the lover wavers between despair and Hope, whose promises deceive many lovers. He names his enemies and finds Love's three gifts, Sweet Thought, Sweet Speech, and Sweet Looks, worth nothing while Fair Welcome is in prison. He blames himself for not heeding Reason, yet resolves to wait on Love's mercy, and leaves his heart to Fair Welcome.

E si l'ai je perdue, espeir:
And yet it-have I lost perhaps
a po que ne m'en desespeir.
at little that — myself-thereof I-despair
Desespeir! Las! je non ferai,
Despair Alas I not shall-do
ja ne m'en desespererai,
ever not myself-thereof I-shall-despair
car, s'Esperance m'iert faillanz,
for if-Hope to-me-will-be failing
je ne seraie pas vaillanz.
I not would-be at-all worthy
En li me dei reconforter,
In her myself I-ought comfort
qu'Amours, pour meauz mes maus porter,
for-Love for better my ills to-bear
me dist qu'el me garantirait
me told that-she me would-protect
e qu'avec mei par tout irait,
and that-with me through all would-go

mais de ce quei? Qu'en ai je a faire?
but of this what What-thereof have I to do
S'ele est courteise e debonaire,
If-she is courteous and gracious
el n'est de nule rien certaine;
she not-is of any thing certain
el met les amanz en grant peine,
she puts the lovers in great pain
e se fait d'aus dame e maistresse;
and herself makes of-them lady and mistress
maint en deceit par sa promesse,
many-a-one thereof she-deceives by her promise
qu'el promet tel chose souvent
for-she promises such a-thing often
don el ne tendra ja couvent;
whereof she not will-keep ever covenant
si est periz, si Deus m'ament,
so is a-peril so God me-help
car en amer maint bon amant
for in loving many-a good lover
par li se tienent e tendront
by her themselves hold and will-hold
qui ja nul jour n'i avendront.
who ever any day not-there will-attain
L'en ne s'en set a quei tenir,
One not oneself-thereof knows to what to-hold
qu'el ne set qu'est a avenir:
for-she not knows what-is to come
pour c'est fos qui trop s'en aprime,
for this-is a-fool who too himself-thereto draws-near

car, quant el fait bon sillogime,
for when she makes a-good syllogism
si deit l'en aveir grant peeur
so ought one have great fear
qu'el ne conclue le peeur,
that-she — conclude the worse
qu'aucune feiz l'a l'en veü,
for-some time it-has one seen
s'en ont maint esté deceü.
so-thereby have many been deceived
E nepourquant si vourrait ele
And nevertheless so would-wish she
que le meilleur de la querele
that the best of the quarrel
eüst cil qui la tient o sei;
should-have he who her holds with himself
si sui fos quant blasmer l'osai.
so I-am a-fool when to-blame her-I-dared
E que me revaut son vouleir,
And what me avails-in-turn her will
puis qu'el ne me fait desdouleir?
since that-she not me makes cease-grieving
Trop po, qu'el n'i peut conseil metre
Too little for-she not-there can counsel put
fors que seulement de prometre:
except that only of promising
promesse senz don ne vaut gaires.
promise without gift not is-worth much

Aveir me lait tant de contraires
To-have me she-lets so-many of adversities
que nus n'en peut saveir le nombre.
that anyone not-thereof can know the number
Dangiers, Honte e Peeur m'encombre,
Danger Shame and Fear me-encumbers
e Jalousie, e Male Bouche,
and Jealousy and Wicked Tongue
qui envenime e qui entouche
who envenoms and who infects
touz ceus don il fait sa matire;
all those whereof he makes his matter
par langue les livre a martire.
by tongue them he-delivers to martyrdom
Cil ont en prison Bel Acueil,
Those have in prison Fair Welcome
qu'en trestouz mes pensers acueil,
whom-in all my thoughts I-welcome
e sai que, s'aveir ne le puis,
and I-know that if-to-have not him I-can
en brief tens ja ne vivrai puis;
in brief time ever not I-shall-live afterward
enseurquetout me repartue
above-all me in-turn-kills-outright
l'orde vieille, puant, moussue,
the-foul old-woman stinking mossy
qui de si près le deit garder
who from so near him must guard
qu'il n'ose nului regarder.
that-he not-dares anyone to-look-at

Des or enforcera mi deus.
From now will-grow-stronger my grief
Senz faille il est veirs que li deus
Without fail it is true that the god
d'Amours treis dons, seue merci,
of-Love three gifts his mercy
me dona, mais je les pert ci:
me gave but I them lose here
Douz Penser, qui point ne m'aïde,
Sweet Thought who at-all not me-helps
Douz Paler me refaut d'aïde,
Sweet Speech me fails-in-turn of-help
li tierz avait non Douz Regart,
the third had name Sweet Looks
perdu le rai, si Deus me gart.
lost him I-have-in-turn so God me guard
Senz faille beaus dons i a, mais
Without fail fair gifts there are but
il ne me vaudront riens jamais
they not me will-avail anything ever
se Bel Acueil n'ist de prison,
if Fair Welcome not-issues from prison
que l'en tient par grant mesprison.
whom one holds by great wrong
Pour lui mourrai, au mien avis,
For him I-shall-die to-the my opinion
qu'il n'en istra, ce crei, ja vis.
for-he not-thence will-issue this I-believe ever alive

Istra! Non veir. Par quel proece
Will-issue No truly By what prowess
istrait il de tel forterece?
would-issue he from such fortress
Par mei veir ne sera ce mie.
By me truly not will-be this at-all
Si n'oi, ce crei, de sen demie,
So not-I-had this I-believe of sense half
ainz fis grant folie e grant rage,
rather I-did great folly and great madness
quant au deu d'Amours fis omage.
when to-the god of-Love I-did homage
Dame Oiseuse le me fist faire:
Lady Idleness it me made do
honi seit li e son afaire,
shamed be she and her affair
qui me fist ou joli vergier
who me made in-the pretty garden
par ma priere herbergier!
by my prayer to-lodge
Car, s'ele eüst nul bien seü,
For if-she had any good known
el ne m'eüst onques creü:
she not me-would-have ever believed
l'en ne deit pas creire fol ome
one not ought at-all believe a-foolish man
de la value d'une pome;
of the value of-an apple

blasmer le deit l'en e reprendre
blame him ought one and reprove
ainz qu'en li laist folie emprendre;
before that-one him let folly to-undertake
e je fui fos e el me crut.
and I was a-fool and she me believed
Onques par li biens ne me crut;
Ever by her good not to-me grew
el m'acompli trop mon vouleir,
she for-me-fulfilled too my will
si m'en esteut plaindre e douleir.
so me-thereof it-behooves to-lament and to-grieve
Bien le m'avait Raison noté;
Well it to-me-had Reason noted
tenir m'en puis pour rassoté
hold myself-thereof I-can for besotted
quant des lors d'amer ne recrui,
when from then of-loving not I-desisted
e le conseil Raison ne crui.
and the counsel (of-)Reason not I-believed
Dreit ot Raison de mei blasmer,
Right had Reason of me to-blame
quant onques m'entremis d'amer;
when ever myself-I-meddled with-loving
trop griés maus m'en couvient sentir.
exceedingly grievous ills me-thereof it-behooves to-feel
Je m'en vueil, ce crei, repentir.
I myself-thereof wish this I-believe to-repent
Repentir! Las! je que feraie?
To-repent Alas I what would-do

Traïtres, faus, honiz seraie.
Traitor false shamed I-would-be
Maufez m'avrait bien envaï:
The-Devil me-would-have well assailed
j'avraie mon seigneur traï,
I-would-have my lord betrayed
Bel Acueil reserait traïz.
Fair Welcome would-be-in-turn betrayed
Deit il estre par mei haïz,
Ought he be by me hated
s'il, pour mei faire courteisie,
if-he for to-me to-do courtesy
languist en la tour Jalousie?
languishes in the tower (of-)Jealousy
Courteisie me fist il? Veire,
Courtesy to-me did he Truly
si grant que nus nou pourrait creire,
so great that anyone not-it could believe
quant il vost que je trespassasse
when he wished that I should-cross
la haie e la rose baisasse.
the hedge and the rose should-kiss
Ne l'en dei pas mal gré saveir,
Not him-thereof I-ought at-all ill thanks to-know
ne je ne l'en savrai ja veir.
nor I not him-thereof shall-know ever truly
Ja, se Deu plaist, dou deu d'Amours
Ever if to-God it-pleases of-the god of-Love
ne de lui plaintes ne clamours,
nor of him complaints nor outcries

ne d'Esperance, ne d'Oiseuse,
nor of-Hope nor of-Idleness
qui tant m'a esté gracieuse,
who so-much to-me-has been gracious
ne ferai mais, car tort avraie
not I-shall-make more for wrong I-would-have
se de leur bien faiz me plaignaie.
if of their good deeds myself I-complained
Donc n'i a mais fors dou sofrir
Then not-there is more except of-the suffering
e mon cors a martire ofrir,
and my body to martyrdom to-offer
e d'atendre en bone esperance
and of-awaiting in good hope
tant qu'Amours m'enveit alejance.
until that-Love me-send relief
Atendre merci me couvient,
To-await mercy me it-behooves
car il me dist, bien m'en souvient:
for he me told well me-thereof it-remembers
«Ton servise prendrai de gré,
Thy service I-shall-take with pleasure
e te metrai en haut degré,
and thee I-shall-put in high degree
se mauvaistié ne le te tost;
if wickedness not it from-thee take-away
mais, espeir, ce n'iert mie tost.»
but perhaps this not-will-be at-all soon
Ce sont si dit tuit mot a mot:
These are his sayings all word for word

bien pert que tendrement m'amot.
well it-appears that tenderly me-be-loved
Donc n'i a fors de bien servir,
Then not-there is except of well to-serve
se je vueil son gré deservir,
if I wish his favor to-deserve
qu'en mei seraient li defaut:
for-in me would-be the faults
ou deu d'Amours pas ne defaut, 4190
in-the god of-Love at-all not it-fails
par fei, que deus ne failli onques:
by faith for a-god not failed ever
certes il defaut en mei donques,
certainly it fails in me then
si ne sai je pas don ce vient,
so not know I at-all whence this comes
ne ja ne savrai, se devient.
nor ever not I-shall-know if it-happens
Or aut si come aler pourra, 4195
Now let-it-go so as go it-will-be-able
face en Amours ce qu'il vourra,
let-do thereof Love that which-he will-wish
ou d'eschaper ou d'encourir,
either of-escaping or of-incurring
s'il veaut, si me laisse mourir.
if-he wishes so me may-he-let to-die
N'en vendraie jamais a chief,
Not-thereof I-would-come ever to end
si sui je morz se ne l'achief, 4200
so am I dead if not it-I-achieve

ou s'autres pour mei ne l'achieve;
or if-another for me not it-achieves
mais s'Amours, qui si fort me grieve,
but if-Love who so strongly me grieves
pour mei le voulait achever,
for me it wished to-achieve
nus maus ne me pourrait grever
any ill not me could grieve
qui m'avenist en son servise.
which to-me-might-befall in his service
Or aut dou tout a sa devise,
Now let-it-go of-the all at his pleasure
mete i conseil s'il l'i veaut metre,
let-him-put there counsel if-he it-there wishes to-put
je ne m'en sai plus entremetre.
I not myself-thereof know-how more to-meddle
Mais, coment que de mei aviegne,
But however that of me it-may-come
je li pri que il li souviegne
I him pray that it to-him may-come-to-mind
de Bel Acueil emprès ma mort,
of Fair Welcome after my death
qui, senz mei mal faire, m'a mort;
who without to-me harm to-do me-has killed
e touteveis, pour lui deduire,
and nevertheless for him to-delight
a vous, Amours, ainz que je muire,
to you Love before that I die
des que ne puis porter son fais,
since that not I-can bear his burden

senz repentir me faz confès,
without repenting myself I-make confessed
si con font li leial amant,
so as do the loyal lovers
e vueil faire mon testament:
and I-wish to-make my testament
au departir mon cueur li lais.
at-the departing my heart to-him I-leave
Ja ne seront autre mi lais. 4220
Ever not will-be other my legacies

Reason Returns, and Love in Contraries

XXV

Hearing his complaints, Reason comes down from her tower again and asks whether he is tired of loving yet. He admits he knows his lord only by the rules he was given, and she offers to teach him. She describes love in a run of contraries: hateful peace, loving hatred, reasonable madness, a sickness full of health, a sweet hell and a sorrowful paradise, a moth that spares neither purple nor homespun. No one escapes it except those Genius excommunicates for wronging Nature, and the only cure is flight. The lover says he has learned nothing and asks her to define love.

Tant come ainsinc me dementaie
While as thus myself I-lamented
des granz douleurs que je sentaie,
of-the great griefs which I felt
ne ne savaie ou querre mire
nor not I-knew where to-seek a-physician
de ma tristece ne de m'ire,
for my sadness nor for my-grief

lors vi dreit a mei revenant
then I-saw straight to me returning
Raison la bele, l'avenant,
Reason the fair the-comely
qui de sa tour jus descendi
who from her tower down descended
quant mes complaintes entendi:
when my complaints she-heard
«Beaus amis», dist Raison la bele,
Fair friend said Reason the fair
«coment se porte la querele?
how itself bears the quarrel
Seras tu ja d'amer lassez?
Wilt-be thou ever of-loving wearied
N'as tu pas eü mal assez?
Not-hast thou at-all had ill enough
Que te semble or des maus d'amer?
What to-thee seems now of-the ills of-loving
Sont il trop douz ou trop amer?
Are they too sweet or too bitter
Sez en tu le meien eslire
Knowest thereof thou the mean to-choose
qui te puist aidier e soufire?
which thee may help and suffice
As tu or bon seigneur servi,
Hast thou now a-good lord served
qui si t'a pris e asservi
who so thee-has taken and enslaved
e te tourmente senz sejour?
and thee torments without respite

Il te meschaï bien le jour
It to-thee befell-ill well the day
qu'onques omage li feïs;
that-ever homage to-him thou-didst
fos fus quant a ce te meïs;
a-fool thou-wast when to this thyself thou-didst-put
mais, senz faille, tu ne savaies
but without fail thou not knewest
a quel seigneur afaire avaies,
with what lord to-do thou-hadst
car, se tu bien le queneüsses,
for if thou well him hadst-known
onques ses on esté n'eüsses,
ever his man been not-thou-hadst
ou, se tu l'eüsses esté,
or if thou it-hadst been
ja nou servisses un esté,
ever not-him thou-wouldst-have-served one summer
non pas un jour, non pas une eure,
not at-all one day not at-all one hour
ainz crei que senz point de demeure
rather I-believe that without a-whit of delay
son omage li reneiasses,
his homage to-him thou-wouldst-renounce
ne jamais par amour n'amasses.
nor ever by love not-thou-wouldst-love
Quenois le tu point? — Oïl, dame.
Knowest him thou at-all Yes lady
— Non faiz. — Si faz. — De quei, par t'ame?
Not thou-dost So I-do Of what by thy-soul

— De tant qu'il me dist: Tu deiz estre
Of so-much that-he me told Thou oughtest be
mout liez don tu as si bon maistre
very glad whereof thou hast so good a-master
e seigneur de si haut renon.
and lord of so high renown
— Quenois le tu de plus? — Je non,
Knowest him thou of more I not
fors tant qu'il me bailla ses regles,
except so-much that-he me gave his rules
e s'en foï plus tost qu'uns aigles;
and himself-thence fled more quickly than-an eagle
e je remés en la balance.
and I remained in the balance
— Certes, c'est povre quenoissance;
Certainly this-is poor knowledge
mais or vueil que tu le quenoisses,
but now I-wish that thou him know
qui tant en as beü d'angoisses
who so-much thereof hast drunk of-anguishes
que touz en iés desfigurez.
that wholly thereby thou-art disfigured
Nus las chaitis maleürez
Any weary wretch ill-starred
ne peut fais emprendre graigneur.
not can burden undertake greater
Bon fait quenoistre son seigneur,
Good it-makes to-know one's lord
e se cetui bien quenoissaies,
and if this-one well thou-knewest

legierement issir pourraies
lightly issue thou-couldst
de la prison ou tant empires.
from the prison where so-much thou-worsenest
— Dame, veir, puis qu'il est mes sires,
Lady truly since that-he is my lord
e je ses on liges entiers,
and I his man liege entire
mout i entendist volentiers
much thereto would-attend willingly
mes cuers, e plus en apreïst,
my heart and more thereof would-learn
s'il fust qui leçon l'en preïst.
if-there were who lesson him-thereof would-take
— Par mon chief, je la t'en vueil prendre,
By my head I it to-thee-thereof wish to-take
puis que tes cueurs i veaut entendre.
since that thy heart thereto wishes to-attend
Or te demonterrai senz fable
Now to-thee I-shall-demonstrate without fable
chose qui n'est pas demontrable;
a-thing which not-is at-all demonstrable
si savras tantost senz science
so thou-wilt-know at-once without science
e quenoistras senz quenoissance
and thou-wilt-know without knowledge
ce qui ne peut estre seü
that which not can be known
ne demontré ne queneü,
nor demonstrated nor known

quant a ce que ja plus en sache
as-far-as to this that ever more thereof may-know
nus on qui son cueur i atache,
any man who his heart thereto attaches
ne que ja pour ce meins s'en dueille,
nor that ever for this less himself-thereof grieve
s'il n'est teus que foïr le vueille.
if-he not-is such that to-flee it he-wish
Lors t'avrai le neu desnoé
Then to-thee-I-shall-have the knot untied
que toujourz trouveras noé.
which always thou-wilt-find knotted
Or i met bien t'entencion,
Now thereto put well thy-attention
veiz en ci la descripcion:
see thereof here the description
amour ce est pais haïneuse,
love this is peace hateful
amour c'est haïne amoureuse;
love this-is hatred loving
c'est leiautez la desleiaus,
this-is loyalty the disloyal
c'est la desleiautez leiaus;
this-is the disloyalty loyal
c'est peeur toute asseüree,
this-is fear all assured
esperance desesperee;
hope despairing
c'est raison toute forsenable,
this-is reason all maddened

c'est forsenerie raisnable;
this-is madness reasonable
c'est douz periz a sei neier;
this-is sweet peril to oneself to-drown
griés fais legiers a paumeier;
heavy burden light to handle
c'est Caribdis la perilleuse,
this-is Charybdis the perilous
desagreable e gracieuse;
disagreeable and gracious
c'est langueur toute santeïve,
this-is languor all healthy
c'est santé toute maladive;
this-is health all sickly
c'est fain saoule en abondance;
this-is hunger sated in abundance
c'est couveiteuse soufisance;
this-is covetous sufficiency
c'est la seif qui toujourz est ivre,
this-is the thirst which always is drunk
ivrece qui de seif s'enivre;
drunkenness which with thirst itself-intoxicates
c'est faus deliz, c'est tristeur liee,
this-is false delight this-is sadness glad
c'est leece la courrouciee;
this-is gladness the angered
douz maus, douceur malicieuse,
sweet ill sweetness malicious
douce saveur mal savoureuse;
sweet savor ill savory

entechiez de pardon pechiez,
stained with pardon sin
de pechié pardons entechiez;
with sin pardon stained
c'est peine qui trop est joieuse,
this-is pain which exceedingly is joyous
c'est felonie la piteuse,
this-is felony the piteous
c'est li jeus qui n'est point estables,
this-is the game which not-is at-all stable
estaz trop fers e trop muables,
state too firm and too changeable
force enferme, enfermeté forz,
strength infirm infirmity strong
qui tout esmeut par ses efforz;
which all moves by its efforts
c'est fos sens, c'est sage folie,
this-is foolish sense this-is wise folly
prosperité triste e jolie;
prosperity sad and merry
c'est ris pleins de pleurs e de lermes,
this-is laughter full of weeping and of tears
repos travaillanz en touz termes;
rest laboring in all seasons
ce est enfers li doucereus,
this is hell the sweet
c'est paradis li doulereus;
this-is paradise the sorrowful
c'est chartre qui prisons soulage,
this-is a-jail which prisoners comforts

printens pleins de freit ivernage;
springtime full of cold winter
c'est teigne qui riens ne refuse,
this-is moth which anything not refuses
les pourpres e les bureaus use,
the purples and the homespuns wears-out
car ausinc bien sont amouretes
for just-as well are love-affairs
souz bureaus come souz brunetes,
under homespuns as under fine-cloths
car nus n'est de si haut lignage,
for anyone not-is of so high lineage
ne nul ne treuve l'en si sage,
nor anyone not finds one so wise
ne de force tant esprouvé,
nor of strength so-much proved
ne si hardi n'a l'en trouvé,
nor so bold not-has one found
ne qui tant ait d'autres bontez,
nor who so-much may-have of-other virtues
qui par Amours ne seit dontez.
who by Love not be tamed
Touz li mondes va cele veie;
All the world goes that way
c'est li deus qui touz les desveie,
this-is the god who all them leads-astray

se ne sont cil de male vie
if not are those of evil life
que Genius escomenie
whom Genius excommunicates
pour ce qu'il font tort a Nature;
for this that-they do wrong to Nature
ne pour ce, se je n'ai d'aus cure,
nor for this if I not-have of-them care
ne vueil je pas que les genz aiment
not wish I at-all that the folk love
de cele amour don il se claiment
with that love whereof they themselves call
en la fin las, chaitif, dolent,
in the end weary wretched sorrowful
tant les vait Amours afolant.
so-much them goes Love maddening
Mais se tu veauz bien eschever
But if thou wishest well to-avoid
qu'Amours ne te puisse grever,
that-Love — thee can grieve
e veauz guerir de cete rage,
and wishest to-be-healed of this madness
ne peuz beivre si bon bevrage
not thou-canst drink so good drink
come penser de lui foïr:
as to-think of him to-flee
tu n'en peuz autrement joïr;
thou not-thereof canst otherwise to-enjoy

se tu le suiz, il te suira,
if thou him followest he thee will-follow
se tu t'en fuiz, il s'en fuira.»
if thou thyself-thence fleest he himself-thence will-flee
Quant j'oi bien Raison entendue,
When I-had well Reason heard
qui pour neient s'est debatue:
who for nothing herself-is struggled
«Dame», fis je, «de ce me vant,
Lady said I of this myself I-boast
je n'en sai pas plus que devant,
I not-thereof know at-all more than before
a ce que m'en puisse retraire.
as-to this that myself-thence I-may draw-back
En ma leçon a tant contraire
In my lesson there-is so-much contrary
que je n'en puis neient aprendre,
that I not-thereof can anything learn
si la sai je bien par cueur rendre,
yet it know I well by heart to-render
qu'onc mes cueurs riens n'en oublia,
for-ever my heart anything not-thereof forgot
veire entendre quanqu'il i a
yea to-understand whatever-it there has
pour lire en tout comunement,
for to-read in all commonly
ne mais a mei tant seulement;
nor but to me so only
mais puis qu'amour m'avez descrite,
but since that-love to-me-you-have described

e tant loee e tant despite,
and so-much praised and so-much despised
prier vous vueil dou defenir,
to-pray you I-wish of-the defining
si qu'il m'en puist meauz souvenir,
so that-it me-thereof may better remember
car ne l'oï defenir onques.
for not it-I-heard to-define ever
— Volentiers; or i entent donques:
Willingly now thereto attend then

Love Defined, and Youth and Old Age

XXVI

Reason defines love as a sickness of thought between two persons of different sex, born of disordered sight, that seeks embraces and carnal pleasure; some men only feign it to deceive women, and they are the least deceived. Nature put delight in the act so that its workers would not flee it and the species would go on; whoever seeks delight alone serves the prince of all vices, as Tully says in his book on old age. Youth, Delight's chambermaid, drives men and women into every folly, even into a convent they then regret, and Old Age draws them back: Labor and Grief, who lodge her, beat her until she repents her wasted past, and only penance can bring her back to the sovereign good.

Amour, se bien sui apensee,
Love if well I-am bethought
c'est maladie de pensee
this-is malady of thought
entre deus persones annexe,
between two persons joined

franches entre eus, de divers sexe,
free between them of different sex
venant aus genz par ardeur nee
coming to-the folk by ardor born
de vision desordenee,
of vision disordered
pour acoler e pour baisier,
for to-embrace and for to-kiss
pour aus charnelment aaisier.
for themselves carnally to-gratify
Amanz autre chose n'entent,
A-lover other thing not-intends
ainz s'art e se delite en tant.
rather himself-burns and himself delights in so-much
De fruit aveir ne fait il force;
Of fruit to-have not makes he force
au deliter senz plus s'efforce.
at-the delighting without more himself-exerts
Si sont aucun de tel maniere
So are some of such manner
que cete amour n'ont mie chiere,
that this love not-have at-all dear
touteveis fins amanz se feignent,
nevertheless true lovers themselves feign
mais par amour amer ne deignent,
but by love to-love not deign
e se gabent ainsinc des dames,
and themselves mock thus of-the ladies
e leur prometent cors et ames,
and to-them promise bodies and souls

e jurent mençonges e fables
and swear lies and fables
a ceus qu'il treuvent decevables,
to those whom-they find deceivable
tant qu'il ont leur delit eü;
until that-they have their delight had
mais cil sont li meins deceü,
but those are the least deceived
car adès vient il meauz, beau maistre,
for ever comes it better fair master
deceveir que deceüz estre;
to-deceive than deceived to-be
meïsmement en cete guerre,
especially in this war
quant le meien n'i sevent querre.
when the mean not-there they-know-how to-seek
Mais je sai bien, pas nou devin,
But I know well at-all not-it I-divine
continuer l'estre devin
to-continue the-being divine
a son poeir vouleir deüst
to his power wish ought
quiconques a fame geüst,
whoever with woman should-lie
e sei garder en son semblable,
and himself to-keep in his like
pour ce qu'il sont tuit corrompable,
for this that-they are all corruptible

si que ja par succession
so that ever by succession
ne fausist generacion;
not should-fail generation
car, puis que pere e mere faillent,
for since that father and mother fail
Nature veaut que li fill saillent,
Nature wishes that the sons spring-forth
pour recontinuer cete euvre,
for to-continue-in-turn this work
si que par l'un l'autre recueuvre.
so that by the-one the-other recovers
Pour c'i mist Nature delit,
For this-there put Nature delight
pour ce veaut que l'en s'i delit
for this she-wishes that one oneself-there delight
que cil ouvrier ne s'en foïssent
that those workers not themselves-thence should-flee
e que cete euvre ne haïssent,
and that this work not they-should-hate
car maint n'i trairaient ja trait
for many not-there would-draw ever stroke
se n'iert deliz qui les atrait.
if not-were delight which them attracts
Ainsinc Nature i soutiva.
Thus Nature there contrived
Saches que nus a dreit n'i va,
Know that anyone with right not-there goes
ne n'a pas entencion dreite,
nor not-has at-all intention right

qui senz plus delit i couveite;
who without more delight there covets
car cil qui va delit querant,
for he who goes delight seeking
sez tu qu'il se fait? Il se rent,
knowest thou what-he himself does He himself gives-up
comme sers e chaitis e nices,
as serf and wretch and simpleton
au prince de trestouz les vices;
to-the prince of all the vices
car c'est de touz maus la racine,
for this-is of all ills the root
si con Tulles le determine
so as Tully it determines
ou livre qu'il fist de Vieillece,
in-the book which-he made of Old-Age
qu'il loe e veaut plus que Jennece;
which-he praises and wishes more than Youth
car Jennece boute ome e fame
for Youth thrusts man and woman
en touz periz de cors e d'ame,
into all perils of body and of-soul
e trop est fort chose a passer
and exceedingly is hard thing to pass
senz mort ou senz membre casser,
without death or without limb to-break
ou senz faire honte ou domage
or without to-do shame or damage
seit a sei ou a son lignage.
be-it to himself or to his lineage

Par Jennece s'en va li ons
By Youth himself-thence goes the man
en toutes dissolucions,
into all dissolutions
e suit les males compaignies
and follows the evil companies
e les desordenees vies,
and the disordered lives
e mue son propos souvent;
and changes his purpose often
ou se rent en aucun couvent,
or himself gives into some convent
qu'il ne set garder la franchise
for-he not knows-how to-keep the freedom
que Nature avait en lui mise,
which Nature had in him put
e cuide prendre au ciel la grue
and thinks to-take in-the sky the crane
quant il se met ileuc en mue,
when he himself puts there in mew
e remaint tant qu'il seit profès;
and remains until that-he be professed
ou, s'il resent trop grief lo fais,
or if-he feels too heavy the burden
si s'en repent e puis s'en ist;
so himself-thereof repents and then himself-thence issues
ou sa vie espeir i fenist,
or his life perhaps there finishes
qu'il ne s'en ose revenir,
for-he not himself-thence dares to-come-back

pour Honte qui l'i fait tenir,
for Shame which him-there makes remain
e contre son cueur i demeure.
and against his heart there remains
La vit a grant mesaise e pleure
There he-lives in great distress and weeps
la franchise qu'il a perdue,
the freedom which-he has lost
qui ne li peut estre rendue,
which not to-him can be rendered
se n'est que Deus grace li face,
if not-is that God grace to-him may-do
qui sa mesaise li efface
who his distress for-him effaces
e le tiegne en obedience
and him may-keep in obedience
par la vertu de pacience.
by the virtue of patience
Jennece met ome es folies,
Youth puts man into-the follies
es boules, es ribauderies,
into-the frauds into-the ribaldries
es luxures e es outrages,
into-the lusts and into-the outrages
es mutacions de courages,
into-the mutations of hearts
e fait comencier teus mellees
and makes begin such brawls
qui puis sont enviz desmellees.
which then are reluctantly untangled

En teus periz les met Jennece,
Into such perils them puts Youth
qui les cueurs a Delit adrece.
who the hearts to Delight directs
Ainsinc Deliz enlace e meine
Thus Delight enlaces and leads
le cors e la pensee humaine
the body and the thought human
par Jennece sa chamberiere,
by Youth his chambermaid
qui de mal faire est coustumiere,
who of evil to-do is accustomed
e des genz a Delit atraire.
and of-the folk to Delight to-attract
Ja ne querrait autre euvre faire.
Ever not she-would-seek other work to-do
Mais Vieillece les en resache.
But Old-Age them thence draws-back
Qui ce ne set si le resache,
Who this not knows so it may-learn
ou le demant aus anciens
or it may-ask of-the ancients
que Jennece ot en ses liens;
whom Youth had in her bonds
qu'il leur remembre encore assez
for-it them reminds yet plenty
des granz periz qu'il ont passez
of-the great perils which-they have passed
e des folies qu'il ont faites;
and of-the follies which-they have done

don les forces leur a soutraites,
whereof the forces from-them has withdrawn
avec les foles volentez
with the foolish wills
don il seulent estre tentez,
whereby they were-wont to-be tempted
Vieillece, qui les acompaigne,
Old-Age who them accompanies
qui mout leur est bone compaigne,
who very to-them is good companion
qui les rameine a dreite veie
who them leads-back to right way
e jusqu'en la fin les conveie.
and until-in the end them escorts
Mais mal empleie son servise,
But ill she-employs her service
que nus ne l'aime ne ne prise,
for anyone not her-loves nor not prizes
au meins jusqu'a ce, tant en sai,
at-the least until this so-much thereof I-know
qu'il la vousist aveir en sei,
that-he her would-wish to-have in himself
car nus ne veaut veauz devenir
for anyone not wishes old to-become
ne jennes sa vie fenir.
nor young his life to-end
Si s'esbaïssent e merveillent,
So themselves-astonish and marvel

quant en leur remembrance veillent
when in their remembrance they-watch
e des folies leur souvient,
and of-the follies to-them it-remembers
si con souvenir leur couvient,
so as to-remember to-them it-behooves
coment il firent tel besoigne
how they did such business
senz receveir honte e vergoigne;
without receiving shame and disgrace
ou, se honte e domage i orent,
or if shame and damage there they-had
coment encore eschaper porent
how yet escape they-could
de teus periz senz pis aveir
from such perils without worse to-have
ou d'ame ou de cors ou d'aveir.
either of-soul or of body or of-wealth
E sez tu ou Jennece maint,
And knowest thou where Youth dwells
que tant prisent maintes e maint?
whom so-much prize many(-women) and many(-men)
Deliz la tient en sa maison
Delight her holds in his house
tant come ele est en sa saison,
as-long as she is in her season
e veaut que Jennece le serve,
and wishes that Youth him serve
pour neient fust neïs sa serve;
for nothing she-were even his serf

e el si fait si volentiers
and she so does so willingly
qu'el le trace par touz sentiers,
that-she him tracks through all paths
e son cors a bandon li livre;
and her body at will to-him delivers
n'el ne voudrait pas senz lui vivre.
nor-she not would-wish at-all without him to-live
E Vieillece sez ou demeure?
And Old-Age knowest-thou where dwells
Dire le te vueil senz demeure,
To-tell it to-thee I-wish without delay
car la te couvient il aler,
for there thee behooves it to-go
se Mort ne te fait avaler
if Death not thee makes descend
ou tens de Jennece en sa cave,
in-the time of Youth into her cave
qui mout est tenebreuse e have.
which very is shadowy and dismal
Travauz e Douleur la herbergent;
Labor and Grief her lodge
mais il la lient e enfergent,
but they her bind and fetter
e tant la batent e tourmentent
and so-much her beat and torment
que mort prouchaine li presentent,
that death near to-her they-present
e talent de sei repentir,
and desire of herself to-repent

tant li font de flaiaus sentir.
so-much to-her they-make of flails to-feel
Adonc li vient en remembrance,
Then to-her comes in remembrance
en cete tardive presence,
in this late presence
quant el se veit feible e chenue,
when she herself sees feeble and hoary
que malement l'a deceüe
that badly her-has deceived
Jennece, qui tout a gité
Youth who all has cast
son preterit en vanité,
her past in vanity
e qu'ele a sa vie perdue
and that-she has her life lost
se dou futur n'est secourue,
if by-the future not-is succored
qui la soutiegne en penitence
which her sustain in penance
des pechiez qu'el fist en enfance,
of-the sins which-she did in childhood
e, par bien faire en cete peine,
and by well doing in this pain
au souverain bien la rameine,
to-the sovereign good her brings-back
don Jennece la dessevrait,
from-which Youth her separated
qui des vanitez s'abevrait;
who with-the vanities herself-watered

car li presenz si po li dure
for the present so little to-her lasts
qu'il n'i a conte ne mesure.
that-it not-there has count nor measure

The Fruit of Love, and the Lover's Retort

XXVII

Whoever would enjoy love, Reason says, should seek its fruit, though many women do not wish to be pregnant. A woman who gives herself for gifts is worthless, and a man is a fool to think she loves him; lovers may freely give each other a small jewel, but good love is born of a true heart. The love that holds the lover is carnal delight, which wastes his youth and strips him of virtue. Love throws her sermon out of his other ear; angry, he asks whether he must hate everyone, and begs her to define the other love she spoke of. Reason calls him a fool for scorning her counsel, but agrees to preach again.

Mais coment que la besoigne aille,
But however that the business go
qui veaut d'amours joïr senz faille,
who wishes of-love to-enjoy without fail
fruit i deit querre e cil e cele,
fruit there ought seek both he and she
quel qu'ele seit, dame ou pucele,
whatever that-she be lady or maiden
ja seit ce que dou deliter
ever be-it this that of-the delighting
ne deivent pas leur part quiter.
not they-ought at-all their part to-quit

Mais je sai bien qu'il en sont maintes
But I know well that-there thereof are many
qui ne veulent pas estre enceintes,
who not wish at-all to-be pregnant
e, s'eus le sont, il leur en poise,
and if-they it are it them thereof grieves
si n'en font eus ne plait ne noise,
so not-thereof make they neither plea nor noise
se n'est aucune fole e nice
if not-is some foolish and simple-one
ou Honte n'a point de joustice.
where Shame not-has a-whit of justice
Briement tuit a Delit s'acordent
Briefly all to Delight themselves-agree
cil qui a cete euvre s'amordent,
those who to this work themselves-attach
se ne sont genz qui riens ne vaillent,
if not are folk who anything not are-worth
qui pour deniers vilment se baillent,
who for pence vilely themselves give
qui ne sont pas des leis liees
who not are at-all by-the laws bound
par leur ordes vies soilliees.
by their foul lives soiled
Mais ja, certes, n'iert fame bone
But ever certainly not-will-be woman good
qui pour dons prendre s'abandone.
who for gifts to-take herself-abandons

Nus on ne se devrait ja prendre
Any man not himself ought ever take
a fame qui sa char veaut vendre:
to woman who her flesh wishes to-sell
pense il que fame ait son cors chier
thinks he that woman have her body dear
qui tout vif le veaut escorchier?
who all alive it wishes to-flay
Bien est chaitis e defoulez
Well is wretched and trampled
on qui si vilment est boulez
a-man who so vilely is cheated
qu'il cuide que tel fame l'aime
that-he thinks that such woman him-loves
pour ce que son ami le claime,
for this that her friend him she-calls
e qu'el li rit e li fait feste.
and that-she to-him laughs and to-him makes feast
Certainement nule tel beste
Certainly any such beast
ne deit estre amie clamee,
not ought be friend called
n'el n'est pas digne d'estre amee.
nor-she not-is at-all worthy of-being loved
L'en ne deit riens prisier moillier
One not ought anything prize a-wife
qui ome bee a despoillier.
who a-man aims to despoil
Je ne di pas que bien ne port,
I not say at-all that well not she-wear

e par soulaz e par deport,
both for solace and for sport
un joelet, se ses amis
a little-jewel if her friend
le li a doné ou tramis;
it to-her has given or sent
mais qu'ele pas ne le demant,
provided that-she at-all not it ask
qu'el le prendrait lors laidement.
for-she it would-take then basely
E des siens ausinc li redoigne,
And of-the hers likewise to-him let-her-give-back
s'el le peut faire senz vergoigne.
if-she it can do without shame
Ainsinc leur cueurs ensemble joignent,
Thus their hearts together they-join
bien s'entraiment, bien s'entredoignent.
well each-other-they-love well each-other-they-give
Ne cuidiez pas que jes dessemble:
Not think at-all that I-them separate
je vueil bien qu'il aillent ensemble,
I wish well that-they go together
e facent quanqu'il deivent faire,
and do whatever-they ought do
come courteis e debonaire;
as courteous and gracious
mais de la fole amour se gardent
but from the foolish love themselves let-them-guard
don li cueur esprennent e ardent;
whereby the hearts kindle and burn

e seit l'amour senz couveitise,
and be the-love without covetousness
qui les faus cueurs de prendre atise.
which the false hearts to take incites
Bone amour deit de fin cueur naistre;
Good love ought from true heart to-be-born
don n'en deivent pas estre maistre
gift not-thereof ought at-all be master
ne quel font corporel soulaz.
nor than-it do bodily solaces
Mais l'amour qui te tient ou laz
But the-love which thee holds in-the snare
charneus deliz te represente,
carnal delight to-thee presents
si que tu n'as ailleurs t'entente,
so that thou not-hast elsewhere thy-attention
pour ce veauz tu la rose aveir,
for this wishest thou the rose to-have
tu n'i songes nul autre aveir;
thou not-there dreamest any other possession
mais tu n'en iés pas a deus deie,
but thou not-thereof art at-all at two fingers
c'est ce qui la pel t'amaigreie,
this-is that which the skin for-thee-makes-lean
e qui de toutes vertuz t'oste.
and which from all virtues thee-removes
Mout receüs doulereus oste
Very thou-receivedst painful guest
quant onques Amours ostelas;
when ever Love thou-lodgedst

mauvais oste en ton ostel as;
evil guest in thy lodging thou-hast
pour ce te lo que hors l'en boutes
for this to-thee I-advise that out him-thence thou-thrust
qu'il te tost les pensees toutes
for-he from-thee takes the thoughts all
qui te deivent a preu tourner:
which to-thee ought to profit turn
ne l'i laisse plus sejourner.
not him-there let more to-stay
Trop sont a grant meschief livré
Exceedingly are to great mischief delivered
cueur qui d'amours sont enivré;
hearts which with-love are intoxicated
en la fin encor le savras,
in the end yet it thou-wilt-know
quant ton tens perdu i avras,
when thy time lost there thou-wilt-have
e degastee ta jouvente
and wasted thy youth
en cete leece dolente.
in this gladness sorrowful
Se tu peuz encore tant vivre
If thou canst yet so-long to-live
que d'amours te veies delivre,
that from-love thyself thou-see delivered
le tens qu'avras perdu plourras,
the time which-thou-wilt-have lost thou-wilt-weep
mais recouvrer ne le pourras.
but recover not it thou-wilt-be-able

Encor, se par tant en eschapes,
Still if by so-much thence thou-escapest
car, en l'amour ou tu t'entrapes,
for in the-love where thou thyself-entrappest
maint i perdent, bien dire l'os,
many there lose well to-say it-I-dare
sen, tens, chatel, cors, ame, los.»
sense time chattel body soul praise
Ainsinc Raison me preeschait;
Thus Reason me preached
mais Amours tout empeeschait
but Love all prevented
que riens a euvre n'en meïsse,
that anything to work thereof I-should-put
ja seit ce que bien entendisse
ever be-it this that well I-understood
mot a mot toute la matire;
word for word all the matter
car Amours, qui forment m'atire,
for Love who strongly me-draws
qui par trestouz mes pensers chace,
who through all my thoughts hunts
con cil qui par tout a sa chace,
as he who through all has his chase
e toujourz tient mon cueur souz s'ele,
and always holds my heart under his-wing
hors de ma teste, a une pele,
out of my head with a shovel
quant au sarmon seiant m'aguiete,
when at-the sermon sitting me-be-watches

par l'une des oreilles giete
by the-one of-the ears throws
quanque Raison en l'autre boute,
whatever Reason into the-other thrusts
si qu'ele i pert sa peine toute
so that-she there loses her pains all
e m'emple de courrouz e d'ire.
and me-fills with wrath and with-anger
Lors li pris touz irez a dire:
Then to-her I-began all angered to say
«Dame, bien me voulez traïr.
Lady well me you-wish to-betray
Dei je donques les genz haïr?
Ought I then the folk to-hate
Donc harrai je toutes persones?
Then shall-hate I all persons
Puis qu'amours ne sont mie bones,
Since that-loves not are at-all good
jamais n'amerai d'amours fines,
ever not-I-shall-love with-loves true
ainz vivrai toujourz en haïnes;
rather I-shall-live always in hatreds
lors si serai morteus pechierres,
then so I-shall-be mortal sinner
veire, par Deu, pires que lierres.
yea by God worse than thief
A ce ne puis je pas faillir.
To this not can I at-all fail
Par l'un me couvient il saillir:
By the-one me behooves it to-leap

ou j'amerai, ou je harrai;
either I-shall-love or I shall-hate
mais espeir que je comparrai
but perhaps that I shall-pay-for
plus la haïne au darrenier,
more the hatred at-the last
tout ne vaille amour un denier.
though not be-worth love a penny
Bon conseil m'avez or doné,
Good counsel to-me-you-have now given
qui toujourz m'avez sarmoné
who always me-you-have sermonized
que je deie d'amour recreire.
that I ought from-love desist
Or est fos qui ne vous veaut creire.
Now is a-fool who not you wishes to-believe
Si m'avez vous ramenteüe
Yet to-me-have you recalled
une autre amour mesqueneüe,
an other love unknown
que je ne vous oi pas blasmer,
which I not you heard at-all to-blame
don genz se peuent entramer:
whereby folk each-other can love
se la vouliez defenir,
if it you-wished to-define
pour fol me pourraie tenir
for a-fool myself I-could hold
se volentiers ne l'escoutaie,
if willingly not it-I-listened

saveir au meins se ja pourraie
to-know at-the least if ever I-could
les natures d'amours aprendre,
the natures of-love to-learn
s'il vous i plaisait a entendre.
if-it you there pleased to attend
— Certes, beaus amis, fos es tu,
Certainly fair friend a-fool art thou
quant tu ne prises un festu
when thou not prizest a straw
ce que pour ton preu te sarmon;
that which for thy profit to-thee I-preach
s'en vueil encor faire un sarmon,
so-thereof I-wish yet to-make a sermon
car de tout mon poeir sui preste
for with all my power I-am ready
d'acomplir ta bone requeste;
to-fulfill thy good request
mais ne sai s'il te vaudra guieres:
but not I-know if-it thee will-avail much

Friendship, and the Love That Fortune Gives

XXVIII

Friendship, Reason says, is a good will common among people, with goods shared and help given unasked; Tully says friends should grant only honest requests, unless life or good name is at stake. A feigned, covetous love lasts only while it hopes for profit, comes from Fortune, and is eclipsed like the moon by Poverty; a rich man who thinks himself loved, loving no one, is a bigger fool than a stag is horned.

Amours sont de pluseurs manieres,
Loves are of several fashions
senz cele qui si t'a mué,
besides that-one which so thee-has changed
e de ton dreit sen remué.
and from thy right sense removed
De male eure fus ses acointes;
In evil hour thou-wast its acquaintance
pour Deu, gar que plus ne l'acointes.
for God beware that more not it-thou-befriend
Amitiez est nomee l'une:
Friendship is named the-one
c'est bone volenté comune
this-is good will common
de genz entr'aus senz descordance,
of folk between-themselves without discord
selonc la Deu benivolence.
according-to the (of-)God benevolence
E seit entr'aus comunité
And let-there-be between-themselves community
de touz leur biens en charité,
of all their goods in charity

si que par nule entencion
so that by any intention
n'i puisse aveir excepcion.
not-there may have exception
Ne seit l'uns d'aidier l'autre lenz,
Not let-be the-one of-helping the-other slow
come on fers, sages e celanz,
as a-man firm wise and discreet
e leiaus, car riens ne vaudrait
and loyal for anything not would-avail
li sens ou leiauté faudrait.
the sense where loyalty would-fail
Que l'uns quanqu'il ose penser
That the-one whatever-he dares to-think
puisse a son ami recenser
may to his friend recount
come a sei seul seürement,
as to himself alone securely
senz soupeçon d'encusement.
without suspicion of-betrayal
Teus meurs aveir deivent e seulent
Such ways have ought and are-wont
qui parfaitement amer veulent.
who perfectly to-love wish
Ne peut estre on bien amiables,
Not can be a-man well lovable
s'il n'est si fers e si estables
if-be not-is so firm and so stable
que pour Fortune ne se meuve,
that for Fortune not himself may-move

si qu'en un point toujourz le treuve,
so that-in one point always him may-find
ou riche ou povre, ses amis,
or rich or poor his friend
qui tout en lui son cuer a mis.
who wholly in him his heart has put
E s'a povreté le veit tendre,
And if-to poverty him he-sees tend
il ne deit mie tant atendre
he not ought at-all so-long wait
que cil s'aïde li requiere,
that that-one his-help of-him may-request
car bonté faite par priere
for kindness done by prayer
est trop malement chier vendue
is too wickedly dear sold
a cueurs qui sont de grant value.
to hearts which are of great worth
Mout a vaillanz on grant vergoigne
Much has a-worthy man great shame
quant il requiert que l'en li doigne,
when he requests that one to-him give
mout i pense, mout se soussie,
much thereon he-thinks much himself he-worries
mout a mesaise anceis qu'il prie,
much he-has distress before that-he prays
tel honte a de dire son dit,
such shame he-has of saying his word
e si redoute l'escondit.
and so fears the-refusal

Mais quant un tel en a trouvé,
But when a such thereof he-has found
qu'il a tant anceis esprouvé
that-he has so-much before proved
qu'il est bien certains de s'amour,
that-he is well certain of his-love
faire li veaut joie ou clamour
to-make to-him he-wishes joy or complaint
de touz les cas que penser ose,
of all the cases that to-think he-dares
senz honte aveir de nule chose,
without shame to-have of any thing
car coment en avrait il honte
for how thereof would-have he shame
se cil est teus con je te conte?
if that-one is such as I thee tell
Quant son secré dit li avra,
When his secret said to-him he-will-have
jamais li tierz ne le savra;
ever the third not it will-know
ne dou reprouche n'a il garde,
nor of-the reproach not-has he fear
car sages on sa langue garde;
for a-wise man his tongue guards
ce ne savrait mie fos faire:
this not would-know-how at-all a-fool to-do
nus fos ne set sa langue taire.
any fool not knows-how his tongue to-silence

Plus fera, qu'il le secourra
More he-will-do for-he him will-succor
de trestout quanque il pourra,
with all whatever he will-be-able
plus liez dou faire, au dire veir,
more glad of-the doing to tell truly
que ses amis dou receveir.
than his friend of-the receiving
E s'il ne li fait sa requeste,
And if-he not to-him does his request
n'en a il pas meins de moleste
not-thereof has he at-all less of vexation
que cil qui la li a requise,
than that-one who it of-him has requested
tant est d'amour grant la maistrise.
so is of-love great the mastery
E de son deul la meitié porte,
And of his grief the half he-carries
e de quanqu'il peut le conforte;
and with whatever-he can him comforts
e de sa joie a sa partie,
and of his joy has his part
se l'amour est a dreit partie.
if the-love is with right shared
Par la lei de cete amitié
By the law of this friendship
dit Tulles, en un sien ditié,
says Tully in a his-own treatise

que bien devons faire requeste
that well we-ought make request
a noz amis, s'ele est oneste;
to our friends if-it is honest
e leur requeste refaison,
and their request we-do-in-turn
s'ele contient dreit e raison.
if-it contains right and reason
Ne deit pas estre autrement faite,
Not ought at-all be otherwise done
fors en deus cas qu'il en excete:
except in two cases that-he thereof excepts
s'en les voulait a mort livrer,
if-one them wished to death to-deliver
penser devons d'aus delivrer;
think we-ought of-them to-deliver
se l'en assaut leur renomee,
if one assails their renown
gardons qu'el ne seit diffamee.
let-us-guard that-it not be defamed
En ces deus cas les leist defendre,
In these two cases them it-is-allowed to-defend
senz dreit e senz raison atendre:
without right and without reason to-await
tant come amour peut escuser,
so-far as love can excuse
ce ne deit nus on refuser.
this not ought any man refuse

Cete amour que ci te propos
This love which here to-thee I-propose
n'est pas contraire a mon propos:
not-is at-all contrary to my purpose
cete vueil je bien que tu sives,
this wish I well that thou follow
e vueil que l'autre amour eschives;
and I-wish that the-other love thou-shun
cete a toute vertu s'amort,
this to all virtue itself-attaches
mais l'autre met les genz a mort.
but the-other puts the folk to death
D'une autre amour te vueil retraire,
Of-an other love to-thee I-wish to-tell
qui rest a bone amour contraire,
which is-in-turn to good love contrary
e forment refait a blasmer:
and strongly does-in-turn to blame
c'est feinte volenté d'amer
this-is feigned will of-loving
en cueurs malades dou mahaing
in hearts sick of-the malady
de couveitise de gaaing.
of covetousness of gain
Cete amour est en tel balance:
This love is in such balance
si tost come el pert l'esperance
so soon as she loses the-hope
dou profit qu'ele veaut ataindre,
of-the profit which-she wishes to-attain

faillir la couvient e esteindre,
to-fail her it-behooves and to-be-quenched
car ne peut bien estre amoureus
for not can well be loving
cueurs qui n'aime les genz pour eus,
a-heart which not-loves the folk for themselves
ainz se feint e les vait flatant,
rather itself feigns and them goes flattering
pour le profit qu'il en atent.
for the profit which-it thereof awaits
C'est l'amour qui vient de Fortune,
This-is the-love which comes from Fortune
qui s'eclisse come la lune
which itself-eclipses as the moon
que la terre obnuble e enombre
which the earth clouds and shades
quant la lune chiet en son ombre,
when the moon falls in its shadow
s'a tant de sa clarté perdue
so-has so-much of her brightness lost
con dou soleil pert la veüe,
as of-the sun she-loses the sight
e quant el ra l'ombre passee,
and when she has-in-turn the-shadow passed
si revient toute enluminee
so comes-back all illumined
des rais que li solauz li montre,
by-the rays which the sun to-her shows
qui d'autre part reluist encontre:
which on-other side shines-back opposite

cete amour est d'autel nature,
this love is of-such nature
car or est clere, or est ocure.
for now is bright now is dark
Si tost con Povretez l'afuble
So soon as Poverty her-cloaks
de son hisdeus mantel obnuble,
with her hideous mantle cloudy
qu'el ne veit mais richeces luire,
so-that-she not sees more riches to-shine
ocurcir la couvient e fuire;
to-darken her it-behooves and to-flee
e quant richeces li reluisent,
and when riches on-her shine-back
toute clere la raconduisent,
all bright her they-bring-back
qu'el faut quant les richeces faillent
for-she fails when the riches fail
e saut si tost come eus resaillent.
and leaps so soon as they leap-back
De l'amour que je ci te nome
By the-love which I here to-thee name
sont amé trestuit li riche ome,
are loved all the rich men
especiaument li aver,
especially the misers

qui ne veulent leur cueurs laver
who not wish their hearts to-wash
de la grant ardure e dou vice
of the great burning and of-the vice
a la couveiteuse Avarice.
of the covetous Avarice
S'est plus cornarz qu'uns cers ramez
So-is more horned-fool than-a stag antlered
riches on qui cuide estre amez.
a-rich man who thinks to-be loved
N'est ce mie grant cornardie?
Not-is this at-all great folly
Il est certains qu'il n'aime mie:
He is certain that-he not-loves at-all
e coment cuide il que l'en l'aime,
and how thinks he that one him-loves
s'il en ce pour fol ne se claime?
if-he in this for a-fool not himself declares
En cet cas n'est il mie sages
In this case not-is he at-all wise
ne queus est uns beaus cers ramages.
nor such-as is a fair stag wild
Par Deu, cil deit estre amiables
By God he ought be lovable
qui desierre amis veritables;
who desires friends true
qu'il n'aime pas, prouver le puis,
that-he not-loves at-all prove it I-can

quant il a sa richece, puis
when he has his wealth since
que ses amis povres esgarde,
that his friends poor he-beholds
e devant aus la tient e garde,
and before them it holds and keeps
e toujourz garder la propose
and always to-keep it purposes
tant que la bouche lui seit close
until that the mouth to-him be closed
e que male mort l'acravent;
and that evil death him-crush
car il se laisserait avant
for he himself would-let rather
le cors par membres departir
the body by limbs to-divide
qu'il la sofrist de sei partir,
than-he it would-suffer from himself to-part
si que point ne leur en depart.
so that at-all not to-them thereof he-shares
Donc n'a ci point amour de part,
Then not-has here at-all love of part
car coment serait amitié
for how would-be friendship
en cueur qui n'a leial pitié?
in a-heart which not-has loyal pity
Certains en rest quant il ce fait,
Certain thereof he-is-in-turn when he this does
car chascuns set son propre fait.
for each knows his own deed

Certes, mout deit estre blasmez
Certainly much ought be blamed
on qui n'aime ne n'est amez.
a-man who not-loves nor not-is loved

Adverse Fortune and True Friends

XXIX

Adverse Fortune, Reason argues, profits men more than kind Fortune. The kind one suckles them like a mother, promises them stability on her wheel, and makes them believe they have more friends than they can count, all of it flattery. The adverse one tumbles them into the mud and lays a plaster of poverty on their hearts, and so shows them their friends: the false ones flee and defame them, the true ones stay. A friend is lost only through pride, anger, reproach, betrayed secrets, and slander, and is worth more than any wealth, so the poor man who learns this has gained.

E puis qu'a Fortune venons,
And since that-to Fortune we-come
quant de s'amour sarmon tenons,
when of her-love sermon we-hold
dire t'en vueil fiere merveille,
to-tell thee-thereof I-wish a-mighty marvel
n'onc, ce crei, n'oïs sa pareille.
nor-ever this I-believe not-heardest its like
Ne sai se tu le pourras creire,
Not I-know if thou it wilt-be-able believe
touteveis est ce chose veire,
nevertheless is this a-thing true
e si la treuve l'en escrite:
and so it finds one written

que meauz vaut aus genz e profite
that better avails to-the folk and profits
Fortune parverse e contraire
Fortune perverse and contrary
que la mole e la debonaire.
than the soft and the gracious
E se ce te semble doutable,
And if this to-thee seems doubtful
c'est bien par argument prouvable,
this-is well by argument provable
car la debonaire e la mole
for the gracious and the soft
leur ment e les boule e afole,
to-them lies and them cheats and maddens
e les alaite come mere
and them suckles as a-mother
qui ne semble estre point amere;
who not seems to-be at-all bitter
semblant leur fait d'estre loiaus,
semblance to-them she-makes of-being loyal
quant leur depart de ses joiaus,
when to-them she-shares of her jewels
come d'eneurs e de richeces,
as of-honors and of riches
de dignetez e de hauteces,
of dignities and of highnesses
e leur promet estableté
and to-them promises stability
en estat de muableté,
in state of mutability

e touz les paist de gloire vaine
and all them feeds with glory vain
en la beneürté mondaine
in the felicity worldly
quant seur sa roe les fait estre:
when upon her wheel them she-makes to-be
lors cuident estre si haut maistre,
then they-think to-be so high masters
e leur estaz si fers voeir
and their state so firm to-see
qu'il n'en puissent jamais choeir.
that-they not-thence may ever fall
E quant en tel point les a mis,
And when in such point them she-has put
creire leur fait qu'il ont d'amis
to-believe them she-makes that-they have of-friends
tant qu'il ne les sevent nombrer;
so-many that-they not them know-how to-number
n'il ne s'en peuent descombrer
nor-they not themselves-thereof can rid
qu'il n'aillent entour aus e viegnent
that-they go around them and come
e que pour seigneurs ne les tiegnent;
and that for lords — them hold
e leur prometent leur servises
and to-them promise their services
jusqu'au despendre les chemises,
until-the spending the shirts

veire jusques au sanc espandre
yea as-far to-the blood spilling
pour aus garantir e defendre,
for them to-protect and to-defend
prest d'obeïr e d'aus ensivre
ready to-obey and them to-follow
a touz les jourz qu'il ont a vivre.
on all the days that-they have to live
E cil qui teus paroles oient
And those who such words hear
s'en glorefient e les croient
themselves-thereof glorify and them believe
ausinc con ce fust evangile.
just as this were gospel
E tout est flaterie e guile,
And all is flattery and guile
si con cil après le savraient
so as those afterward it would-know
se touz leur biens perduz avaient,
if all their goods lost they-had
qu'il n'eüssent ou recouvrer:
so-that-they not-had where to-recover
lors verraient amis ouvrer,
then they-would-see friends to-work
car de cent amis aparanz,
for of a-hundred friends apparent
seient compaignons ou parenz,
be-they companions or kinsmen
s'uns leur en poait demourer,
if-one to-them thereof could remain

Deu en devraient aourer.
God thereof they-ought adore
Cete Fortune que j'ai dite,
This Fortune which I-have told
quant avec les omes abite,
when with the men dwells
ele trouble leur quenoissance
she troubles their knowledge
e les nourrist en ignorance.
and them nourishes in ignorance
Mais la contraire e la parverse,
But the contrary and the perverse
quant de leur granz estaz les verse,
when from their great states them overturns
e les tombe, au tour de la roe,
and them tumbles at-the turn of the wheel
dou somet envers en la boe,
from-the summit backward in the mud
e leur assiet, come marrastre,
and to-them applies as a-stepmother
au cueur un doulereus emplastre,
to-the heart a painful plaster
destrempé, non pas de vin aigre,
steeped not at-all in wine sour
mais de povreté lasse e maigre,
but in poverty weary and lean
cete montre qu'ele est veraie,
this-one shows that-she is true

e que nus fier ne se deie
and that anyone trust not himself ought
en la beneürté Fortune,
in the felicity (of-)Fortune
qu'il n'i a seürté nes une.
for-it not-there has security not-even one
Cete fait quenoistre e saveir,
This-one makes know and to-learn
des qu'il ont perdu leur aveir,
as-soon that-they have lost their wealth
de quel amour cil les amaient
with what love those them loved
qui leur ami devant estaient,
who their friends before were
car ceus que beneürtez done,
for those whom felicity gives
maleürtez si les estone
misfortune so them stuns
qu'il devienent tuit anemi,
that-they become all enemies
n'il n'en remaint un ne demi,
nor-there not-thereof remains one nor half
ainz s'en fuient e les reneient
rather themselves-thence flee and them deny
si tost come povres les veient.
so soon as poor them they-see
N'encor pas a tant ne s'en tienent,
Nor-yet at-all at so-much not themselves-thereof hold

mais par touz les leus ou il vienent
but through all the places where they come
blasmant les vont e diffamant,
blaming them they-go and defaming
e fos maleüreus clamant;
and fools unhappy calling
nes cil a cui plus de bien firent,
even those to whom more of good they-did
quant en leur granz estaz se virent,
when in their great states themselves they-saw
vont tesmoignant a voiz jolie
go testifying with voice merry
qu'il leur pert bien de leur folie.
that-it on-them appears well of their folly
N'en treuvent nus qui les secueurent.
Not-thereof they-find any who them succor
Mais li vrai ami leur demeurent,
But the true friends to-them remain
qui les cueurs ont de teus nobleces
who the hearts have of such noblenesses
qu'il n'aiment pas pour les richeces,
that-they not-love at-all for the riches
ne pour nul preu qu'il en atendent.
nor for any profit which-they thereof await
Cil les secueurent e defendent,
Those them succor and defend
car Fortune en aus riens n'a mis.
for Fortune in them anything not-has put
Toujourz aime qui est amis.
Always loves who is a-friend

Qui seur ami trairait s'espee
Who upon a-friend would-draw his-sword
n'avrait il pas l'amour copee,
not-would-have he at-all the-love cut
fors en ces cas que je vueil dire:
except in these cases which I wish to-tell
l'en le pert par orgueil, par ire,
one it loses by pride by anger
par reprouche, e par reveler
by reproach and by revealing
les secrez qui font a celer,
the secrets which are to conceal
e par la plaie doulereuse
and by the wound painful
de detraccion venimeuse.
of detraction venomous
Amis en ces cas s'en fuirait;
A-friend in these cases himself-thence would-flee
nule autre chose n'i nuirait.
any other thing not-there would-harm
Mais tel ami mout bien se preuvent
But such friends very well themselves prove
s'il entre mil un seul en treuvent.
if-they among thousand one only thereof find
E pour ce que nule richece
And for this that any wealth
a valeur d'ami ne s'adrece,
to worth of-friend not itself-raises

qu'el ne pourrait si haut ataindre
for-it not could so high reach
que valeur d'ami ne seit graindre,
that worth of-friend not be greater
qu'adès vaut meauz amis en veie
for-ever is-worth better a-friend on way
que ne font denier en courreie;
than — do pennies in purse
e Fortune la mescheanz,
and Fortune the unlucky
quant sus les omes est cheanz,
when upon the men is falling
si les fait, par son meschoeir,
so them makes by her mishap
trestouz si clerement voeir
all so clearly to-see
qu'el leur fait leur amis trouver,
that-she them makes their friends find
e par esperiment prouver
and by experiment to-prove
qu'il valent meauz que nul aveir
that-they are-worth better than any wealth
qu'il peüssent ou monde aveir:
which-they could in-the world have
donc leur profite aversité
then them profits adversity
plus que ne fait prosperité,
more than — does prosperity

car par cete ont il ignorance
for by this-one have they ignorance
e par aversité science.
and by adversity knowledge
E li povres, qui par tel preuve
And the poor-man who by such proof
les fins amis des faus espreuve,
the true friends from-the false proves
e les quenoist e les devise,
and them knows and them distinguishes
quant il iert riches a devise,
when he was rich at will
que tuit a toujourz li ofraient
that all for always to-him offered
cueurs e cors e quanqu'il avaient,
hearts and bodies and whatever-they had
que vousist il acheter lores
what would-wish he to-buy then
qu'il en seüst ce qu'il set ores?
that-he thereof might-know that which-he knows now
Meins eüst esté deceüz
Less he-would-have been deceived
s'il s'en fust lors aperceüz:
if-he himself-thereof were then aware
donc li fait graigneur avantage,
then to-him does greater advantage
puis que d'un fol a fait un sage,
since that of-a fool it-has made a wise-man

la mescheance qu'il receit
the mischance which-he receives
que richece qui le deceit.
than wealth which him deceives

Sufficiency, and Those Who Sell Their Knowledge

XXX

Riches do not make a man rich; sufficiency does. A man with not two loaves who is content is richer than a merchant with a hundred measures of wheat, who never stops striving to increase it. A poor man who looks for no more than his daily living reckons that if he falls sick he can go without food, be carried to the Hôtel-Dieu, or die and reach paradise sooner, and Pythagoras' Golden Verses say the soul freed from the body goes into the holy air; Boethius teaches that our country is not on earth, and, as the lover's own masters say, no one is wretched who does not think himself so. The coal porters of the Grève, who spend their wages at the tavern, are richer than usurers, and no merchant lives at ease: he sets out, as it were, to drink the whole Seine. Advocates and physicians who sell their knowledge hang by the same halter, and preachers who preach for honors or riches deceive themselves, even when their sermons help others.

Si ne fait pas richece riche 4975
So not makes at-all wealth rich
celui qui en tresor la fiche,
him who in treasure it fixes
car soufisance seulement
for sufficiency only
fait ome vivre richement;
makes a-man live richly

car teus n'a pas vaillant deus miches
for such-a-one not-has at-all worth two loaves
qui est plus a aise e plus riches
who is more at ease and more rich
que teus a cent muis de froment,
than such-a-one has a-hundred measures of wheat
si te puis bien dire coment:
so to-thee I-can well tell how
qu'il en est espeir marcheanz,
that-he thereof is perhaps merchant
si est ses cueurs si mescheanz
so is his heart so wretched
qu'il s'en est soussiez assez
that-he himself-thereof is worried plenty
ainz que cil tas fust amassez,
before that that heap was amassed
ne ne cesse de soussier,
nor not ceases of worrying
d'acreistre e de monteplier,
of-increasing and of multiplying
que jamais assez n'en avra,
for ever enough not-thereof he-will-have
ja tant aquerre ne savra.
ever so-much to-acquire not he-will-know-how
Mais li autres qui ne se fie
But the other who not himself trusts
ne mais qu'il ait au jour la vie,
no more-than that-he have for-the day the life
e li soufist ce qu'il gaaigne,
and him suffices that which-he earns

quant il se vit de sa gaaigne,
when he himself lives from his earning
ne ne cuide que riens li faille,
nor not thinks that anything to-him fail
tout n'ait il pas une maaille,
though not-have he at-all a halfpenny
mais bien veit qu'il gaaignera
but well sees that-he will-earn
pour mangier quant mestiers sera,
for to-eat when need will-be
e pour recouvrer chauceüre
and for to-obtain footwear
e couvenable vesteüre;
and fitting clothing
ou, s'il ravient qu'il seit malades
or if-it happens-in-turn that-he be sick
e truist toutes viandes fades,
and find all foods insipid
si se pourpense il touteveie,
so himself bethinks he nevertheless
pour sei giter de male veie
for himself to-cast from evil way
e pour issir hors de dangier,
and for to-issue out of difficulty
qu'il n'avra mestier de mangier;
that-he not-will-have need of eating
ou que de petite vitaille
or that with little victuals
se passera, coment qu'il aille;
himself he-will-pass however that-it go

ou riert a l'Ostel Deu portez,
or will-be-in-turn to the-Hostel (of-)God carried
lors sera bien reconfortez;
then he-will-be well comforted
ou espeir qu'il ne pense point
or perhaps that-he not thinks at-all
qu'il ja puist venir a ce point;
that-he ever may come to this point
ou, s'il creit que ce li aviegne,
or if-he believes that this to-him may-happen
pense il, ainz que li maus le tiegne,
thinks he before that the ill him may-hold
que tout a tens espernera
that all in time he-will-save
pour sei chevir quant la sera;
for himself to-provide when there he-will-be
ou, se d'espernier ne li chaut,
or if of-saving not to-him it-matters
ainz viegnent li freit e li chaut,
rather let-come the colds and the heats
ou la fain qui mourir le face,
or the hunger which to-die him may-make
pense il, espeir, e s'i soulace,
thinks he perhaps and himself-there consoles
que, quant plus tost defenira,
that when more soon he-will-end
plus tost en paradis ira,
more soon into paradise he-will-go

qu'il creit que Deus le li present
for-he believes that God it to-him may-present
quant il laira l'essil present.
when he will-leave the-exile present
Pytagoras te dit neïs,
Pythagoras thee tells even
se tu son livre onques veïs
if thou his book ever sawest
que l'en apele Vers dorez,
which one calls Verses golden
pour les diz dou livre onorez:
for the sayings of-the book honored
«Quant tu dou cors departiras,
When thou from-the body wilt-depart
touz frans ou saint air t'en iras
all free into-the holy air thyself-thence wilt-go
e laisseras humanité,
and wilt-leave humanity
vivanz en pure deïté.»
living in pure deity
Mout est chaitis e fos naïs
Very is wretched and fool natural
qui creit que ci seit ses païs:
who believes that here be his country
n'est pas vostre païs en terre,
not-is at-all your country on earth
ce peut l'en bien des clers enquerre
this can one well of-the clerks to-inquire
qui Boece, de Confort, lisent,
who Boethius of Consolation read

e les sentences qui la gisent;
and the sentences which there lie
don granz biens aus genz lais ferait
whereof great good to-the folk lay would-do
qui bien le leur translaterait.
who well it to-them would-translate
Ou, s'il rest teus qu'il se set vivre
Or if-he is-in-turn such that-he himself knows-how to-live
de ce que sa rente li livre,
of that which his rent to-him delivers
ne ne desierre autrui cheté,
nor not desires another's property
ainz cuide estre senz povreté,
rather thinks to-be without poverty
car, si con dient vostre maistre,
for so as say your masters
nus n'est chaitis s'il nou cuide estre,
anyone not-is wretched if-he not-it thinks to-be
seit reis, chevaliers ou ribauz.
be-he king knight or ribald
Maint ribaut ont les cueurs si bauz,
Many ribalds have the hearts so bold
portant sas de charbon en Grieve,
carrying sacks of coal in Grève
que la peine riens ne leur grieve,
that the toil at-all not them grieves
s'il en pacience travaillent,
if-they in patience labor
qu'il balent e tripent e saillent,
that-they dance and skip and leap

e vont a Saint Marcel aus tripes,
and go to Saint Marcel for-the tripe
ne ne prisent tresors treis pipes,
nor not prize treasures three pipes
ainz despendent en la taverne
rather spend in the tavern
tout leur gaaing e leur esperne,
all their gain and their saving
puis revont porter les fardeaus
then go-back to-carry the burdens
par leeces, non pas par deaus,
with gladness not at-all with griefs
e leiaument leur pain gaaignent,
and loyally their bread earn
quant embler ne tolir ne deignent;
when to-steal nor to-rob not they-deign
puis revont au tonel e beivent
then go-back to-the cask and drink
e vivent si con vivre deivent.
and live so as live they-ought
Tuit cil sont riche en abondance
All those are rich in abundance
s'il cuident aveir soufisance,
if-they think to-have sufficiency
plus, ce set Deus li dreituriers
more this knows God the righteous
que s'il estaient usuriers;
than if-they were usurers
car usurier, bien le t'afiche,
for usurers well it to-thee-I-affirm

ne pourraient pas estre riche,
not could at-all be rich
ainz sont tuit povre e soufraiteus,
rather are all poor and needy
tant sont aver e couveiteus.
so-much they-are miserly and covetous
E si rest veirs, cui qu'il desplaise,
And so is-in-turn true to-whomsoever that-it displease
nus marcheanz ne vit a aise,
any merchant not lives at ease
car son cueur a mis en tel guerre
for his heart he-has put in such war
qu'il art touz vis de plus aquerre,
that-he burns all alive of more to-acquire
ne ja n'avra assez aquis;
nor ever not-will-have enough acquired
si crient perdre l'aveir aquis;
so he-fears to-lose the-wealth acquired
e cueurt après le remenant,
and runs after the remainder
don ja ne se verra tenant,
whereof ever not himself he-will-see holding
car de riens desirrier n'a tel
for of anything desire not-has such
come d'aquerre autrui chatel.
as of-acquiring another's chattel
Emprise a merveilleuse peine:
Undertaken has marvelous task
il bee a beivre toute Seine,
he aims to drink all Seine

don ja tant beivre ne pourra
whereof ever so-much drink not he-will-be-able
que toujourz plus en demourra.
that always more thereof will-remain
C'est la destrece, c'est l'ardure,
This-is the distress this-is the-burning
c'est l'angoisse qui toujourz dure,
this-is the-anguish which always lasts
c'est la douleur, c'est la bataille
this-is the grief this-is the battle
qui li detrenche la couraille
which to-him cuts-up the guts
e le destreint en tel defaut:
and him constrains in such lack
quant plus aquiert, plus li defaut.
when more he-acquires more to-him lacks
Avocat e fisicien
Advocates and physicians
sont tuit lié de cet lien;
are all bound with this bond
s'il pour deniers science vendent,
if-they for pence knowledge sell
trestuit a cete hart se pendent.
all with this halter themselves hang
Tant ont le gaaing douz e sade
So-much they-have the gain sweet and tasty
que cist voudrait, pour un malade
that this-one would-wish for one sick-man
qu'il a, qu'il en eüst seissante,
whom-he has that-he thereof had sixty

e cil pour une cause trente,
and that-one for one case thirty
veire deus cenz, veire deus mile,
yea two hundred yea two thousand
tant les art couveitise e guile.
so-much them burns covetousness and guile
Si sont devin qui vont par terre:
So are divines who go through land
quant il preeschent pour aquerre
when they preach for to-acquire
eneurs ou graces ou richeces,
honors or favors or riches
il ront les cueurs en teus destreces.
they have-in-turn the hearts in such distresses
Cil ne vivent pas leiaument.
Those not live at-all loyally
Mais seur touz especiaument
But above all especially
cil qui pour vaine gloire tracent
those who for vain glory hunt
la mort de leur ames pourchacent.
the death of their souls procure
Deceüz est teus decevierres,
Deceived is such deceiver
car sachiez que teus preeschierres,
for know that such preacher
combien qu'il aus autres profit,
however-much that-he to-the others profit
a sei ne fait il nul profit,
to himself not does he any profit

car bone predicacion
for good preaching
vient bien de male entencion,
comes well from evil intention
qui n'a riens a celui valu, 5115
which not-has anything to that-one availed
tout face ele aus autres salu,
though do it to-the others salvation
car cist i prennent bon essemple,
for these there take good example
e cil de vaine gloire s'emple.
and that-one with vain glory himself-fills

Hoarders, Money's Revenge, and the Fear of Kings

XXXI

Hoarders who lock away their pence while the poor freeze neither love nor fear God, and suffer three torments: the labor of getting, the fear of losing, and the grief of leaving. If love reigned and the rich gave and lent without usury, there would be no poor; but the world has made love salable, Fraud has made private what was once common, and men have become serfs of their money, which avenges itself on them, while the generous ride it hard and give it wings, as Daedalus did for Icarus. God hates misers and loves Largesse, and riches give no happiness without security. Kings arm themselves out of Fear, a ribald of the Grève walks safer than a king with his treasure, and the king's men and strength are not his own.

Mais laissons teus preescheeurs
But let-us-leave such preachers
e palons des entasseeurs: 5120
and let-us-speak of-the hoarders

certes Deu n'aiment ne ne doutent,
certainly God not-they-love nor not fear
quant teus deniers en tresor boutent
when such pence in treasure they-thrust
e plus qu'il n'est mestiers les gardent
and more than-it is needful them keep
quant les povres dehors regardent
when the poor outside they-see
de freit trembler, de fain perir:
of cold to-tremble of hunger to-perish
Deus le leur savra bien merir.
God it to-them will-know-how well to-repay
Treis granz mescheances avienent
Three great mischances befall
a ceus qui teus vies maintienent:
to those who such lives maintain
par grant travail quierent richeces,
by great labor they-seek riches
peeur les tient en granz destreces
fear them holds in great distresses
tandis con dou garder ne cessent,
while as of-the keeping not they-cease
a douleur en la fin les laissent.
with grief in the end them they-leave
En tel torment meurent e vivent
In such torment die and live
cil qui les granz richeces sivent;
those who the great riches follow

ne ce n'est fors par le defaut
nor this not-is except by the lack
d'amour, qui par le monde faut;
of-love which through the world fails
car, cil qui richeces amassent,
for those who riches amass
s'en les amast e il amassent,
if-one them loved and they loved
e bone amour par tout reinast,
and good love through all reigned
que mauvaistié ne la faisnast,
that wickedness not it spoiled
mais plus donast qui plus eüst
but more gave who more had
a ceus que besoigneus seüst,
to those whom needy he-knew
ou prestast, non pas a usure,
or lent not at-all at usury
mais par charité nete e pure,
but by charity clean and pure
pour quei cil a bien entendissent
provided that those to good attended
e d'oiseuse se defendissent,
and from-idleness themselves defended
ou monde nul povre n'eüst
in-the world any poor-man not-there-would-be
ne nul aveir n'en i deüst.
nor any be not-thereof there ought

Mais tant est li mondes endables
But so-much is the world devilish
qu'il ont faites amours vendables:
that-they have made loves salable
nus n'aime fors pour son preu faire,
anyone not-loves except for his profit to-make
pour dons ou pour servise traire;
for gifts or for service to-draw
neïs fames se veulent vendre:
even women themselves wish to-sell
mal chief puisse tel vente prendre!
evil end may such sale take
Ainsinc Baraz a tout honi,
Thus Fraud has all shamed
par cui li bien, jadis oni,
by whom the goods formerly common
furent aus genz aproprié.
were to-the folk appropriated
Tant sont d'avarice lié
So-much they-are by-avarice bound
qu'il ont leur naturel franchise
that-they have their natural freedom
a vil servitude soumise,
to vile servitude submitted
qu'il sont tuit serf a leur deniers,
for-they are all serfs to their pence
qu'il tienent clos en leur greniers.
which-they hold closed in their granaries
Tienent! Certes, ainz sont tenu,
Hold Certainly rather they-are held

quant a tel meschief sont venu:
when to such mischief they-are come
de leur aveir ont fait leur maistre
of their wealth have made their master
li chaitif boterel terrestre.
the wretched toads earthly
L'aveirs n'est preuz fors pour despendre:
The-wealth not-is profitable except for to-spend
ce ne sevent il pas entendre,
this not know-how they at-all to-understand
ainz veulent tuit a ce respondre
rather wish all to this to-answer
qu'aveirs n'est preuz fors pour repondre.
that-wealth not-is profitable except for to-hide
N'est pas veirs. Mais bien le repoignent,
Not-it-is at-all true But well it they-hide
ja nou despendent ne ne doignent:
ever not-it they-spend nor not give
quant que seit iert il despenduz,
however that be will-be it spent
s'en les avait trestouz penduz,
if-one them had all hanged
car en la fin, quant mort seront,
for in the end when dead they-will-be
a cui que seit le laisseront,
to whom that be it they-will-leave
qui lieement le despendra,
who gladly it will-spend
ne ja nul preu ne leur tendra;
nor ever any profit not to-them will-hold

n'il ne sont pas seür encores
nor-they not are at-all sure yet
s'il le garderont jusqu'a lores,
if-they it will-keep until then
car teus i pourrait metre main
for such-a-one there could put hand
qui tout emporterait demain.
who all would-carry-off tomorrow
Aus richeces font grant laidure
To-the riches they-do great outrage
quant il leur tolent leur nature.
when they from-them take their nature
Leur nature est qu'eus deivent courre
Their nature is that-they ought run
pour genz aidier e pour secourre,
for folk to-help and for to-succor
senz estre a usure prestees;
without being at usury lent
a ce les a Deus aprestees:
to this them has God prepared
or les ont en prison repostes.
now them they-have in prison hidden
Mais les richeces de teus ostes,
But the riches on such hosts
qui meauz, selonc leur destinees,
which better according-to their destinies
deüssent estre traïnees,
ought be dragged
se venchent enourablement,
themselves avenge honorably

car emprès aus honteusement
for after them shamefully
les traïnent, sachent e hercent;
them they-drag pull and harrow
de treis glaives les cueurs leur percent:
with three swords the hearts to-them they-pierce
li premiers est travauz d'aquerre;
the first is labor of-acquiring
li seconz, qui les cueurs leur serre,
the second which the hearts to-them presses
c'est peeur qu'en nes toille ou emble
this-is fear that-one them take or steal
quant il les ont mises ensemble,
when they them have put together
don il s'esmaient senz cessier;
whereby they themselves-dismay without ceasing
li tierz est douleur dou laissier.
the third is grief of-the leaving
Si con je t'ai dit ci devant,
So as I to-thee-have said here before
malement s'en vont decevant.
badly themselves-thereby go deceiving
Ainsinc Pecune se revenche,
Thus Money herself avenges
come dame e reïne franche,
as lady and queen free
des sers qui la tienent enclose;
on-the serfs who her hold enclosed
en pais se tient e se repose,
in peace herself holds and herself rests

e fait les mescheanz veillier
and makes the wretches watch
e soussier e traveillier.
and to-worry and to-toil
Souz piez si courz les tient e donte
Under feet so short them holds and tames
qu'ele a l'eneur e cil la honte
that-she has the-honor and they the shame
e le torment e le domage,
and the torment and the damage
qu'il languissent en son servage.
for-they languish in her servitude
Preuz n'est ce pas faire en tel garde,
Profitable not-is this at-all to-do in such keeping
au meins a celui qui la garde;
at-the least to him who her keeps
mais, senz faille, ele demourra
but without fail she will-remain
a cui que seit quant cil mourra
to whom that be when he will-die
qui ne l'osait pas assaillir
who not her-dared at-all to-assail
ne faire courre ne saillir.
nor to-make run nor to-leap
Mais li vaillant ome l'assaillent
But the worthy men her-assail
e la chevauchent e poursaillent,
and her ride and leap-upon

e tant aus esperons la batent
and so-much with-the spurs her beat
qu'il s'en aaisent e esbatent,
that-they themselves-thereby ease and disport
par le cueur qu'il ont large e ample.
by the heart which-they have large and ample
A Dedalus prennent essemple,
From Daedalus they-take example
qui fist eles a Ycarus,
who made wings for Icarus
quant, par art e non pas par us,
when by art and not at-all by usage
tindrent par l'air veie comune;
they-held through the-air way common
tout autel font cil a Pecune,
all such do those to Money
qu'il li font eles pour voler,
for-they for-her make wings for to-fly
qu'ainz se lairaient afoler
for-rather themselves they-would-let to-destroy
qu'il n'en eüssent los e pris.
than-they thereof had praise and worth
Ne veulent pas estre repris
Not they-wish at-all to-be reproached
de la grant ardure e dou vice
of the great burning and of-the vice
a la couveiteuse Avarice;
of the covetous Avarice
ainz en font les granz courteisies,
rather thereof they-do the great courtesies

don leur proeces sont preisies
whereby their prowesses are prized
e celebrees par le monde,
and celebrated through the world
e leur vertuz en seurabonde,
and their virtue thereby superabounds
que Deus a pour mout agreable,
which God has for very agreeable
pour leur cueur large e charitable;
for their heart large and charitable
car tant come Avarice put
for so-much as Avarice stinks
a Deu, qui de ses biens reput
to God who with his goods fed
le monde, quant il l'ot forgié,
the world when he it-had forged
(ce ne t'a nus apris fors gié),
this not thee-has anyone taught except I
tant li est Largece plaisant,
so-much to-him is Largesse pleasing
la courteise, la bienfaisant.
the courteous the beneficent
Deus het avers, les vilains natres,
God hates misers the churls base
e les danne come idolatres,
and them damns as idolaters
les chaitis sers desmesurez,
the wretched serfs immoderate
poereus e maleürez.
fearful and unhappy

Si cuident il, e pour veir dient,
So think they and for true say
qu'il aus richeces ne se lient
that-they to-the riches not themselves bind
fors que pour estre en seürté,
except that for to-be in security
e pour vivre en beneürté.
and for to-live in felicity
O! douces richeces morteus,
O sweet riches mortal
dites, donc estes vous or teus
say then are you now such
que vous faciez beneürees
that you make happy
genz qui si vous ont enmurees?
folk who so you have walled-up
Car, quant plus vous assembleront,
For when more you they-will-assemble
e plus de peeur trembleront;
and more with fear they-will-tremble
e coment est en bon eür
and how is in good fortune
on qui n'est en estat seür?
a-man who not-is in state secure
Beneürtez don li saudrait,
Felicity whence to-him would-spring
puis que seürtez li faudrait?
since that security to-him would-fail

Mais aucuns qui ce m'orrait dire,
But someone who this me-would-hear to-say
pour mon dit danner e despire,
for my saying to-damn and to-despise
des reis me pourrait oposer,
of-the kings to-me could object
qui, pour leur noblece aloser,
who for their nobility to-praise
si con li menuz peuples cuide,
so as the small people thinks
fierement metent leur estuide
proudly put their study
a faire entour aus armer genz,
to have around them armed folk
cinc cenz ou cinc mile sergenz;
five hundred or five thousand sergeants
e dit l'en tout comunement
and says one all commonly
qu'il leur vient de grant hardement,
that-it to-them comes from great boldness
mais Deus set bien tout le contraire:
but God knows well all the contrary
c'est Peeur qui leur fait ce faire,
this-is Fear who them makes this do
qui toujourz les tourmente e grieve.
who always them torments and grieves
Meauz pourrait uns ribauz de Grieve
Better could a ribald of Grève
seürs e seus par tout aler,
secure and alone through all to-go

e devant les larrons baler,
and before the thieves to-dance
senz douter aus ne leur afaire,
without fearing them nor their doing
que li reis o sa robe vaire,
than the king with his robe vair
portast neïs o sei grant masse
he-should-carry even with him great mass
dou tresor que si grant amasse
of-the treasure which so great he-amasses
d'or e de precieuses pierres;
of-gold and of precious stones
sa part en prendrait chascuns lierres,
his part thereof would-take each thief
quanqu'il porterait li toudraient,
whatever-he would-carry from-him they-would-take
e tuer espeir le voudraient.
and to-kill perhaps him they-would-wish
Si serait il, ce crei, tuez
So would-be he this I-believe killed
ainz que d'ileuc fust remuez,
before that from-there he-were removed
car li larron se douteraient,
for the thieves themselves would-fear
se vif eschaper le laissaient,
if alive to-escape him they-let
qu'il nes feïst ou que seit prendre
that-he them should-have where that be taken
e par sa force mener pendre.
and by his force led to-hang

Par sa force! Mais par ses omes,
By his force But by his men
car sa force ne vaut deus pomes
for his force not is-worth two apples
outre la force d'un ribaut,
beyond the force of-a ribald
qui s'en irait a cueur si baut.
who himself-thence would-go with heart so bold
Par ses omes! Par fei, je ment,
By his men By faith I lie
ou je ne di pas proprement:
or I not say at-all properly
vraiement sien ne sont il mie,
truly his not are they at-all
tout ait il entr' aus seignourie.
though have he among them lordship
Seignourie! Non, mais servise,
Lordship No but service
qu'il les deit garder en franchise;
for-he them ought keep in freedom
ainz sont leur, car, quant il voudront,
rather they-are theirs for when they will-wish
leur aïdes au rei toudront,
their aids from-the king they-will-take
e li reis touz seus demourra
and the king all alone will-remain
si tost con li peuples vourra,
so soon as the people will-wish
car leur bontez ne leur proeces,
for their goodness nor their prowess

leur cors, leur forces, leur sageces
their bodies their forces their wisdoms
ne sont pas sien, ne riens n'i a;
not are at-all his nor anything not-there is
Nature bien les li nia.
Nature well them to-him denied

What Is a Man's Own, and Love for All

XXXII

Nothing outside a man is truly his, Reason says: his own goods are those he feels within, and all the rest are Fortune's to scatter and take back, so he must not set his heart on them or befriend men for their wealth. When she asks when she ever told him to hate, the lover answers that she bids him despise his lord for a love no one can find, which fled the earth with Right, Chastity, Faith, and Justice when the giants attacked the gods; Tully himself found no more than three or four pairs of true friends in all past ages. Reason offers him a love within anyone's reach: to love all people loyally in general, and to do to others only what he would have done to himself.

Ne Fortune ne peut pas faire, 5315
Nor Fortune not can at-all make
tant seit aus omes debonaire,
however-much be-she to-the men gracious
que nules des choses leur seient,
that any of-the things to-them be
coment que conquises les aient,
however that acquired them they-have
don Nature les fait estranges.
whereof Nature them makes strangers

— Ha! Dame, pour le rei des anges,
Ah Lady for the king of-the angels
aprenez mei donc toutesveies
teach me then nevertheless
queus choses peuent estre meies,
what things can be mine
e se dou mien puis riens aveir:
and if of-the mine I-can anything have
ce voudraie je bien saveir.
this would-wish I well to-know
— Oïl», ce respondi Raisons,
Yes this answered Reason
«mais n'entent pas chans ne maisons,
but not-understand at-all fields nor houses
ne robes ne teus garnemenz,
nor robes nor such garments
ne nus terriens tenemenz,
nor any earthly holdings
ne meubles de quelque maniere;
nor movables of whatever manner
trop as meilleur chose e plus chiere:
far hast better thing and more dear
touz les biens que dedenz toi senz,
all the goods which within thee thou-feelest
e que si bien les quenois enz,
and which so well them thou-knowest within
qui te demeurent senz cessier,
which to-thee remain without ceasing

si qu'il ne te peuent laissier
so that-they not thee can leave
pour faire a autre autel servise:
for to-do to another such service
cil bien sont tien a dreite guise.
those goods are thine in right wise
Es autres biens, qui sont forain,
In-the other goods which are outward
n'as tu vaillant un viez lorain;
not-hast thou worth an old harness-strap
ne tu ne nul ome qui vive
nor thou nor any man who lives
n'i avez vaillant une cive,
not-there have worth one chive
car sachiez que toutes voz choses
for know that all your things
sont en vous meïsmes encloses;
are in you yourselves enclosed
tuit autre bien sont de Fortune,
all other goods are of Fortune
qui les esparpille e aüne,
who them scatters and gathers
e tost e done a son vouleir,
and takes-away and gives at her will
don les fos fait rire e douleir.
whereby the fools she-makes to-laugh and to-grieve
Mais riens que Fortune ferait
But anything that Fortune would-do
nus sages on ne priserait,
any wise man not would-prize

ne nou ferait lié ne dolent
nor not-him would-make glad nor sorrowful
li tourz de sa roe volant,
the turn of her wheel flying
car tuit si fait sont trop doutable,
for all her deeds are too doubtful
pour ce qu'il ne sont pas estable.
for this that-they not are at-all stable
Pour ce n'est preuz l'amour de li,
For this not-is profitable the-love of her
n'onc a preudome n'abeli,
nor-ever to a-worthy-man not-pleased
n'il n'est pas dreiz qu'il abelisse,
nor-it not-is at-all right that-it please
quant pour si po chiet en eclisse;
when for so little falls in eclipse
e pour ce vueil que tu le saches
and for this I-wish that thou it know
que ton cueur pour riens n'i ataches;
that thy heart for anything not-there attach
si n'en iés tu pas entechiez,
so not-thereof art thou at-all stained
mais ce serait trop granz pechiez
but this would-be exceedingly great sin
se ça avant t'en entechaies,
if hither forward thyself-thereof thou-stained
e se tant vers les genz pechaies
and if so-much toward the folk thou-sinned
que pour leur ami te clamasses,
that for their friend thyself thou-called

e leur aveir senz plus amasses,
and their wealth without more thou-loved
ou le preu qui d'aus te vendrait:
or the profit which from-them to-thee would-come
nus preudon a bien nou tendrait.
any worthy-man for good not-it would-hold
Cete amour que je t'ai ci dite,
This love which I to-thee-have here told
fui la come vil e despite,
flee it as vile and despised
e d'amer par amour recrei,
and of-loving by love desist
e seies sages e me crei.
and be wise and me believe
Mais d'autre chose te vei nice,
But of-other thing thee I-see foolish
quant tu m'as mis sus tel malice
when thou me-hast put upon such malice
que je haïne te comant.
that I hatred to-thee command
Or di: Quant? En quel leu? Coment?
Now say When In what place How
— Ci ne finastes ui de dire
Here not you-ceased today of saying
que je dei mon seigneur despire,
that I ought my lord despise
pour ne sai quel amour sauvage.
for not I-know what love savage
Qui cercherait jusqu'en Cartage,
Who would-search as-far-as-in Carthage

e d'orient en occident,
and from-east into west
e bien vesquist tant que li dent
and well should-live so-long that the teeth
li fussent cheü de vieillece,
to-him were fallen from old-age
e courust toujourz senz parece,
and should-run always without sloth
faisant sa visitacion
making his visitation
par midi, par septentrion,
by south by north
tant qu'il eüst trestout veü,
until that-he had all seen
n'avrait il pas aconseü
not-would-have he at-all overtaken
cete amour que ci dit m'avez.
this love which here told me-you-have
Bien en fu li mondes lavez
Well thereof was the world washed
des lors que li deu s'en foïrent,
from then that the gods themselves-thence fled
quant li jaiant les assaillirent,
when the giants them assailed
e Dreiz e Chasteez e Feiz
and Right and Chastity and Faith
s'en foïrent a cele feiz.
themselves-thence fled at that time

Cele amour fu si esperdue
That love was so distraught
qu'el s'en foï, si est perdue.
that-she herself-thence fled so is lost
Joustice, qui plus pesanz iere,
Justice who more heavy was
si s'en foï la darreniere;
so herself-thence fled the last
si laissierent trestuit les terres,
so left all the lands
qu'il ne porent sofrir les guerres.
for-they not could suffer the wars
Es ceaus firent leur abitacles,
In-the heavens they-made their dwellings
n'onc puis, se ne fu par miracles,
nor-ever since if not was by miracles
n'oserent ça jus devaler:
not-dared hither down to-descend
Baraz les en fist touz aler,
Fraud them thence made all go
qui tient en terre l'eritage
who holds on earth the-heritage
par sa force e par son outrage.
by his force and by his outrage
Neïs Tulles, qui mist grant cure
Even Tully who put great care
en cerchier secrez d'escriture,
in searching secrets of-writing

n'i pot tant son engin debatre
not-there could so-much his wit to-rack
qu'onc plus de treis paire ou de quatre,
that-ever more than three pairs or than four
de touz les siecles trespassez,
of all the ages past
puis que cist monz fu compassez,
since that this world was measured-out
de si fines amours trouvast.
of so fine loves he-found
Si crei que meins en esprouvast
So I-believe that fewer thereof he-proved
de ceus qui a son tens vivaient,
of those who in his time lived
qui si ami de bouche estaient;
who his friends by mouth were
n'encor n'ai je nul leu leü
nor-yet not-have I any place read
qu'il onc en ait nul tel eü.
that-he ever thereof have any such had
E sui je plus sages que Tulles?
And am I more wise than Tully
Bien seraie fos e entulles
Well I-would-be foolish and stupid
se teus amours voulaie querre,
if such loves I-wished to-seek
puis qu'il n'en a mais nule en terre.
since that-there not-thereof is more any on earth
Tel amour donques ou querraie,
Such love then where would-I-seek

quant ça jus ne la trouverraie?
when here below not it I-would-find
Puis je voler avec les grues,
Can I fly with the cranes
veire saillir outre les nues,
yea to-leap beyond the clouds
con fist li cignes Socratès?
as did the swan (of-)Socrates
N'en quier plus paler, je la tais.
Not-thereof I-seek more to-speak I it silence
Ne sui pas de si fol espeir;
Not I-am at-all of so foolish hope
li deu cuideraient, espeir,
the gods would-think perhaps
que j'assaillisse paradis,
that I-assailed paradise
con firent li jaiant jadis,
as did the giants formerly
s'en pourraie estre foudriez;
so-thereby I-could be thunderstruck
ne sai se vous le voudriez;
not I-know if you it would-wish
si n'en dei je pas estre en doute.
so not-thereof ought I at-all be in doubt
— Beaus amis», dist ele, «or escoute:
Fair friend said she now listen

s'a cete amour ne peuz ataindre,
if-to this love not thou-canst attain
car ausinc bien peut il remaindre
for just-as well can it remain
par ton defaut com par l'autrui,
by thy fault as by another's
je t'enseignerai bien autre ui.
I thee-shall-teach well another today
Autre! Non pas, mais ce meïsmes
Another No at-all but this same
don chascuns peut estre a meïsmes,
whereof each can be at hand
mais qu'il preigne l'entendement
provided that-he take the-understanding
d'amour un po plus largement;
of-love a little more largely
qu'il aint en generalité,
that-he love in generality
e laist especialité;
and leave speciality
n'i face ja comunion
not-there make ever communion
de grant participacion.
of great participation
Tu peuz amer generaument
Thou canst love generally
touz ceus dou monde leiaument:
all those of-the world loyally
aime les touz autant come un,
love them all as-much as one

au meins de l'amour dou comun;
at-the least with the-love of-the common

fai tant que teus envers touz seies
do so-much that such toward all thou-be

con touz envers tei les voudraies;
as all toward thee them thou-wouldst-wish

ne fai vers nul ne ne pourchace
not do toward anyone nor not procure

fors ce que tu veauz qu'en te face.
except that which thou wishest that-one to-thee do

E s'ainsinc voulaies amer,
And if-thus thou-wished to-love

l'en t'en devrait quite clamer;
one thee-thereof ought quit declare

e cete iés tu tenuz a sivre,
and this-one art thou held to follow

senz cete ne deit nus on vivre.
without this-one not ought any man live

Love Better Than Justice

XXXIII

Judges exist because some abandon that love. Asked whether love or justice is worth more, Reason argues for love, which could suffice without justice. Justice reigned in Saturn's time, whose son Jupiter cut off his balls and cast them into the sea, from which Venus was born; if men loved one another there would be no wrongs, no kings, and no bailiffs. Sin made kings and judges, who now sell their judgments.

E pour ce que cete amour laissent
And for this that this love leave
cil qui de mal faire s'engressent,
those who of ill to-do themselves-are-eager
sont en terre establi li juige,
are on earth established the judges
pour estre defense e refuige
for to-be defense and refuge
a ceus cui li mondes forfait
to those whom the world wrongs
de faire amender le forfait;
to have amended the wrong
pour ceus punir e chastier
for those to-punish and to-chastise
qui, pour cete amour renier,
who for this love to-deny
les genz murtrissent ou afolent,
the folk murder or maim
ou ravissent, emblent ou tolent,
or ravish steal or take
ou nuisent par detraccion,
or harm by detraction

ou par fausse acusacion,
or by false accusation
ou par queusque malaventures,
or by whatever misadventures
seient apertes ou ocures;
be-they open or hidden
si couvient que l'en les joustice.
so it-behooves that one them bring-to-justice
— Ha! Dame, pour Deu, de Joustice,
Ah Lady for God of Justice
don jadis fu si granz renons,
whereof formerly was so great renown
tandis com parole en tenons
while as talk thereof we-hold
e d'enseignier mei vous penez,
and of-teaching me yourself strive
s'il vous plaist, un mot m'aprenez.
if-it you pleases a word me-teach
— Di quel. — Volentiers. Je demant
Say which Willingly I ask
que me faciez un juigement
that me you-make a judgment
d'amour e de joustice ensemble:
of-love and of justice together
la quel vaut meauz, si con vous semble?
the which is-worth better so as to-you seems
— De quel amour dis tu? — De cete
Of what love sayest thou Of this-one
ou vous voulez que je me mete,
wherein you wish that I myself put

car cele qui s'est en mei mise
for that-one which itself-is in me put
ne bé je pas a metre en mise.
not aim I at-all to put in stake
— Certes, fos, bien en faiz a creire,
Certainly fool well thereof thou-art to believe
mais, se tu quiers sentence veire,
but if thou seekest sentence true
la bone amour vaut meauz. — Prouvez.
the good love is-worth better Prove
— Volentiers veir. Quant vous trouvez
Willingly truly When you find
deus choses qui sont couvenables,
two things which are fitting
necessaires e profitables,
necessary and profitable
cele qui plus est necessaire
that-one which more is necessary
vaut meauz. — Dame, c'est chose veire.
is-worth better Lady this-is a-thing true
— Or te pren bien ci donques garde,
Now thyself take well here then heed
la nature d'andeus esgarde:
the nature of-both regard
ces deus choses, ou qu'eus abitent,
these two things where that-they dwell
sont necessaires e profitent.
are necessary and profit
— Veirs est. — Donc ai je d'eus itant,
True it-is Then have I of-them so-much

que meauz vaut la plus profitant.
that better is-worth the more profiting
— Dame, bien m'i puis acorder.
Lady well myself-thereto I-can agree
— Nou te vueil donc plus recorder.
Not-it to-thee I-wish then more to-recall
Mais plus tient grant necessité
But more holds great necessity
amour, qui vient de charité,
love which comes from charity
que joustice ne fait d'assez.
than justice — does by-much
— Prouvez, dame, ainz qu'outre passez.
Prove lady before that-beyond you-pass
— Volentiers. Bien te di senz feindre
Willingly Well to-thee I-say without feigning
que plus est necessaire e graindre,
that more is necessary and greater
par quei fait trop meauz a eslire,
by which it-is far better to choose
li biens qui par sei peut soufire
the good which by itself can suffice
que cil qui a mestier d'aïe.
than that-one which has need of-help
Ce ne contrediras tu mie.
This not wilt-contradict thou at-all
— Pour quei non? Faites vous entendre,
For what not Make yourself understand
saveir s'il i a que reprendre.
to-know if-it there is what to-reprove

Un essemple oïr en vourraie,
An example to-hear thereof I-would-wish
saveir s'acorder m'i pourraie.
know if-to-agree myself-thereto I-could
— Par fei, quant d'essemples me charges
By faith when with-examples me thou-chargest
e de preuves, ce sont granz charges;
and with proofs these are great charges
touteveis essemple en avras,
nevertheless example thereof thou-wilt-have
puis que par ce meauz le savras:
since that by this better it thou-wilt-know
s'uns on peut bien une nef traire,
if-a man can well a ship to-draw
senz aveir d'autre aïde afaire,
without to-have of-other help to-do
que ja par tei bien ne trairaies,
which ever by thyself well not thou-wouldst-draw
trait il meauz que tu ne feraies?
draws he better than thou — wouldst-do
— Oïl, dame, au meins au chaable.
Yes lady at-the least at-the cable
— Or pren ci donques ton semblable:
Now take here then thy likeness
se Joustice iert toujourz gisanz,
if Justice were always lying
si serait Amour soufisanz
so would-be Love sufficient
a mener bele vie e bone,
to lead fair life and good

senz jousticier nule persone;
without judging any person
mais senz Amour Joustice non.
but without Love Justice not
Pour ç'Amour a meilleur renon.
For this-Love has better renown
— Prouvez me cete. — Volentiers.
Prove to-me this Willingly
Or te tais donc endementiers.
Now thyself silence then meanwhile
Joustice, qui jadis regnot,
Justice who formerly reigned
ou tens que Saturnus regne ot,
in-the time that Saturn reign had
cui Jupiter copa les coilles,
whose Jupiter cut the balls
ses fiz, con se fussent andoilles,
his son as if they-were sausages
(mout ot ci dur fill e amer),
very had here hard son and bitter
puis les gita dedenz la mer,
then them cast into the sea
don Venus la deesse issi,
whence Venus the goddess issued
car li livres le dit issi,
for the book it says thus
s'ele iert en terre revenue,
if-she were on earth returned

e fust autresinc bien tenue
and were likewise well held
au jour d'ui come ele estait lores,
on-the day of-today as she was then
si serait il mestiers encores
so would-be it needful still
aus genz entr'aus qu'il s'entramassent,
to-the folk between-themselves that-they each-other-should-love
combien que Joustice gardassent,
however-much that Justice they-kept
car, puis qu'Amour s'en voudrait fuire,
for since that-Love itself-thence would-wish to-flee
Joustice en ferait trop destruire;
Justice thereof would-make too-many destroy
mais, se les genz bien s'entramaient,
but if the folk well each-other-loved
jamais ne s'entreforferaient;
ever not each-other-would-wrong
e puis que Forfaiz s'en irait,
and since that Wrongdoing itself-thence would-go
Joustice de quei servirait?
Justice of what would-serve
— Dame, je ne sai pas de quei.
Lady I not know at-all of what
— Bien t'en crei, car paisible e quei
Well thee-thereof I-believe for peaceable and quiet
trestuit cil dou monde vivraient,
all those of-the world would-live
jamais rei ne prince n'avraient;
ever king nor prince not-they-would-have

ne serait baillis ne prevoz,
nor would-there-be bailiff nor provost
tant vivrait li peuples devoz;
so-much would-live the people devout
jamais juiges n'orrait clamour:
ever judge not-would-hear complaint
donc di je que meauz vaut Amour
then say I that better is-worth Love
simplement que ne fait Joustice,
simply than — does Justice
tout aille ele contre Malice,
though go she against Malice
qui fu mere des seignouries,
who was mother of-the lordships
don les franchises sont peries,
whereby the freedoms are perished
car, se ne fust maus e pechiez,
for if not were ill and sin
don li mondes est entechiez,
wherewith the world is stained
l'en n'eüst onques rei veü
one not-would-have ever king seen
ne juige en terre queneü.
nor judge on earth known
Si se preuvent il malement,
So themselves prove they badly
qu'il deüssent prumierement
for-they ought firstly
aus meïsmes justifier,
them themselves to-justify

puis qu'en se veaut en aus fier,
since that-one oneself wishes in them to-trust
e leiaus estre e diligenz,
and loyal to-be and diligent
non pas lasches e negligenz,
not at-all slack and negligent
ne couveiteus, faus ne feintis,
nor covetous false nor feigning
pour faire dreiture aus plaintis;
for to-do justice to-the plaintiffs
mais or vendent les juigemenz
but now they-sell the judgments
e bestournent les erremenz,
and pervert the proceedings
e taillent e content e raient,
and tax and count and shave
e les povres genz trestout paient:
and the poor folk all pay
tuit s'efforcent de l'autrui prendre.
all themselves-strive of another's to-take
Teus juiges fait le larron pendre
Such judge has the thief hanged
qui meauz deüst estre penduz,
who better should be hanged
se juigemenz li fust renduz
if judgment to-him were rendered
des rapines e des torz faiz
of-the rapines and of-the wrongs done
qu'il a par son poeir forfaiz.
which-he has by his power committed

Appius and Virginia, and the Duty of Judges

XXXIV

Livy's judge Appius had his servant claim the maiden Virginia as a stolen serf and gave hasty sentence for him; her father Virginius cut off her head and presented it to the judge, the people saved him, and Appius killed himself in prison. Judges, Reason says, hold their honors to do justice without fee, as servants of the people. The lover thanks her, then objects to a shameless word she used. She defers that and denies teaching him hatred: forbidding one folly does not command its contrary, as Horace says, and she forbids only the love that wounds.

Ne fist bien Appius a pendre,
Not was well Appius to hang
qui fist a son sergent emprendre
who made to his servant to-undertake
par faus tesmoinz fausse querele
by false witnesses false suit
contre Virgine la pucele,
against Virginia the maiden
qui fu fille Virginius,
who was daughter (of-)Virginius
si con dit Titus Livius,
so as says Titus Livius
qui bien set le cas raconter?
who well knows-how the case to-recount
Pour ce qu'il ne poait donter
For this that-he not could tame
la pucele, qui n'avait cure
the maiden who not-had care
ne de lui ne de sa luxure,
nor of him nor of his lust

li ribauz dist en audience:
the ribald said in audience
«Sire juiges, donez sentence
Lord judge give sentence
pour mei, car la pucele est meie;
for me for the maiden is mine
pour ma serve la prouveraie
for my serf her I-would-prove
contre touz ceus qui sont en vie,
against all those who are in life
car, ou qu'ele ait esté nourrie,
for wherever that-she have been nourished
de mon ostel me fu emblee
from my house from-me was stolen
des lors, par po, qu'ele fu nee,
from then by little that-she was born
e bailliee a Virginius:
and given to Virginius
si vous requier, sire Appius,
so you I-request lord Appius
que vous me delivrez ma serve,
that you to-me deliver my serf
car il est dreiz qu'ele me serve,
for it is right that-she me serve
non pas celui qui l'a nourrie;
not at-all him who her-has nourished
e se Virginius le nie,
and if Virginius it denies
tout ce sui je prez de prouver,
all this am I ready to prove

car bons tesmoinz en puis trouver.»
for good witnesses thereof I-can find
Ainsinc palait li maus traïstres,
Thus spoke the evil traitor
qui dou faus juige estait menistres,
who of-the false judge was minister
e con li plaiz ainsinc alast,
and as the plea thus went
ainz que Virginius palast,
before that Virginius spoke
qui touz estait prez de respondre,
who all was ready to answer
pour ses aversaires confondre,
for his adversaries to-confound
juija par hastive sentence
judged by hasty sentence
Appius que, senz atendance,
Appius that without delay
fust la pucele au serf rendue.
should-be the maiden to-the serf rendered
E quant la chose a entendue
And when the thing has heard
li beaus preudon devant nomez,
the fair worthy-man before named
bons chevaliers, bien renomez,
good knight well renowned
c'est a saveir Virginius,
this-is to know Virginius

qui bien veit que vers Appius
who well sees that against Appius
ne peut pas sa fille defendre,
not can at-all his daughter to-defend
ainz li couvient par force rendre
rather to-him it-behooves by force to-render
e son cors livrer a hontage,
and her body to-deliver to shame
si change honte pour domage
so changes shame for loss
par merveilleus apensement,
by marvelous resolve
se Titus Livius ne ment;
if Titus Livius not lies
car il, par amour, senz haïne,
for he by love without hatred
a sa bele fille Virgine
to his fair daughter Virginia
tantost a la teste copee
at-once has the head cut
e puis au juige presentee,
and then to-the judge presented
devant touz, en plein consistoire;
before all in full consistory
e li juiges, selonc l'estoire,
and the judge according-to the-history
le comanda tantost a prendre,
him commanded at-once to take
pour lui mener ocierre ou pendre.
for him to-lead to-kill or to-hang

Mais ne l'ocist ne ne pendi,
But not him-killed nor not hanged
car li peuples le defendi,
for the people him defended
qui fu touz de pitié meüz
who was all with pity moved
si tost con li faiz fu seüz.
so soon as the deed was known
Puis fu pour cete mesprison
Then was for this misdeed
Appius mis en la prison,
Appius put in the prison
e s'ocist la hastivement
and himself-killed there hastily
ainz le jour de son juigement;
before the day of his judgment
e Claudius li chalengierres
and Claudius the claimant
juigiez iert a mort come lierres
judged would-be to death as thief
se ne l'en eüst respitié
if not him-thereof had respited
Virginius par sa pitié,
Virginius by his pity
qui tant vost le peuple preier
who so-much wished the people to-pray
qu'en essil le fist enveier;
that-into exile him had sent

e tuit cil condanné moururent
and all those condemned died
qui tesmoing de sa cause furent.
who witnesses of his cause were
Briement juige font trop d'outrages.
Briefly judges do too-many of-outrages
Lucans redit, qui mout fu sages,
Lucan says-in-turn who very was wise
qu'onques vertu e grant poeir
that-ever virtue and great power
ne pot nus ensemble voeir.
not could anyone together see
Mais sachent que, s'il ne s'amendent,
But let-them-know that if-they not themselves-amend
e ce qu'il ont mal pris ne rendent,
and that which-they have ill taken not render
li poissanz juiges pardurables
the mighty judge everlasting
en enfer, avec les deables,
in hell with the devils
leur en metra es cos le laz;
to-them thereof will-put on-the necks the noose
je n'en met hors reis ne prelaz.
I not-thereof put out kings nor prelates
Ne juige de quelconques guise,
Nor judge of whatever guise
seit seculer ou seit d'iglise,
be-he secular or be-he of-church
n'ont pas les eneurs pour ce faire:
not-they-have at-all the honors for this to-do

senz loier deivent a chief traire
without wage they-ought to end draw
les quereles que l'en leur porte,
the suits which one to-them brings
e aus plaintis ouvrir la porte,
and to-the plaintiffs to-open the door
e oïr en propres persones
and to-hear in own persons
les quereles fausses e bones.
the suits false and good
N'ont pas les eneurs pour neient;
Not-they-have at-all the honors for nothing
ne s'en aillent ja gogueiant;
not themselves-thence let-them-go ever jesting
qu'il sont tuit serf au menu peuple,
for-they are all serfs to-the small people
qui le païs acreist e peuple,
who the country increases and peoples
e li font sairemenz e jurent
and to-it make oaths and swear
de faire dreit tant come il durent;
to do right as-long as they last
par aus deivent cil en pais vivre,
by them ought those in peace to-live
e cil les maufaiteurs parsivre,
and these the evildoers to-pursue
e de leur mains les larrons pendre,
and with their hands the thieves to-hang

s'il n'estait qui vousist emprendre
if-there not-were who would-wish to-undertake
pour leur persones tel office,
for their persons such office
puis qu'il deivent faire joustice.
since that-they ought do justice
La deivent metre leur ententes;
There they-ought put their intentions
pour ce leur bailla l'en les rentes;
for this to-them gave one the rents
ainsinc au peuple le promistrent
thus to-the people it promised
cil qui primes les eneurs pristrent.
those who first the honors took
Or t'ai, se bien l'as entendu,
Now to-thee-have-I if well it-thou-hast understood
ce que tu m'as requis rendu;
that which thou of-me-hast required rendered
e les raisons as tu veües
and the reasons hast thou seen
qui me semblent a ce meües.
which to-me seem to this moved
— Dame, certes, bien m'en paiez,
Lady certainly well me-thereof you-pay
e je m'en tieng bien a paiez,
and I myself-thereof hold well for paid
come cil qui vous en merci.
as he who you thereof thank
Mais oï vous ai nomer ci,
But heard you I-have to-name here

si com mei semble, une parole
so as to-me seems a word
si esbaulevree e si fole
so shameless and so foolish
que, qui voudrait, ce crei, muser
that who would-wish this I-believe to-waste-time
a vous emprendre a escuser,
to you to-undertake to excuse
l'en n'i pourrait trouver defenses.
one not-there could find defenses
— Bien vei», dist ele, «a quei tu penses:
Well I-see said she to what thou thinkest
une autre feiz, quant tu vorras,
an other time when thou wilt-wish
escusacion en orras,
excuse thereof thou-wilt-hear
s'il te plaist a ramenteveir.
if-it thee pleases to recall
— Donc le ramentevrai je veir»,
Then it shall-recall I truly
dis je, con remembranz e vistes,
said I as mindful and quick
«par tel mot con vous le deïstes;
by such word as you it said
si m'a mes maistres defendu,
yet to-me-has my master forbidden
car je l'ai mout bien entendu,
for I it-have very well understood

que ja moz n'isse de ma bouche
that ever word not-issue from my mouth
qui de ribaudie s'aprouche;
which to ribaldry itself-approaches
mais, des que je n'en sui faisierres,
but since that I not-thereof am doer
j'en puis bien estre recitierres:
I-thereof can well be reciter
si nomerai le mot tout outre.
so I-shall-name the word all out
Bien fait qui sa folie moutre
Well does who his folly shows
a celui qu'il veit foleier.
to him whom-he sees act-foolishly
De tant vous puis or chasteier;
Of so-much you I-can now chastise
si rapercevreiz vostre outrage,
so you-will-perceive-in-turn your outrage
qui vous feigniez estre si sage.
who yourself feign to-be so wise
— Ce vueil je bien», dist ele, «atendre;
This wish I well said she to-await
mais de ce me resteut defendre
but of this me behooves-in-turn to-defend
que tu de haïne m'oposes.
that thou of hatred me-objectest
Merveille est coment dire l'oses.
Marvel it-is how to-say it-thou-darest
Sez tu pas qu'il ne s'ensuit mie,
Knowest thou not that-it not itself-follows at-all

se laissier vueil une folie,
if to-leave I-wish a folly
que faire deie autel ou graindre?
that do I-must such-a-one or greater
Ne pour ce, se je vueil esteindre
Nor for this if I wish to-quench
la fole amour a quei tu bees,
the foolish love to which thou aspirest
comant je pour ce que tu hees?
command I for this that thou hate
Ne te souvient il pas d'Horace,
Not thee remembers it at-all of-Horace
qui tant ot de sen e de grace?
who so-much had of sense and of grace
Horaces dit, qui n'est pas nices:
Horace says who not-is at-all simple
quant li fol eschivent les vices,
when the fools shun the vices
si se tournent a leur contraires;
so themselves they-turn to their contraries
si n'en vaut pas meauz leur afaires.
so not-thereby is-worth at-all better their affair
N'amour ne vueil je pas defendre
Nor-love not wish I at-all to-forbid
que l'en n'i deie bien entendre,
that one thereto ought well attend
fors qu'a cele qui les genz blece.
except that-to that-one which the folk wounds
Pour ce, se je defent ivrece,
For this if I forbid drunkenness

ne vueil je pas defendre a beivre.
not wish I at-all to-forbid to drink
Ce ne vaudrait un grain de peivre.
This not would-be-worth a grain of pepper
Se fole largece devee,
If foolish largess I-forbid
l'en me tendrait bien pour desvee
one me would-hold well for mad
se je comandaie avarice,
if I commanded avarice
car l'une e l'autre est trop grant vice.
for the-one and the-other is exceedingly great vice
Je ne faz pas teus argumenz.
I not make at-all such arguments
— Si faites veir. — Certes tu menz;
So you-do truly Certainly thou liest
je ne te quier de ce flater.
I not thee seek of this to-flatter
Tu n'as pas bien, pour mei mater,
Thou not-hast at-all well for me to-checkmate
cerchié les livres anciens;
searched the books ancient
tu n'iés pas bons logiciens.
thou not-art at-all good logician
Je ne lis pas d'amour issi:
I not read at-all of-love thus
onques de ma bouche n'issi
ever from my mouth not-issued
que nule rien haïr deie en;
that any thing to-hate ought one

l'en i peut bien trouver meien:
one there can well find a-mean
c'est l'amour que j'ain tant e prise,
this-is the-love which I-love so-much and prize
que je t'ai pour amer aprise.
which I thee-have for to-love taught

Natural Love, and Reason Offers Her Love

XXXV

Another love, natural love, preserves one's kind by begetting and nurture, shared by men and beasts and deserving neither praise nor blame. Reason offers herself as his beloved: she is the daughter of God, and her father will keep them both. He need only leave the god who makes him a fool and prize Fortune at nothing, like Socrates, Heraclitus, and Diogenes; Fortune throws only those who fall willingly.

Autre amour naturel i a,
Other love natural there is
que Nature es bestes cria,
which Nature in-the beasts created
par quei de leur faons chevissent
by which of their young they-provide
e les alaitent e nourrissent.
and them suckle and nourish
De l'amour don je tieng ci conte,
Of the-love whereof I hold here account
se tu veauz que je te raconte
if thou wishest that I to-thee recount
queus est li defenissemenz,
what is the definition

c'est natureus enclinemenz
this-is natural inclination
de vouleir garder son semblable
of wishing to-keep one's like
par entencion couvenable,
by intention fitting
seit par veie d'engendreüre
be-it by way of-engendering
ou par cure de nourreture.
or by care of nurture
A cete amour sont prest e prestes
To this love are ready(-males) and ready(-females)
ausinc li ome con les bestes.
as-well the men as the beasts
Cete amour, combien qu'el profite,
This love however-much that-it profit
n'a los ne blasme ne merite;
not-has praise nor blame nor merit
n'en font n'a blasmer n'a loer:
not-thereof they-are neither-to blame nor-to praise
Nature les i fait voer.
Nature them thereto makes devote
Force leur fait, c'est chose voire,
Force to-them does this-is a-thing true
n'el n'a seur nul vice victoire;
nor-it not-has over any vice victory
mais, senz faille, s'il nou faisaient,
but without fail if-they not-it did
blasme receveir en devraient.
blame receive thereof they-ought

Ausinc con quant uns on manjue,
Just as when a man eats
quel loenge l'en est deüe?
what praise him-thereof is due
Mais s'il forjurait le mangier,
But if-he forswore the eating
l'en l'en devrait bien laidengier.
one him-thereof ought well revile
Mais bien sai que tu n'entenz pas
But well I-know that thou not-attendest at-all
a cete amour, pour ce m'en pas.
to this love for this myself-thence I-pass
Mout as empris plus fole emprise
Much thou-hast undertaken more foolish enterprise
de l'amour que tu as emprise;
of the-love which thou hast undertaken
si la te venist meauz laissier,
so it to-thee would-come better to-leave
se de ton preu veauz apressier.
if of thy profit thou-wishest to-approach
Nepourquant si ne vueil je mie
Nevertheless so not wish I at-all
que tu demeures senz amie;
that thou remain without friend
met, s'il te plaist, en mei t'entente:
put if-it thee pleases in me thy-attention
sui je pas bele dame e gente,
am I not fair lady and noble
digne de servir un preudome,
worthy of serving a worthy-man

e fust empereres de Rome?
and were-he emperor of Rome
Ci vueil t'amie devenir;
Here I-wish thy-friend to-become
e, se te veauz a mei tenir,
and if thyself thou-wishest to me to-hold
sez tu que m'amour te vaudra?
knowest thou what my-love to-thee will-avail
Tant que jamais ne te faudra
So-much that ever not to-thee will-fail
nule chose qui te couviegne,
any thing which to-thee may-befit
pour mescheance qui t'aviegne:
for mischance which to-thee-may-befall
lors te verras si grant seigneur
then thyself thou-wilt-see so great lord
qu'onc n'oïs paler de graigneur.
that-ever not-heardest-thou to-speak of greater
Je ferai quanque tu vourras,
I shall-do whatever thou wilt-wish
ja si haut vouleir ne pourras,
ever so high wish not thou-wilt-be-able
mais que, senz plus, faces mes euvres;
provided that without more thou-do my works
ja ne couvient qu'autrement euvres.
ever not it-behooves that-otherwise thou-work

Ci avras en cet avantage
Here thou-wilt-have in this advantage
amie de si haut lignage
a-friend of so high lineage
qu'il n'est nule qui s'i compere,
that-there not-is any who herself-there compares
fille Deu le souverain pere,
daughter (of-)God the sovereign father
qui tele me fist e fourma.
who such me made and formed
Regarde ci quele fourme a,
Look here what form there-is
e te mire en mon cler visage.
and thyself mirror in my bright face
N'onques pucele de parage
Nor-ever maiden of rank
n'ot d'amer tel bandon con gié,
not-had of-loving such license as I
car j'ai de mon pere congié
for I-have from my father leave
de faire ami e d'estre amee:
to make a-friend and to-be loved
ja n'en serai, ce dit, blasmee;
ever not-thereof I-shall-be this he-says blamed
ne de blasme n'avras tu garde,
nor of blame not-wilt-have thou fear
ainz t'avra mes peres en garde,
rather thee-will-have my father in keeping
e nourrira nous deus ensemble.
and will-nourish us two together

Di je bien? Respon: Que t'en semble?
Say I well Answer What to-thee-thereof seems
Li deus qui te fait foleier
The god who thee makes act-foolishly
set il ses genz si bien paier?
knows-how he his folk so well to-pay
Leur apareille il si bons gages,
To-them prepares he so good wages
aus fos don il prent les omages?
to-the fools whereof he takes the homages
Pour Deu, gar que ne me refuses:
For God beware that not me thou-refuse
trop sont dolentes e confuses
exceedingly are sorrowful and confounded
puceles qui sont refusees,
maidens who are refused
quant de prier ne sont usees,
when to pray not they-are accustomed
si con tu meïsmes le preuves
so as thou thyself it provest
par Echo, senz querre autres preuves.
by Echo without to-seek other proofs
— Or me dites donques anceis,
Now to-me tell then first
non en latin, mais en franceis,
not in Latin but in French
de quei voulez vous que je serve?
in what wish you that I serve
— Seufre que je seie ta serve,
Suffer that I be thy servant

e tu li miens leiaus amis.
and thou the mine loyal friend
Le deu lairas qui ci t'a mis,
The god thou-wilt-leave who here thee-has put
e ne priseras une prune
and not wilt-prize a plum
toute la roe de Fortune.
all the wheel of Fortune
A Socratès seras semblables,
To Socrates thou-wilt-be like
qui tant fu forz e tant estables
who so was strong and so stable
qu'il n'iert liez en prosperitez
that-he not-was glad in prosperity
ne tristes en aversitez:
nor sad in adversity
tout metait en une balance,
all he-put in one balance
bone aventure e mescheance,
good fortune and mischance
e les faisait egal peser,
and them made equal weigh
senz esjoïr e senz peser,
without rejoicing and without grieving
car de chose, quel qu'ele seit,
for of thing whatever that-it be
n'iert joieus ne ne l'en pesait.
not-he-was joyful nor not him-thereof it-grieved
Ce fu cil, bien le dit Solin,
This was he well it says Solinus

qui par le respons Apolin
who by the response (of-)Apollo
fu juigiez dou mont li plus sages;
was judged of-the world the most wise
ce fu cil a cui li visages
this was he to whom the face
de tout quanque li avenait
of all whatever to-him befell
toujourz en un point se tenait;
always in one point itself held
n'onc cil mué ne le trouverent
nor-ever those changed not him found
qui par cegüe le tuerent,
who by hemlock him killed
pour ce que pluseurs deus niait
for this that several gods he-denied
e en un seul deu se fiait,
and in one only god himself trusted
e preeschait qu'il se gardassent
and preached that-they themselves should-guard
que par pluseurs deus ne jurassent.
that by several gods not they-should-swear
Eraclitus, Diogenès
Heraclitus Diogenes
refurent de tel cueur que nes
were-in-turn of such heart that even
pour povreté ne pour destrece
for poverty nor for distress
ne furent onques en tristece.
not were ever in sadness

Tuit ferm en un propos soutindrent
All firm in one purpose sustained
touz les meschiés qui leur avindrent.
all the mishaps which to-them befell
Ainsinc feras tant seulement,
Thus thou-wilt-do so only
ne me serf jamais autrement.
not me serve ever otherwise
Gar que Fortune ne t'abate,
Beware that Fortune not thee-cast-down
combien qu'el te tourmente ou bate.
however-much that-she thee torment or beat
N'est pas bons luitierres ne forz,
Not-is at-all good wrestler nor strong
quant Fortune fait ses efforz
when Fortune makes her efforts
e le veaut desconfire ou batre,
and him wishes to-defeat or to-beat
qui ne se peut a li combatre.
who not himself can with her to-fight
L'en ne s'i deit pas laissier prendre,
One not oneself-there ought at-all let take
mais viguereusement defendre;
but vigorously to-defend
si set ele si po de luite
so knows she so little of wrestling
que chascuns qui contre li luite,
that each who against her wrestles
seit en palais, seit en fumier,
be-he in palace be-he on dunghill

la peut abatre au tour prumier.
her can throw at-the turn first
N'est pas hardiz qui riens la doute,
Not-is at-all bold who anything her fears
car, qui savrait sa force toute,
for who would-know her force all
e bien se quenoistrait senz doute,
and well himself would-know without doubt
nus, qui de gré jus ne se boute,
anyone who of will down not himself thrusts
ne peut a son jambet choeir.
not can at her trip to-fall
Si rest granz hontes a voeir
So is-in-turn great shame to see
d'ome qui bien se peut defendre
of-a-man who well himself can defend
quant il se laisse mener pendre;
when he himself lets to-lead to-hang
tort avrait qui l'en voudrait plaindre,
wrong would-have who him-thereof would-wish to-pity
qu'il n'est nule parece graindre.
for-there not-is any sloth greater
Garde donc que ja riens ne prises
Take-heed then that ever anything not thou-prize
ne ses eneurs ne ses servises;
nor her honors nor her services
laisse li sa roe tourner,
let her her wheel to-turn
qu'el tourne adès senz sejourner,
for-she turns ever without resting

e siet ou mileu come avugle;
and sits in-the middle as blind
les uns de richeces avugle,
the ones with riches she-blinds
e d'eneurs e de dignetez,
and with-honors and with dignities
aus autres done povretez,
to-the others gives poverties
e, quant li plaist, tout en reporte;
and when her pleases all thence takes-back
s'est mout fos qui s'en desconforte
so-is very foolish who himself-thereof despairs
e qui de riens s'en esjoïst,
and who of anything himself-thereof rejoices
puis que defendre s'en poïst,
since that defend himself-thereof he-could
car il le peut certainement,
for he it can certainly
mais qu'il le vueille seulement.
provided that-he it wish only
D'autre part, ce rest chose espresse,
On-other side this is-in-turn a-thing express
vous faites Fortune deesse,
you make Fortune goddess
e jusques es ceaus la levez,
and as-far into-the heavens her raise
ce que pas faire ne devez,
that which at-all do not you-ought

qu'il n'est mie dreiz ne raison
for-it not-is at-all right nor reason
qu'ele ait en paradis maison;
that-she have in paradise house
el n'est pas si bien eüreuse,
she not-is at-all so well fortunate
ainz a maison trop perilleuse.
rather has house exceedingly perilous

The Rock of Fortune and Its Two Rivers

XXXVI

Fortune lives on a rock in the sea, battered by the waves and always changing its form: Zephyr makes its flowers bloom and the north wind mows them down. Its wood is a world turned upside down, where the laurel withers, the willow bears fruit, and the screech owl wails while the nightingale seldom sings. Two rivers run there, one honey-sweet, whose drinkers only grow thirstier and are cast back on dry land, the other sulfurous and black, which drowns the crowds who enter it and fouls the sweet one where they meet. Fortune's house hangs on the mountainside, threatening to fall.

Une roche est en mer seianz,
A rock is in sea sitting
bien parfont, ou mileu laienz,
well deep in-the middle therein
qui seur la mer en haut se lance,
which above the sea on high itself thrusts
contre cui la mer grouce e tence.
against which the sea grumbles and quarrels
Li flot la hurtent e debatent,
The waves it strike and beat

qui toujourz a li se combatent,
which always with it themselves fight
e maintes feiz tant i cotissent
and many times so-much there they-dash
que toute en mer l'ensevelissent;
that all in sea it-they-bury
aucune feiz se redespueille
some time itself strips-again
de l'eve qui toute la mueille,
of the-water which all it wets
si con li floz arriers se tire,
so as the wave back itself draws
don saut en l'air e si respire.
whereby it-leaps into the-air and so breathes
Mais el ne retient nule fourme,
But it not retains any form
anceis se tresmue e refourme,
rather itself transmutes and re-forms
e se desguise e se treschange;
and itself disguises and itself transforms
toujourz se vest de fourme estrange,
always itself clothes in form strange
car, quant ainsinc apert par air,
for when thus it-appears in air
les floretes i fait pareir
the flowerets there makes appear
e come esteles flambeier,
and as stars to-flame

e les erbetes verdeier
and the grasses to-grow-green
Zephirus, quant seur mer chevauche.
Zephyr when over sea rides
E quant Bise resoufle, il fauche
And when North-Wind blows-in-turn it mows
les floretes e la verdure
the flowerets and the greenery
a l'espee de sa freidure,
with the-sword of its coldness
si que la fleur i pert son estre
so that the flower there loses its being
si tost come el comence a naistre.
so soon as it begins to be-born
La roche porte un bois doutable,
The rock bears a wood dreadful
don li arbre sont merveillable:
whereof the trees are marvelous
l'une est brehaigne e riens ne porte,
the-one is barren and anything not bears
l'autre en fruit porter se deporte;
the-other in fruit bearing itself delights
l'autre de foillir ne refine,
the-other of leafing not ceases
l'autre est de fueilles orfeline;
the-other is of leaves orphaned
e quant l'une en sa verdeur dure,
and when the-one in its greenness lasts
les pluseurs i sont senz verdure;
the most there are without greenness

e quant se prent l'une a flourir,
and when itself takes the-one to flower
aus pluseurs vont les fleurs mourir;
on-the most go the flowers to-die
l'une se hauce, e ses veisines
the-one itself raises and its neighbors
se tienent a la terre enclines;
themselves hold to the earth bowed
e quant bourjon a l'une vienent,
and when buds to the-one come
les autres flesties se tienent.
the others withered themselves hold
La sont li geneste jaiant,
There are the brooms giants
e pin e cedre nain seiant.
and pine and cedar dwarfs sitting
Chascune arbre ainsinc se defourme,
Each tree thus itself deforms
si prent l'uns de l'autre la fourme.
so takes the-one from the-other the form
La tient sa fueille toute flestre
There holds its leaf all withered
li loriers, qui verz devrait estre,
the laurel which green ought be
e seche i redevient l'olive,
and dry there becomes-in-turn the-olive
qui deit estre empreignant e vive;
which ought be fruitful and living
sauce, qui brehaing estre deivent,
willows which barren be ought

i flourissent e fruit receivent;
there flower and fruit receive
contre la vigne estrive l'ourme
against the vine strives the-elm
e li tost dou raisin la fourme.
and from-it takes-away of-the grape the form
Li roussigneus a tart i chante,
The nightingale at late there sings
mais mout i brait, mout s'i demente
but much there screeches much itself-there laments
li chahuanz o sa grant hure,
the screech-owl with its great head
prophetes de malaventure,
prophet of misadventure
hisdeus messagiers de douleur.
hideous messenger of grief
En saveur, en fourme, en couleur,
In savor in form in color
par la, seit estez, seit ivers,
through there be-it summer be-it winter
s'en cueurent dui fleuve divers,
themselves-thence run two rivers different
sourdant de diverses fontaines,
springing from different fountains
qui mout sont de diverses veines.
which very are of different veins
L'uns rent eves si doucereuses,
The-one gives waters so sweet

si savourees, si mieleuses
so savory so honeyed
qu'il n'est nus qui de celui beive,
that-there not-is anyone who of that-one drink
beive en neïs plus qu'il ne deive,
drink thereof even more than-he — ought
qui sa seif en puisse estanchier,
who his thirst thereby may quench
tant douz ont le beivre e tant chier,
so sweet they-have the drink and so dear
car cil qui plus en vont bevant
for those who more thereof go drinking
ardent plus de seif que devant;
burn more with thirst than before
ne nus n'en beit qui ne s'enivre,
nor anyone not-thereof drinks who not himself-intoxicates
mais nus de seif ne s'i delivre,
but anyone from thirst not himself-there delivers
car la douceur si fort les boule
for the sweetness so strongly them cheats
qu'il n'est nus qui tant en engoule
that-there not-is anyone who so-much thereof gulps
qu'il n'en vueille plus engouler,
that-he not-thereof wish more to-gulp
tant les set la douceur bouler,
so-well them knows-how the sweetness to-cheat
car lecherie si les pique
for lechery so them pricks
qu'il en sont trestuit ydropique.
that-they thereof are all dropsical

Cil fluns cueurt si joliement
That river runs so prettily
e meine tel grondillement
and makes such rumbling
qu'il resone e taboure e timbre
that-it resounds and drums and beats-timbrel
plus soef que tabour ne timbre;
more sweetly than drum or timbrel
n'il n'est nus qui cele part voise
nor-there not-is anyone who that way goes
que touz li cueurs ne li renvoise.
that all the heart not to-him makes-merry
Maint sont qui d'entrer enz se hestent,
Many are who to-enter in themselves hasten
qui tuit a l'entree s'arestent,
who all at the-entrance themselves-stop
ne n'ont poeir d'aler avant;
nor not-have power to-go forward
a peine i vont leur piez lavant.
with difficulty there go their feet washing
Enviz les douces eves touchent,
Reluctantly the sweet waters they-touch
combien que dou fleuve s'aprouchent;
however-much that to-the river themselves-approach
un petitet, senz plus, en beivent,
a little-bit without more thereof they-drink
e, quant la douceur aperceivent,
and when the sweetness they-perceive

volentiers si parfont iraient
willingly so deep they-would-go
que tuit dedenz se plongeraient.
that all within themselves would-plunge
Li autre passent si avant
The others pass so forward
qu'il se vont ou plein gort lavant,
that-they themselves go in-the full pool washing
e de l'aise qu'il ont se loent
and of the-ease which-they have themselves praise
don ainsinc se baignent e noent:
whereby thus themselves they-bathe and swim
lors vient une ondee legiere
then comes a wave light
qui les boute a la rive arriere
which them pushes to the bank back
e les remet a terre seche,
and them puts-back on land dry
don touz li cueurs leur art e seche.
whereby all the heart to-them burns and dries
Or te dirai de l'autre fleuve,
Now to-thee I-shall-tell of the-other river
de quel nature l'en le treuve:
of what nature one it finds
les eves en sont ensoufrees,
the waters thereof are sulfurous
tenebreuses, mal savourees,
murky ill tasting
come cheminee fumanz,
as chimney smoking

toutes de pueur escumanz;
all with stench foaming
n'il ne cueurt mie doucement,
nor-it not runs at-all gently
ainz descent si hisdeusement
rather descends so hideously
qu'il tempeste l'air en son eirre
that-it storms the-air in its course
plus que nul orrible toneirre.
more than any horrible thunder
Sus ce fleuve, que je ne mente,
Upon this river that I not lie
Zephirus nule feiz n'i vente,
Zephyr any time not-there blows
ne ne li recrespist ses ondes,
nor not for-it ruffles its waves
qui mout sont laides e parfondes;
which very are ugly and deep
mais li doulereus venz de bise
but the grievous wind of north
a contre lui bataille emprise,
has against it battle undertaken
qui li contreint par estouveir
which it constrains by necessity
toutes ses ondes esmouveir,
all its waves to-stir
e li fait les fonz e les plaignes
and to-it makes the depths and the plains
saillir en guise de montaignes,
to-leap in guise of mountains

e les fait entr'aus bataillier,
and them makes between-themselves battle
tant veaut le fleuve travaillier.
so-much wishes the river to-torment
Maint ome a la rive demeurent,
Many men at the bank remain
qui tant i soupirent e pleurent,
who so-much there sigh and weep
senz metre en leur pleur fins ne termes,
without to-put in their weeping ends nor limits
que tuit se plongent en leur lermes,
that all themselves plunge in their tears
e ne se cessent d'esmaier
and not themselves cease to-be-dismayed
qu'il nes couviegne ou flun neier.
that-it them behoove in-the river to-drown
Maint peuple en cet fleuve s'en entre,
Many people into this river itself-thence enters
non pas seulement jusqu'au ventre,
not at-all only as-far-as-the belly
ainz i sont tuit enseveli,
rather there are all buried
tant se plongent es floz de li.
so-much themselves they-plunge in-the floods of it
La sont empeint e debouté
There are pushed and thrust-back
dou hisdeus fleuve redouté.
by-the hideous river dreaded
Maint en sorbist l'eve e afonde,
Many-a-one thereof swallows the-water and sinks

maint sont hors reflati par l'onde;
many are out thrown-back by the-wave
mais li flot maint en assorbissent
but the floods many-a-one thereof absorb
qui si trés en parfont flatissent
who so very into deep are-flung
qu'il ne sevent trace tenir
that-they not know-how trace to-hold
par ou s'en puissent revenir;
by where themselves-thence they-may come-back
ainz les i couvient sejourner,
rather them there it-behooves to-stay
senz jamais amont retourner.
without ever upward to-return
Cist fleuves va tant tourneiant.
This river goes so-much turning
Par tant de destreiz desveiant,
Through so-many of straits straying
o tout son venin doulereus,
with all its venom painful
qu'il chiet ou fleuve doucereus,
that-it falls in-the river sweet
e li tresmue sa nature
and of-it transmutes its nature
par sa pueur e par s'ordure,
by its stench and by its-filth
e li depart sa pestilence
and to-it imparts its pestilence
pleine de male mescheance,
full of evil mischance

e le fait estre amer e trouble,
and it makes be bitter and troubled
tant l'envenime e tant le trouble;
so-much it-envenoms and so-much it troubles
tost li s'atrempee valeur
takes-away from-it its-tempered worth
par sa destrempee chaleur;
by its untempered heat
sa bone oudeur neïs li oste,
its good odor even from-it removes
tant rent de pueur a son oste.
so-much gives of stench to its host
En haut, ou chief de la montaigne,
On high at-the head of the mountain
ou pendant, non pas en la plaigne,
on-the slope not at-all in the plain
menaçant toujourz trebuichance,
threatening always downfall
preste de receveir cheance,
ready of receiving fall
descent la maison de Fortune;
descends the house of Fortune
si n'est rage de venz nes une,
so not-is rage of winds not-even one
ne tormenz qu'il puissent ofrir
nor torment that-they may offer
qu'il ne li couviegne a sofrir.
that-it not to-it behoove to suffer

La receit de tantes tempestes
There it-receives of so-many tempests
e les assauz e les molestes.
and the assaults and the vexations
Zephirus, li douz venz senz per,
Zephyr the sweet wind without peer
i vient a tart pour atremper
there comes at late for to-temper
des durs venz les assauz orribles
of-the hard winds the assaults horrible
par ses souflez mos e paisibles.
by his breaths soft and peaceful

Fortune's House, and Nero and Seneca

XXXVII

One side of the hall is gold and silver set with gems, the other mud and thatch, cracked in five hundred thousand places. When Fortune wants honor she sits in the golden part in rich robes, prouder than pride; then she wheels into the filthy part, strips, and crouches weeping in the brothel. Because she debases the good and raises the wicked, the ancients blindfolded her. Her example is Nero, who burned Rome, killed his brother, had his mother dismembered to see where he was conceived, and had his master Seneca bled to death in a bath because he could not help rising for him; yet he ruled the whole world.

L'une partie de la sale
The-one part of the hall
va contremont, e l'autre avale;
goes upward and the-other descends
si semble qu'el deie choeir,
so it-seems that-it must fall

tant la peut l'en pendant voeir;
so-much it can one leaning to-see
n'onc si desguisee maison
nor-ever so disguised house
ne vit, ce cuit, onques mais on.
not saw this I-think ever before a-man
Mout reluist d'une part, car gent
Much it-shines on-one side for fine
i sont li mur d'or e d'argent;
there are the walls of-gold and of-silver
si rest toute la couverture
so is-in-turn all the roofing
de cele meïsmes faiture,
of that same make
ardanz de pierres precieuses,
burning with stones precious
mout cleres e mout vertueuses.
very bright and very potent
Chascuns a merveilles la loe.
Each at marvels it praises
D'autre part sont li mur de boe,
On-other side are the walls of mud
qui n'ont pas d'espès pleine paume;
which not-have at-all of-thickness full palm
s'est toute couverte de chaume.
so-is all covered with thatch
D'une part se tient orguilleuse,
On-one side itself holds proud
pour sa grant beauté merveilleuse,
for its great beauty marvelous

d'autre tremble toute effraee,
on-other trembles all frightened
tant se sent feible e esbaee,
so-much itself feels feeble and gaping
e pourfendue de crevaces
and split with crevices
en plus de cinc cenz mile places.
in more than five hundred thousand places
E se chose qui n'est estable,
And if a-thing which not-is stable
come foleianz e mouvable,
as wandering and movable
a certaine abitacion,
has certain habitation
Fortune a la sa mansion.
Fortune has there her mansion
E quant el veaut estre onoree,
And when she wishes to-be honored
si se trait en la part doree
so herself she-draws into the part golden
de sa maison, e la sejourne:
of her house and there stays
lors pere son cors e atourne,
then she-adorns her body and attires
e se vest, come une reïne,
and herself dresses as a queen
de grant robe qui li traïne,
in great robe which on-her trails
de toutes diverses ouleurs,
of all different odors

de mout desguisees couleurs
of very various colors
qui sont es seies e es laines,
which are in-the silks and in-the wools
selonc les erbes e les graines,
according-to the herbs and the dyes
e selonc autres choses maintes
and according-to other things many
don les draperies sont teintes
whereby the draperies are dyed
don toutes riches genz se vestent
wherein all rich folk themselves dress
qui pour eneurs aveir s'aprestent.
who for honors to-have themselves-prepare
Ainsinc Fortune se desguise;
Thus Fortune herself disguises
mais bien te di qu'ele ne prise
but well to-thee I-tell that-she not prizes
trestouz ceus dou monde un festu
all those of-the world a straw
quant veit son cors ainsinc vestu,
when she-sees her body thus clothed
ainz est tant orguilleuse e fiere
rather is so proud and haughty
qu'il n'est orgueauz qui s'i afiere;
that-there not-is pride which itself-there compares
car, quant el veit ses granz richeces,
for when she sees her great riches
ses granz eneurs, ses granz nobleces,
her great honors her great nobilities

de si trés grant folie abonde
with so very great folly she-abounds
qu'el ne creit pas qu'il ait ou monde
that-she not believes at-all that-there be in-the world
ome ne fame qui la vaille,
man nor woman who her equals
coment que la chose après aille.
however that the thing afterward go
Puis va tant roant par sa sale
Then goes so-much wheeling through her hall
qu'ele entre en la partie sale,
that-she enters into the part dirty
feible, decrevee e crolant,
feeble cracked and shaking
o toute sa roe volant;
with all her wheel flying
lors va çoupant e jus se boute,
then goes stumbling and down herself thrusts
ausinc con s'el n'i veïst goute;
just as if-she not-there saw a-whit
e quant ileuc se veit cheüe,
and when there herself she-sees fallen
sa chiere e son abit remue,
her face and her dress she-changes
e si se desnue e desrobe
and so herself strips and unrobes
qu'ele est orfeline de robe,
that-she is orphaned of robe
e semble qu'el n'ait riens vaillant,
and seems that-she not-have anything worth

tant li vont tuit bien defaillant.
so-much to-her go all goods failing
E quant el veit la mescheance,
And when she sees the mischance
si quiert honteuse chevissance,
so seeks shameful shift
e se vait au bourdel croupir,
and herself goes to-the brothel to-crouch
pleine de deul e de soupir:
full of grief and of sighing
la pleure a lermes espandues
there weeps with tears shed
les granz eneurs qu'ele a perdues
the great honors which-she has lost
e les deliz ou ele estait
and the delights where she was
quant des granz robes se vestait.
when with-the great robes herself she-dressed
E pour ce qu'ele est si parverse
And for this that-she is so perverse
que les bons en la boe verse
that the good into the mud she-overturns
e les deseneure e les grieve,
and them dishonors and them grieves
e les mauvais en haut eslieve
and the wicked on high raises
e leur done a granz abondances
and to-them gives in great abundances
dignetez, eneurs e poissances,
dignities honors and powers

puis, quant li plaist, leur tost ou emble,
then when to-her pleases from-them takes-away or steals
n'el ne set qu'el se veaut, ce semble:
nor-she not knows what-she herself wishes this seems
pour ce li ueil bendé li furent
for this the eyes blindfolded to-her were
des anciens, qui la quenurent.
by-the ancients who her knew
E que Fortune ainsinc le face
And that Fortune thus it do
que les bons aville e efface
that the good debases and effaces
e les mauvais en eneur tiegne,
and the wicked in honor hold
car je vueil que bien t'en souviegne,
for I wish that well thee-thereof it-remind
ja seit ce que devant dit t'aie
ever be-it this that before said to-thee-I-have
de Socratès, que tant amaie,
of Socrates whom so-much I-loved
e li vaillanz on tant m'amait
and the worthy man so-much me-loved
qu'en touz ses faiz me reclamait,
that-in all his deeds me be-invoked
mainz essemples en puis trouver;
many examples thereof I-can find
e ce peut l'en tantost prouver
and this can one at-once to-prove
e par Seneque e par Neron,
both by Seneca and by Nero

don la parole tost lairon,
whereof the talk soon we-shall-leave
pour la longueur de la matire,
for the length of the matter
car je metraie trop a dire
for I would-take too-long to tell
les faiz Neron, le cruel ome,
the deeds (of-)Nero the cruel man
coment il mist les feus a Rome,
how he put the fires to Rome
e fist les senateurs ocierre;
and had the senators killed
si rot bien cueur plus dur que pierre
so had-in-turn well a-heart more hard than stone
quant il fist ocierre son frere,
when he had killed his brother
quant il fist desmembrer sa mere,
when he had dismembered his mother
pour ce que par lui fust veüz
for this that by him were seen
li leus ou il fu conceüz;
the place where he was conceived
e puis qu'il la vit desmembree,
and after that-he her saw dismembered
selonc l'estoire remembree,
according-to the-history remembered
la beauté des membres juija.
the beauty of-the limbs he-judged
He! Deus! Con ci felon juige a!
Ah God How here felon judge there-is

N'onc de l'ueil lerme n'en issi,
Nor-ever from the-eye tear not-thence issued
car l'estoire le dit issi;
for the-history it says thus
mais, si come il juijait des membres,
but so as he judged of-the limbs
comanda il que de ses chambres
commanded he that from his chambers
li feïst l'en vin aporter,
to-him should-have one wine brought
e but pour son cors deporter.
and drank for his body to-delight
Mais il l'ot anceis queneüe;
But he her-had before known
sa sereur ravait il eüe;
his sister had-in-turn he had
e bailla sei meïsme a ome
and gave him self to a-man
cil desleiaus que je ci nome.
that disloyal-one whom I here name
Seneque mist il a martire,
Seneca put he to martyrdom
son bon maistre, e li fist eslire
his good master and to-him made choose
de quel mort mourir il vourrait;
of what death to-die he would-wish
cil vit qu'eschaper ne pourrait,
he saw that-to-escape not he-could
tant iere poissanz li maufez:
so-much was mighty the devil

«Donc seit», dist il, «uns bainz chaufez,
Then let-there-be said he a bath heated
puis que d'eschaper est neienz,
since that of-escaping is nothing
e me faites saignier laienz
and me make bleed therein
tant que je muire en l'eve chaude,
until that I die in the-water hot
e que m'ame joieuse e baude
and that my-soul joyful and glad
a Deu qui la fourma se rende,
to God who it formed itself render
qui d'autres tormenz la defende».
who from-other torments it defend
Emprès ce mot, senz arester,
After this word without stopping
fist Nerons le baing aprester,
had Nero the bath prepared
e fist enz le preudome metre,
and had in the worthy-man put
e puis saignier, ce dit la letre,
and then bled this says the letter
tant qu'il li couvint l'ame rendre,
until that-it to-him behooved the-soul to-render
tant li fist cil dou sanc espandre;
so-much of-him had that-one of-the blood shed

ne nule achaison n'i savait
nor any reason not-there he-knew
fors tant que de coustume avait
except so-much that of custom had
Nerons que toujourz des s'enfance
Nero that always from his-childhood
li soulait porter reverence,
to-him was-wont to-bear reverence
si con deciples a son maistre:
so as disciple to his master
«Mais ce ne deit», dist il, «pas estre,
But this not ought said he at-all to-be
ne n'est pas bel en nule place
nor not-is at-all fair in any place
que reverence a ome face
that reverence to a-man may-do
nus on, puis qu'il est empereres,
any man since that-he is emperor
tant seit ses maistres ne ses peres».
however-much be-he his master or his father
E pour ce que trop li grevait
And for this that exceedingly him it-grieved
quant encontre lui se levait,
when to-meet him himself he-rose
quant son maistre voait venir,
when his master he-saw to-come

n'il ne se poait pas tenir
nor-he not himself could at-all hold
qu'il ne li portast reverence
that-he — to-him bore reverence
par la force d'acoustumance,
by the force of-custom
fist il destruire le preudome.
had he destroyed the worthy-man
Si tint il l'empire de Rome,
So held he the-empire of Rome
cil desleiaus que je ci di,
that disloyal-one whom I here tell-of
e d'orient e de midi,
and of-east and of south
d'occident, de septentrion
of-west of north
tint il la juridicion.
held he the jurisdiction

What Honors Show, and the Nothingness of Evil

XXXVIII

Riches, honors, and powers do not make their holders good but show what was in them. All power is of good, for evil is nothing: God, who is all-powerful, cannot do evil, and the wicked, who abandon the end common to all things, have no being. Fortune showed what she is by setting the worst of men over the world, and Claudian answers his own complaint: the wicked are raised so that they may fall farther.

E se tu me sez bien entendre,
And if thou me knowest-how well to-understand
par ces paroles peuz aprendre
by these words thou-canst learn
que richeces e reverences,
that riches and reverences
dignetez, eneurs e poissances,
dignities honors and powers
ne nules graces de Fortune,
nor any graces of Fortune
car je n'en excete nes une,
for I not-thereof except not-even one
de si grant force pas ne sont
of so great force at-all not are
qu'eus facent bons ceus qui les ont,
that-they make good those who them have
ne dignes d'aveir les richeces,
nor worthy of-having the riches
ne les eneurs ne les hauteces.
nor the honors nor the highnesses

Mais s'il ont en aus engrestiez,
But if-they have in them harshness
orgueil, ou queusque mauvaistiez,
pride or whatever wickedness
li grant estat ou il s'encroent
the great states where they themselves-cling
plus tost les montrent e descloent
more soon them show and disclose
que se petiz estaz eüssent,
than if small states they-had
par quei si nuire ne peüssent;
by which so harm not they-could
car, quant de leur poissances usent,
for when of their powers they-use
li fait les volentez encusent,
the deeds the wills accuse
qui demontrance font e signe
which demonstration make and sign
qu'il ne sont pas ne bon ne digne
that-they not are at-all neither good nor worthy
des richeces, des dignetez,
of-the riches of-the dignities
des eneurs e des poetez.
of-the honors and of-the powers
E si dit l'en une parole
And so says one a word
comunement, qui mout est fole,
commonly which very is foolish
si la tienent tuit pour veraie,
so it hold all for true

par leur fol sen qui les desveie,
by their foolish sense which them leads-astray
que les eneurs les meurs remuent;
that the honors the manners change
mais cist mauvaisement argüent,
but these badly argue
car eneurs n'i font pas muance,
for honors not-there make at-all change
mais eus font signe e demontrance
but they make sign and demonstration
queus meurs en aus avant avaient,
what manners in them before they-had
quant es petiz estaz estaient,
when in-the small states they-were
cil qui les chemins ont tenu
those who the paths have held
par quei sont aus eneurs venu;
by which they-are to-the honors come
car, s'il sont fel e orguilleus,
for if-they are felon and proud
despiteus e mal semilleus
spiteful and ill disposed
puis qu'il vont eneurs recevant,
after that-they go honors receiving
saches tel ierent il devant
know such were they before
con tu les peuz après voeir,
as thou them canst afterward see
s'il en eüssent lors poeir.
if-they thereof had then power

Si n'apele je pas poissance
So not-call I at-all power
poeir mal ne desordenance,
power evil nor disorder
car l'escriture dit e bien
for the-scripture says and well
que toute poissance est de bien,
that all power is of good
ne nus a bien faire ne faut
nor anyone at good doing not fails
fors par feiblece e par defaut;
except by feebleness and by lack
e, qui serait bien cler veianz,
and who would-be well clear seeing
il verrait que maus est neienz,
he would-see that evil is nothing
car ainsinc le dit l'escriture.
for thus it says the-scripture
E se d'auctorité n'as cure,
And if of-authority not-thou-hast care
car tu ne veauz, espeir, pas creire
for thou not wishest perhaps at-all to-believe
que toute auctoritez seit veire,
that all authority be true
preste sui que raison i truisse,
ready I-am that reason there I-find
car il n'est riens que Deus ne puisse.
for there not-is anything that God not can
Mais, qui le veir en veaut retraire,
But who the truth thereof wishes to-tell

Deus n'a poissance de mal faire;
God not-has power of evil to-do
e se tu iés bien conoissanz,
and if thou art well knowing
e veiz que Deus est touz poissanz,
and seest that God is all powerful
qui de mal faire n'a poeir,
who of evil to-do not-has power
donc peuz tu clerement voeir
then canst thou clearly see
que, qui l'estre des choses nombre,
that who the-being of-the things numbers
maus ne met nule chose en nombre;
evil not puts any thing in number
mais si con li ombres ne pose
but so as the shadow not puts
en l'air ocurci nule chose
in the-air darkened any thing
fors defaillance de lumiere,
except failing of light
trestout en autele maniere,
all in such manner
en creature ou biens defaut
in creature where good fails
maus n'i met riens fors pur defaut
evil not-there puts anything except pure lack
de bonté, riens plus n'i peut metre.
of goodness anything more not-there can put
E dit encore plus la letre,
And says still more the letter

qui des mauvais comprent la some:
which of-the wicked comprises the sum
que li mauvais ne sont pas ome,
that the wicked not are at-all men
e vives raisons i ameine;
and lively reasons thereto brings
mais ne vueil or pas metre peine
but not I-wish now at-all to-put pain
a tout quanque je di prouver,
to all whatever I say to-prove
quant en escrit le peuz trouver.
since in writing it thou-canst find
E nepourquant, s'il ne te grieve,
And nevertheless if-it not thee grieve
bien te puis par parole brieve
well to-thee I-can by word brief
de raisons amener aucune:
of reasons to-bring some-one
c'est qu'il laissent la fin comune
this-is that-they leave the end common
a quei tendent e tendre deivent
to which tend and tend ought
les choses qui estre receivent:
the things which being receive
c'est de touz biens le souverain,
this-is of all goods the sovereign
que nous apelons prumerain.
which we call first
Autre raison i ra, beau maistre,
Other reason there is-in-turn fair master

pour quei li mauvais n'ont pas estre,
for which the wicked not-have at-all being
qui bien entent la consequence:
who well understands the consequence
qu'il ne sont pas en ordenance
that-they not are at-all in order
en quei tout leur estre mis ont
in which all their being put have
trestoutes les choses qui sont;
all the things which are
don il s'ensuit a cler veiant
whence it itself-follows to clear seeing
que li mauvais sont pour neient.
that the wicked are for nothing
Or veiz coment Fortune sert
Now see how Fortune serves
ça jus en cet mondain desert,
here below in this worldly desert
e coment el fait a despire,
and how she is to despise
qui des mauvais eslut le pire
who of-the wicked chose the worst
e seur touz omes le fist estre
and over all men him made be
de cet monde seigneur e maistre,
of this world lord and master
e fist Seneque ainsinc destruire.
and had Seneca thus destroyed
Fait bien donques sa grace a fuire,
Is well then her grace to flee

quant nus, tant seit de bon eür,
when anyone however-much be-he of good fortune
ne la peut tenir asseür.
not it can hold secure
Pour ce vueil que tu la despises,
For this I-wish that thou her despise
e que ses graces riens ne prises.
and that her graces anything not thou-prize
Claudiens neïs s'en soulait
Claudian even himself-thereof was-wont
merveillier, e blasmer voulait
to-marvel and to-blame wished
les deus de ce qu'il consentaient
the gods of this that-they consented
que li mauvais ainsinc montaient
that the wicked thus rose
es granz eneurs, es granz hauteces,
to-the great honors to-the great highnesses
es granz poeirs, es granz richeces;
to-the great powers to-the great riches
mais il meïsmes i respont,
but he himself thereto answers
e la cause nous en espont,
and the cause to-us thereof expounds
con cil qui bien de raison use;
as he who well of reason uses
e les deus assout e escuse,
and the gods absolves and excuses

e dit que pour ce le consentent
and says that for this it they-consent
que plus emprès les en tormentent,
that more afterward them thereby they-torment
pour estre plus forment grevé;
for to-be more strongly grieved
car pour ce sont en haut levé
for for this they-are on high raised
que l'en les puisse après voeir
that one them may afterward see
de plus haut trebuichier choeir.
from more high to-tumble to-fall

Nero's End, and Croesus's Dream

XXXIX

If the lover does what she asks, Reason promises, no man will be richer, and she mocks his weeping, the work of Love blowing on the coals in his heart. No one can stop Fortune's wheel, not even Nero, who governed well for his first five years: hated by his people and turned away at every door, he hid in a garden, killed himself, and asked that his head be hidden and his body burned, ending the line of the Caesars, as Suetonius writes. Croesus, saved from the pyre by rain, made war again and dreamed that Jupiter washed him and Phoebus dried him on a tree, and his daughter Phania tells him what the dream means.

E se tu me faiz cet servise
And if thou me doest this service
que je ci t'enjoing e devise,
which I here to-thee-enjoin and devise

jamais nul jour ne trouveras
ever any day not thou-wilt-find
plus riche ome que tu seras;
more rich man than thou wilt-be
ne jamais ne seras irez,
nor ever not thou-wilt-be angered
tant seit tes estaz empirez
however-much be thy state worsened
de cors ne d'amis ne d'aveir,
of body nor of-friends nor of-wealth
ainz voudras pacience aveir;
rather thou-wilt-wish patience to-have
e tantost aveir la pourras
and at-once have it thou-wilt-be-able
com mes amis estre vourras.
as my friend to-be thou-wilt-wish
Pour quei donc en tristeur demeures?
For what then in sadness remainest-thou
Je vei maintes feiz que tu pleures
I see many times that thou weepest
come alambic seur alutel:
as alembic upon aludel
l'en te devrait en un putel
one thee ought in a puddle
tooillier come un viez panufle.
to-roll as an old rag
Certes je tendraie a grant trufle,
Certainly I would-hold for great jest
qui dirait que tu fusses on,
who would-say that thou wert a-man

qu'onques on en nule saison,
for-ever a-man in any season
pour qu'il usast d'entendement,
provided that-he used of-understanding
ne mena deul ne marement.
not led grief nor sorrow
Li vif deable, li maufé
The live devils the fiends
t'ont ton athanor eschaufé,
for-thee-have thy furnace heated
qui si fait tes eauz lermeier,
which so makes thy eyes weep
qui de nule rien esmaier
who of any thing to-be-dismayed
qui t'avenist ne te deüsses,
which to-thee-befell not thyself oughtest
se point d'entendement eüsses.
if a-whit of-understanding thou-hadst
Ce fait li deus qui ci t'a mis,
This does the god who here thee-has put
tes bons maistres, tes bons amis,
thy good master thy good friend
c'est Amours, qui soufle e atise
this-is Love who blows and stirs
la brese qu'il t'a ou cueur mise,
the ember which-he to-thee-has in-the heart put
qui fait aus eauz les lermes rendre.
who makes to-the eyes the tears to-render
Chier te veaut s'acointance vendre,
Dear to-thee he-wishes his-acquaintance to-sell

car ce n'aferist pas a ome
for this not-befits at-all to a-man
que sens e proece renome.
whom sense and prowess renown
Certes malement t'en diffames.
Certainly badly thyself-thereby thou-defamest
Laisse plourer enfanz e fames,
Let weep children and women
bestes feibles e variables;
beasts feeble and changeable
e tu seies forz e estables,
and thou be strong and stable
quant Fortune verras venir.
when Fortune thou-wilt-see to-come
Veauz tu sa roe retenir,
Wishest thou her wheel to-hold-back
qui ne peut estre retenue
which not can be held-back
ne par grant gent ne par menue?
nor by great folk nor by small
Cil granz empereres meïsmes,
That great emperor himself
Nerons, dont l'essemple meïsmes,
Nero whose the-example we-set
qui fu de tout le monde sires,
who was of all the world lord
tant s'estendait loing ses empires,
so-much itself-extended far his empire
ne la pot onques arester,
not it could ever stop

tant peüst eneurs conquester;
however-much could honors conquer
car il, se l'estoire ne ment,
for he if the-history not lies
reçut puis mort mauvaisement,
received afterward death badly
de tout son peuple anceis haïz,
by all his people before hated
don il cremait estre envaïz;
whereby he feared to-be attacked
si manda ses privez amis,
so he-summoned his private friends
mais onc li message tramis
but ever the messengers sent
ne trouverent, que qu'il deïssent,
not found whatever that-they said
nus d'aus qui leur uis leur ouvrissent.
any of-them who their doors to-them should-open
Adonc i vint priveement
Then there came privately
Nerons mout poereusement,
Nero very fearfully
e hurta de ses propres mains,
and knocked with his own hands
n'onc ne l'en firent plus, mais meins,
nor-ever not for-him-thereof they-did more but less
car, quant plus chascuns apela,
for when more each he-called
chascuns plus s'enclost e cela,
each more himself-shut and hid

ne nus ne li vost mot respondre.
nor anyone not to-him wished word to-answer
Lors le couvint aler repondre,
Then him it-behooved to-go to-hide
si se mist, pour sei herbergier,
so himself he-put for himself to-lodge
o deus siens sers, en un vergier,
with two his-own serfs in a garden
car ja pluseur par tout couraient
for already many through all ran
qui pour ocierre le queraient,
who for to-kill him sought
e criaient: «Neron! Neron!
and cried Nero Nero
Qui le vit? Ou le trouveron?»
Who him saw Where him shall-we-find
Si qu'il neïs bien les oait,
So that-he even well them heard
mais conseil metre n'i poait.
but counsel put not-there could
Si s'est si forment esbaïz
So himself-is so strongly dismayed
qu'il meïsmes s'est enhaïz;
that-he himself himself-is come-to-hate
e quant il se vit en ce point
and when he himself saw in this point
qu'il n'ot mais d'esperance point,
that-he not-had more of-hope a-whit
aus sers pria qu'il le tuassent,
to-the serfs he-prayed that-they him should-kill

ou qu'a sei tuer li aidassent.
or that-to himself to-kill him they-should-help
Si s'ocist, mais ainz fist requeste
So himself-killed but before made request
que ja nus ne trouvast sa teste,
that ever anyone not should-find his head
pour ce qu'il ne fust queneüz
for this that-be not should-be known
se ses cors fust emprès veüz;
if his body were afterward seen
e pria que le cors ardissent
and prayed that the body they-should-burn
si tost come ardeir le poïssent.
so soon as burn it they-could
E dit li livres anciens,
And says the book ancient
diz des Doze Cesariens,
called of-the Twelve Caesars
ou sa mort trouvons en escrit,
where his death we-find in writing
si con Sutonius l'escrit,
so as Suetonius it-writes
qui la lei crestiene apele
who the law Christian calls
fausse religion nouvele
false religion new
e maufaisant, ainsinc la nome,
and evil-doing thus it names
veiz ci mot de desleial ome,
see here word of disloyal man

que en Neron fu defenie
that in Nero was ended
des Cesariens la lignie.
of-the Caesars the lineage
Cist par ses faiz tant pourchaça
This-one by his deeds so-much contrived
que tout son lignage effaça.
that all his lineage he-effaced
Nepourquant tant fu coustumiers
Nevertheless so-much he-was accustomed
de bien faire es cinc anz prumiers
of well to-do in-the five years first
qu'onc si bien ne gouverna terre
that-ever so well not governed land
nus princes que l'en seüst querre,
any prince whom one could to-seek
tant sembla vaillanz e piteus,
so-much seemed-he worthy and merciful
li desleiaus, li despiteus;
the disloyal-one the spiteful-one
e dist en audience a Rome,
and he-said in audience at Rome
quant il, pour condanner un ome,
when he for to-condemn a man
fu requis de la mort escrire,
was required of the death to-write
ne n'ot pas honte de ce dire,
nor not-had at-all shame of this to-say

qu'il vousist meauz non saveir letre
that-he would-wish better not to-know letters
que sa main pour escrire i metre.
than his hand for to-write thereto to-put
Si tint, ce veaut li livres dire,
So held this wishes the book to-say
entour dis e set anz l'empire,
around ten and seven years the-empire
e trente e deus dura sa vie;
and thirty and two lasted his life
mais ses orgueauz, sa felonie
but his pride his felony
si forment l'orent envaï
so strongly him-had assailed
que de si haut si bas chaï,
that from so high so low he-fell
con tu m'as oï raconter,
as thou me-hast heard to-recount
tant l'ot fait Fortune monter,
so-much him-had made Fortune climb
qui tant le fist emprès descendre,
who so-much him made afterward descend
con tu peuz oïr e entendre.
as thou canst to-hear and to-understand
N'onc ne la pot tenir Cresus
Nor-ever not her could hold Croesus
qu'el nou tournast e jus e sus,
that-she him turned both down and up
qui refu reis de toute Lide,
who was-in-turn king of all Lydia

puis li mist l'en au col la bride,
then to-him put one on-the neck the bridle
e fu pour ardre au feu livrez,
and was for to-burn to-the fire delivered
quant par pluie fu delivrez,
when by rain he-was delivered
qui le grant feu fist tout esteindre,
which the great fire made all be-quenched
n'onques nus n'osa la remaindre;
nor-ever anyone not-dared there to-remain
tuit s'en foïrent pour la pluie:
all themselves-thence fled for the rain
Cresus se mist tantost en fuie,
Croesus himself put at-once in flight
quant il se vit seul en la place,
when he himself saw alone in the place
senz encombrement e senz chace.
without hindrance and without chase
Puis refu sires de sa terre,
Then was-again lord of his land
e puis resmut nouvele guerre,
and then stirred-again new war
puis refu pris, e puis penduz,
then was-again taken and then hanged
quant li songes li fu renduz
when the dream to-him was rendered
des deus deus qui li aparaient,
of-the two gods who to-him appeared
qui seur l'arbre en haut le servaient:
who upon the-tree on high him served

Jupiter, ce dist, le lavait,
Jupiter this he-said him washed
e Phebus la toaille avait,
and Phoebus the towel had
e se penait de l'essuier.
and himself strove to him-to-dry
Mar se vost ou songe apuier,
Ill-for-him himself wished on-the dream to-lean
don si grant fiance acuilli
whereof so great trust he-took
qu'il come fos s'enorguilli.
that-he as a-fool himself-grew-proud
Bien li dist Phanie, sa fille,
Well to-him said Phania his daughter
qui tant estait sage e soutille
who so was wise and subtle
qu'el savait les songes espondre,
that-she knew-how the dreams to-expound
e senz flater li vost respondre:
and without flattering to-him wished to-answer
«Beaus pere», dist la dameisele,
Fair father said the damsel
«ci a doulereuse nouvele.
here there-is painful news
Vostre orgueauz ne vaut une coque;
Your pride not is-worth a shell
sachiez que Fortune vous moque.
know that Fortune you mocks

Par cet songe poez entendre
By this dream you-can understand
qu'el vous veaut faire au gibet pendre;
that-she you wishes to-have on-the gibbet hanged
e quant sereiz penduz au vent,
and when you-will-be hanged in-the wind
senz couverture e senz auvent,
without cover and without awning
seur vous plouvra, beaus sires reis,
upon you it-will-rain fair lord king
e li beaus solauz de ses rais
and the fair sun with its rays
vous essuiera cors e face.
you will-dry body and face
Fortune a cete fin vous chace,
Fortune to this end you drives
qui tost e done les eneurs,
who takes-away and gives the honors
e fait souvent des granz meneurs,
and makes often of-the great lesser
e des meneurs refait graigneurs,
and of-the lesser makes-in-turn greater
e seignourir seur les seigneurs.
and to-lord-it over the lords
Que vous iraie je flatant?
Why you would-go I flattering
Fortune au gibet vous atent,
Fortune at-the gibbet you awaits
e quant au gibet vous tendra,
and when at-the gibbet you she-will-hold

la hart ou col, el reprendra
the halter on-the neck she will-take-back
la bele courone doree
the fair crown gilded
don vostre teste a couronee;
wherewith your head she-has crowned
s'en iert uns autres couronez,
so-therewith will-be an other crowned
de cui garde ne vous donez.
of whom heed not you give

Croesus Hanged, and Charles's Game of Chess

XL

Phania explains the dream: Jupiter is the rain, Phoebus the sun, the tree the gibbet, and Fortune is avenging the people on his pride. Fortune prizes only her daughter Nobility, whom she gives to no one whose heart is not courteous, since Nobility never enters a churlish heart, so a king should be generous and merciful. Croesus called her reading lies, and Fortune hanged him. Reason adds a recent example: Charles of Anjou took Manfred's kingdom and his life, beheaded Conradin, and let Henry, brother of the king of Spain, die in his prison; those two fled the field like chessmen leaping off the board, since without a king they could not be mated, and when Manfred lay mated and dead, Charles took them both.

E pour ce que je vous espoigne
And for this that I to-you expound
plus apertement la besoigne,
more openly the business
Jupiter, qui l'eve vous done,
Jupiter who the-water to-you gives

cist est li airs qui pleut e tone,
this-one is the air which rains and thunders
e Phebus, qui tient la toaille,
and Phoebus who holds the towel
c'est li solauz, senz nule faille;
this-is the sun without any fail
l'arbre par le gibet vous glose,
the-tree by the gibbet to-you I-gloss
je n'i puis entendre autre chose.
I not-there can understand other thing
Passer vous couvient cete planche,
To-pass you it-behooves this plank
Fortune ainsinc le peuple venche
Fortune thus the people avenges
dou bobant que vous demenez,
of-the arrogance which you display
come orguilleus e forsenez.
as proud and mad
Si destruit ele maint preudome,
So destroys she many-a worthy-man
qu'el ne prise pas une pome
for-she not prizes at-all an apple
tricherie ne leiauté,
treachery nor loyalty
ne vil estat, ne reiauté;
nor vile estate nor royalty
anceis s'en jeue a la pelote,
rather herself-therewith plays at the ball
come pucele nice e sote,
as maiden simple and foolish

e giete a grant desordenance
and throws with great disorder
richece, eneur e reverence;
wealth honor and reverence
dignetez e poissances done,
dignities and powers she-gives
ne ne prent garde a quel persone;
nor not takes heed to what person
car ses graces, quant les despent,
for her graces when them she-spends
en despendant si les espant
in spending so them she-scatters
qu'el les giete en leu de pouties
that-she them throws in place of filth
par puteaus e par praeries;
through puddles and through meadows
qu'el ne prise tout une bille
for-she not prizes all a stick
fors que Gentillece, sa fille,
except that Nobility her daughter
cousine e prouchaine Cheance,
cousin and near-kin (of-)Chance
tant la tient Fortune en balance.
so-much her holds Fortune in balance
Mais de cele est il veirs, senz faille,
But of that-one is it true without fail
que Fortune a nul ne la baille,
that Fortune to anyone not her gives
coment qu'il aut dou retolir,
however that-it go of-the taking-back

s'il ne set si son cueur polir
if-he not knows-how so his heart to-polish
qu'il seit courteis, preuz e vaillanz.
that-he be courteous valiant and worthy
Car nus n'est si bien bataillanz,
For anyone not-is so well fighting
se de vilenie s'apresse,
if to villainy himself-presses
que Gentillece ne le laisse.
that Nobility not him leaves
Gentillece est noble e si l'ain,
Nobility is noble and so her-I-love
qu'el n'entre pas en cueur vilain.
for-she not-enters at-all into heart churlish
Pour ce vous pri, mon trés chier pere,
For this you I-pray my very dear father
que vilenie en vous n'apere:
that villainy in you not-appear
ne seiez orguilleus ne chiches,
not be proud nor stingy
aiez, pour enseignier les riches,
have for to-teach the rich
large cueur e courteis e gent,
generous heart and courteous and noble
e piteus a la povre gent;
and merciful to the poor folk
ainsinc le deit chascuns reis faire.
thus it ought each king do

Large, courteis e debonaire
Generous courteous and gracious
ait le cueur, e plein de pitié,
let-him-have the heart and full of pity
s'il quiert dou peuple l'amitié,
if-he seeks of-the people the-friendship
senz cui reis en nule saison
without which king in any season
ne peut ne que uns simples on.»
not can no-more than a simple man
Ainsinc le chastiait Phanie.
Thus him chastised Phania
Mais fos ne veit en sa folie
But a-fool not sees in his folly
fors que sen e raison ensemble,
except that sense and reason together
si come en son fol cueur li semble.
so as in his foolish heart to-him it-seems
Cresus, qui point ne s'umelie,
Croesus who at-all not himself-humbles
touz pleins d'orgueil e de folie,
all full of-pride and of folly
en touz ses faiz cuide estre sages,
in all his deeds thinks to-be wise
combien qu'il feïst granz outrages.
however-much that-he did great outrages
«Fille», fait il, «de courteisie
Daughter says he of courtesy
ne de sen ne m'aprenez mie;
nor of sense not me-teach at-all

plus en sai que vous ne savez,
more thereof I-know than you — know
qui si chastié m'en avez.
who so chastised me-thereof have
E quant par vostre fol respons
And when by your foolish answer
m'avez mon songe ainsinc espons,
to-me-you-have my dream thus expounded
servi m'avez de granz mençonges;
served me-you-have with great lies
car sachiez que cist nobles songes,
for know that this noble dream
ou fausse glose voulez metre,
on-which false gloss you-wish to-put
deit estre entenduz a la letre;
ought be understood to the letter
e je meïsmes l'i entens,
and I myself it-there understand
si con nous le verrons en tens.
so as we it shall-see in time
Onc ausinc noble vision
Ever so noble vision
n'ot si vil esposicion.
not-had so vile exposition
Li deu, sachiez, a mei vendront,
The gods know to me will-come
e le servise me rendront
and the service to-me will-render
qu'il m'ont par cet songe tramis,
which-they to-me-have by this dream sent

tant est chascuns d'aus mes amis,
so-much is each of-them my friend
car bien l'ai pieç'a deservi.»
for well it-have-I long-ago deserved
Veiz con Fortune le servi;
See how Fortune him served
qu'il ne se pot onques defendre
for-he not himself could ever defend
qu'el nou feïst au gibet pendre.
that-she him had at-the gibbet hanged
N'est ce donc bien chose prouvable
Not-is this then well a-thing provable
que sa roe n'est pas tenable,
that her wheel not-is at-all holdable
quant nus ne la peut retenir,
when anyone not it can hold-back
tant sache a grant estat venir?
so-well may-he-know-how to great estate to-come
E se tu sez riens de logique,
And if thou knowest anything of logic
qui bien est science autentique,
which well is science authentic
puis que li grant seigneur i faillent
since that the great lords there fail
li petit en vain s'i travaillent.
the little-ones in vain themselves-there toil
E se les preuves riens ne prises
And if the proofs anything not thou-prizest
d'ancienes estoires prises,
from-ancient histories taken

tu les as de ton tens nouveles,
thou them hast of thy time new
de batailles fresches e beles;
of battles fresh and fair
de tel beauté, ce deiz saveir,
of such beauty this thou-oughtest know
come il peut en bataille aveir;
as it can in battle to-have
c'est de Mainfrei, rei de Secile,
this-is of Manfred king of Sicily
qui par force tint e par guile
who by force held and by guile
lonc tens en pais toute la terre,
long time in peace all the land
quant li bons Chales li mut guerre,
when the good Charles to-him moved war
contes d'Anjou e de Provence,
count of-Anjou and of Provence
qui, par devine pourveance,
who by divine providence
est ore de Secile reis,
is now of Sicily king
qu'ainsinc le veaut Deus li verais,
for-thus it wishes God the true
qui toujourz s'est tenuz o li.
who always himself-is held with him
Cist bons reis Chales l'en toli,
This good king Charles from-him-thereof took-away
non pas senz plus la seignourie,
not at-all without more the lordship

ainz li toli dou cors la vie.
rather from-him took-away of-the body the life
Quant a l'espee qui bien taille,
When with the-sword which well cuts
en la prumeraine bataille,
in the first battle
l'assailli pour lui desconfire,
him-he-assailed for him to-defeat
eschec e mat li ala dire
check and mate to-him went to-say
desus son destrier auferrant
upon his charger gray
d'un trait de paonet errant
with-a move of pawn wandering
ou mileu de son eschequier.
in-the middle of his chessboard
De Corradin paler ne quier,
Of Conradin to-speak not I-seek
son neveu, don l'essemple est preste,
his nephew whereof the-example is ready
don li reis Chales prist la teste,
of-whom the king Charles took the head
maugré les princes d'Alemaigne.
despite the princes of-Germany
Henri, frere le rei d'Espaigne,
Henry brother (of-)the king of-Spain
plein d'orgueil e de traïson,
full of-pride and of treason
mist il mourir en sa prison.
put he to-die in his prison

Cist dui, come fos garçonez,
These two as foolish lads
e ros e fos e paonez
both rooks and fools and pawns
e chevaliers au jeu perdirent,
and knights in-the game lost
e hors de l'eschequier saillirent,
and out of the-chessboard leapt
tel peeur orent d'estre pris
such fear they-had of-being taken
au jeu qu'il orent entrepris;
in-the game which-they had undertaken
car, qui la verité regarde,
for who the truth regards
d'estre mat n'avaient il garde:
of-being mated not-had they fear
puis que senz rei se combataient,
since that without king themselves they-fought
eschec e mat riens ne doutaient;
check and mate anything not they-feared
ne cil haver ne les poait
nor that-one mate not them could
qui contre aus aus eschès joait,
who against them at-the chess played
fust a pié, fust sus ses arçons,
were-it on foot were-it upon his saddle-bows
car l'en ne have pas garçons,
for one not mates at-all lads
fos, chevaliers, fierces ne ros;
fools knights queens nor rooks

car, se verité conter os,
for if truth to-tell I-dare
si n'en quier je nului flater,
so not-thereof seek I anyone to-flatter
ausinc come il va dou mater,
just as it goes of-the mating
puis que des eschès me souvient,
since that of-the chess me it-remembers
se tu riens en sez, il couvient
if thou anything thereof knowest it behooves
que cil seit reis que l'en fait have,
that he be king whom one makes mated
quant tuit si ome sont esclave,
when all his men are captive
si qu'il se veit seul en la place,
so that-he himself sees alone in the place
ne n'i veit chose qui li place,
nor not-there sees a-thing which him may-please
ainz s'en fuit pour ses anemis,
rather himself-thence flees for his enemies
qui l'ont en tel povreté mis.
who him-have in such poverty put
L'en ne peut autre ome haver,
One not can other man to-mate
ce sevent tuit, large e aver,
this know all generous and miserly
car ainsinc le veaut Athalus,
for thus it wishes Attalus
qui des eschès controuva l'us,
who of-the chess invented the-use

quant il traitait d'arismetique.
when he treated of-arithmetic
E verras en Policratique
And thou-wilt-see in Policraticus
qu'il s'enflechi de la matire,
that-he himself-turned-aside from the matter
que des nombres devait escrire,
which of-the numbers he-was write
ou cet bel jeu joli trouva,
where this fair game pretty he-found
que par demontraison prouva.
which by demonstration he-proved
Pour ce se mistrent il en fuie,
For this themselves put they in flight
pour la prise qui leur enuie.
for the capture which them vexes
Qu'ai je dit pour prise eschever!
What-have I said for capture to-avoid
Mais pour la mort, qui plus grever
But for the death which more to-grieve
leur peüst e qui pis valait;
them could and which worse availed
car li jeus malement alait,
for the game badly went
au meins par devers leur partie,
at-the least on toward their side
qui de Deu s'iere departie,
which from God itself-was parted

e la bataille avait emprise
and the battle had undertaken
contre la fei de sainte iglise;
against the faith of holy church
e, qui l'eschec dit leur eüst,
and who the-check said to-them had
n'iert il qui couvrir le peüst,
not-was there who cover it could
car la fierce avait esté prise
for the queen had been taken
au jeu de la prumiere assise,
in-the game of the first sitting
ou li reis perdi, come fos,
where the king lost as a-fool
ros, chevaliers, paons e fos;
rooks knights pawns and fools
si n'iert ele pas la presente,
so not-was she at-all there present
mais la chaitive, la dolente,
but the wretched-one the sorrowful
ne pot foïr ne sei defendre
not could to-flee nor herself to-defend
puis que l'en li ot fait entendre
since that one to-her had made understand
que maz e morz gisait Mainfreiz,
that mated and dead lay Manfred
par chief, par piez e par mains freiz.
by head by feet and by hands cold

E puis que cil bons reis oï
And since that that good king heard
qu'il s'en ierent ainsinc foï,
that-they themselves-thence were thus fled
les prist il fuitis ambedeus,
them took he fugitive both
e puis fist sa volenté d'eus,
and then did his will of-them
e de mainz autres prisoniers, 6725
and of many other prisoners
de leur folie parçoniers.
of their folly partners

Homer's Two Casks

XLI

Charles, once a count, tamed the pride of Marseille and is now vicar of the whole empire. Since Fortune strikes from behind those she anoints from the front, the lover who kissed the rose should not expect pleasure forever, but remember Manfred, Henry, and Conradin, Nero and Croesus, Hecuba and Sisygambis. Reason scolds him for forgetting Homer, whom he has studied: Jupiter keeps two full casks on his threshold, and Fortune the tavern-keeper pours good and ill from them to everyone, more to some and less to others. No one is so glad that nothing displeases him, nor so wretched that nothing comforts him, unless he falls into despair; so he should take heart and receive patiently whatever Fortune gives.

Cil vaillanz reis don je te conte,
That worthy king whereof I to-thee tell
que l'en soulait apeler conte,
whom one was-wont to-call count

cui, nuiz e jourz e mains e seirs,
whom nights and days and mornings and evenings
l'ame e le cors e touz ses eirs
the-soul and the body and all his heirs
gart Deus e defende e conseille,
may-guard God and defend and counsel
cil donta l'orgueil de Marseille
he tamed the-pride of Marseille
e prist des plus granz de la vile
and took of-the most great of the town
les testes, ainz que de Secile
the heads before that of Sicily
li fust li reiaumes donez,
to-him were the kingdom given
don il est or reis couronez,
whereof he is now king crowned
e vicaires de tout l'empire.
and vicar of all the-empire
Mais ne vueil or de lui plus dire,
But not I-wish now of him more to-say
car, qui ses faiz voudrait retraire,
for who his deeds would-wish to-tell
un grant livre en couvendrait faire.
a great book thereof it-would-behoove to-make
Veiz ci genz qui granz eneurs tindrent,
See here folk who great honors held
or sez a quel chief il en vindrent:
now knowest-thou to what end they thereof came
n'est donc bien Fortune seüre;
not-is then well Fortune sure

n'est bien fos qui s'i asseüre,
not-is well a-fool who himself-there assures
quant ceus qu'el veaut par devant oindre
when those whom-she wishes by front to-anoint
seaut ainsinc par darriere poindre?
she-is-wont thus by behind to-prick
E tu, qui la rose baisas,
And thou who the rose kissedst
par quei de deul si grant fais as
by which of grief so great burden hast
que tu ne t'en sez apaisier,
that thou not thyself-thereof knowest-how to-appease
cuidaies tu toujourz baisier,
thoughtest thou always to-kiss
toujourz aveir aise e delices?
always to-have ease and delights
Par mon chief, tu iés fos e nices.
By my head thou art foolish and simple
Mais, que cist deaus plus ne te tiegne,
But that this grief more not thee hold
de Mainfrei vueil qu'il te souviegne,
of Manfred I-wish that-it thee remind
de Henri e de Corradin,
of Henry and of Conradin
qui firent pis que Sarradin,
who did worse than Saracens
de comencier bataille amere
in beginning battle bitter
contre sainte iglise leur mere,
against holy church their mother

e dou fait des Marsilliens
and of-the deed of-the Marseillese
e des granz omes anciens,
and of-the great men ancient
come Neron, come Cresus,
as Nero as Croesus
don je t'ai conté ci desus,
whereof I to-thee-have told here above
qui Fortune tenir ne porent
who Fortune hold not could
a touz les granz poeirs qu'il orent.
with all the great powers which-they had
Par quei frans on qui tant se prise
For which free man who so-much himself prizes
qu'il s'orguillist pour sa franchise,
that-he himself-prides for his freedom
il ne set pas en quel aage
he not knows at-all in what age
Cresus li reis vint en servage;
Croesus the king came into servitude
ne d'Hecuba, mien escient,
nor of-Hecuba to-my knowledge
qui fu fame le rei Priant,
who was wife (of-)the king Priam
ne tient il pas en sa memoire,
not holds he at-all in his memory
ne de Sisicambris l'estoire,
nor of Sisygambis the-history
mere Daire le rei de Perse,
mother (of-)Darius the king of Persia

cui Fortune fu si parverse
to-whom Fortune was so perverse
que franchise e reiaumes tindrent
that freedom and kingdoms they-held
e serves en la fin devindrent.
and serfs in the end became
D'autre part, je tieng a grant honte,
On-other side I hold for great shame
puis que tu sez que letre monte,
since that thou knowest what letters amount
e qu'a estudier couvient,
and what-to study behooves
quant il d'Homer ne te souvient,
when it of-Homer not thee reminds
puis que tu l'as estudié,
since that thou it-hast studied
mais tu l'as, ce semble, oublié.
but thou it-hast this seems forgotten
E n'est ce peine vaine e vuide?
And not-is this pain vain and empty
Tu mez en livres ton estuide,
Thou puttest in books thy study
e tout par negligence oublies!
and all by negligence forgettest
Que vaut quanque tu estudies,
What avails whatever thou studiest
quant li sens au besoing te faut,
when the sense at-the need thee fails
e seulement par ton defaut?
and only by thy fault

Certes, toujourz en remembrance
Certainly always in remembrance
deüsses aveir sa sentence;
thou-oughtest have his sentence
si devraient tuit ome sage,
so ought all men wise
e si fichier en leur courage
and so to-fix in their heart
que jamais ne leur eschapast,
that ever not from-them it-escaped
tant que la mort les atrapast;
until that the death them trapped
car qui la sentence savrait
for who the sentence would-know
e toujourz en son cueur l'avrait,
and always in his heart it-would-have
e la seüst bien soupeser,
and it knew-how well to-weigh
jamais ne li pourrait peser
ever not to-him could weigh-heavy
de chose qui li avenist,
of thing which to-him befell
que toujourz fers ne se tenist
that always firm not himself he-held
encontre toutes aventures,
against all adventures
bones, males, moles e dures.
good evil soft and hard
Si rest ele veir si comune,
So is-in-turn it truly so common

selonc les euvres de Fortune,
according-to the works of Fortune
que chascuns chascun jour la veit,
that each each day it sees
se bon entendement avait.
if good understanding he-had
Merveille est que bien ne l'entenz,
Marvel it-is that well not it-thou-understandest
qui ta cure as mise tant enz;
who thy care hast put so-much in-it
mais tu l'as autre part tournee
but thou it-hast other way turned
par cete amour desordenee;
by this love disordered
si la te vueil or ramenteivre,
so it to-thee I-wish now to-recall
por tei faire meauz aperceivre.
for thee to-make better perceive
Jupiter en toute saison
Jupiter in every season
a seur le sueil de sa maison,
has upon the threshold of his house
ce dit Homers, deus pleins toneaus;
this says Homer two full casks
si n'est veauz on ne garçoneaus,
so not-is-there old man nor lad
n'il n'est dame ne dameisele,
nor-there not-is lady nor damsel
seit vieille ou jenne, laide ou bele,
be-she old or young ugly or fair

qui vie en cet monde receive,
who life in this world receive
qui de ces deus toneaus ne beive.
who from these two casks not drink
C'est une taverne pleniere,
This-is a tavern plentiful
don Fortune la taverniere
whence Fortune the tavern-keeper
trait aluisne e piment en coupes,
draws wormwood and spiced-wine in cups
pour faire a tout le monde soupes;
for to-make for all the world sops
touz les en abeivre a ses mains,
all them therewith she-waters with her hands
mais les uns plus, les autres meins.
but the ones more the others less
N'est nus qui chascun jour ne pinte
Not-is anyone who each day not tipples
de ces toneaus ou quarte ou pinte
from these casks either quart or pint
ou mui ou setier ou chopine,
or hogshead or sester or half-pint
si come il plaist a la meschine,
so as it pleases to the wench
ou pleine paume ou quelque goute,
or full palm or some drop
que Fortune ou bec li agoute,
which Fortune in-the beak to-him drips
car bien e mal a chascun verse,
for good and ill to each she-pours

si come ele est douce e parverse.
so as she is sweet and perverse
Ne ja nus si liez ne sera,
Nor ever anyone so glad not will-be
quant il bien se pourpensera,
when he well himself will-bethink
qu'il ne truisse en sa graigneur aise
that-he not find in his greatest ease
quelque chose qui li desplaise,
some thing which him displease
ne ja tant de meschief n'avra,
nor ever so-much of mischief not-be-will-have
quant bien pourpenser se savra,
when well to-bethink himself be-will-know-how
qu'il ne truisse en son desconfort
that-he not find in his discomfort
quelque chose qui le confort,
some thing which him comfort
seit chose faite ou chose a faire,
be-it thing done or thing to do
s'il pensait bien a son afaire,
if-be thought well to his affair
s'il ne chiet en desesperance,
if-he not falls into despair
qui les pecheeurs desavance;
which the sinners sets-back
ne nus on n'i peut conseil metre,
nor any man not-there can counsel put
tant ait leü parfont en letre.
however-much have-he read deep in letters

Que t'i vaut donc le courroucier,
What thee-there avails then the being-angry
le lermeier ne le groucier?
the weeping nor the grumbling
Mais pren bon cueur e si t'avance
But take good heart and so thyself-advance
de receveir en pacience
to receive in patience
tout quanque Fortune te done,
all whatever Fortune to-thee gives
seit bele ou laide ou male ou bone.
be-it fair or ugly or evil or good

Reason's Requests, and the Plain Word

XLII

Reason asks that the lover love her, despise the god of Love, and prize Fortune at nothing; the first alone will do, as Socrates showed. He refuses: he must serve his master, who will give him the rose. He calls her discourteous for naming balls; she answers that God made them so that the species should live, and she does not sin in naming what he made. When he calls her a ribald, since God made the things but not the words, she will not answer folly with insult.

De Fortune la semilleuse
Of Fortune the tricky
e de sa roe perilleuse
and of her wheel perilous
touz les tourz conter ne pourraie;
all the turns tell not I-could
c'est li jeus de boute en courreie,
this-is the game of push in belt

que Fortune set si partir
which Fortune knows-how so to-share
que nus devant au departir
that anyone before at-the parting
n'en peut aveir science aperte
not-thereof can have knowledge open
s'il i prendra gaaing ou perte.
if-he there will-take gain or loss
Mais a tant de li me tairai,
But at so-much of her myself I-shall-silence
fors tant qu'encor m'i retrairai
except so-much that-yet myself-there I-shall-draw-back
un petitet, pour mes requestes,
a little-bit for my requests
don je te faz treis mout onestes,
whereof I to-thee make three very honest
car volentiers recorde bouche
for willingly recalls a-mouth
chose qui près dou cueur li touche;
a-thing which near of-the heart to-it touches
e se tu les veauz refuser,
and if thou them wishest to-refuse
n'est riens qui te puisse escuser
not-is anything which thee can excuse
que trop ne faces a blasmer:
that exceedingly not thou-be to blame
c'est que tu me vueilles amer,
this-is that thou me wish to-love
e que le deu d'Amours despises,
and that the god of-Love thou-despise

e que Fortune riens ne prises.
and that Fortune anything not thou-prize
E se tu trop feibles te fais
And if thou too feeble thyself makest
a soutenir ce trible fais,
to sustain this triple burden
je le sui preste d'alegier,
I it am ready to-lighten
pour porter le plus de legier.
for to-carry it more with ease
Pren la prumiere seulement,
Take the first only
e se tu m'entenz sainement,
and if thou me-understandest soundly
tu seras des autres delivres,
thou wilt-be of-the others delivered
car, se tu n'iés ou fos ou ivres,
for if thou not-art either foolish or drunk
saveir deiz, e bien le recorde,
know thou-oughtest and well it remember
que quiconque a Raison s'acorde
that whoever with Reason himself-agrees
jamais par amour n'amera,
ever by love not-will-love
ne Fortune ne prisera.
nor Fortune not will-prize
Pour ce fu Socratès iteus
For this was Socrates such
qu'il fu mes amis veriteus.
that-he was my friend truthful

Le deu d'Amours onc ne cremut,
The god of-Love ever not he-feared
ne pour Fortune ne se mut:
nor for Fortune not himself moved
pour ce vueil que tu le resembles
for this I-wish that thou him resemble
que tout ton cueur au mien assembles.
that all thy heart to-the mine thou-join
E se tu l'as ou mien planté,
And if thou it-hast in-the mine planted
ce me soufist a grant plenté.
this me suffices in great plenty
Or veiz con la chose s'apreste:
Now see how the thing itself-prepares
je ne te faz qu'une requeste;
I not to-thee make but-one request
pren la prumiere que j'ai dite,
take the first which I-have said
e je te clain des autres quite.
and I thee declare of-the others quit
Or ne tien plus ta bouche close,
Now not hold more thy mouth closed
respon: Feras tu cete chose?
answer Wilt-do thou this thing
— Dame», fis je, «ne peut autre estre:
Lady said I not can other be
il me couvient servir mon maistre,
it me behooves to-serve my master

qui mout plus riche me fera
who much more rich me will-make
cent mile tanz quant li plaira,
a-hundred thousand times when him it-will-please
car la rose me deit baillier
for the rose to-me he-must give
se je m'i sai bien travaillier;
if I myself-there know-how well to-labor
e se par lui la puis aveir,
and if by him it I-can have
mestier n'avraie d'autre aveir;
need not-I-would-have of-other wealth
je ne priseraie treis chiches
I not would-prize three chickpeas
Socratès, combien qu'il fust riches,
Socrates however-much that-he were rich
ne plus n'en quier oïr paler.
nor more not-thereof I-seek to-hear to-speak
A mon maistre m'en dei raler:
To my master myself-thence I-must go-back
tenir li vueil ses couvenanz,
to-keep to-him I-wish his covenants
car il est dreiz e avenanz:
for it is right and fitting
s'en enfer me devait mener,
if-into hell me he-should lead
n'en puis je mon cueur refrener.
not-thereof can I my heart restrain
Mon cueur! Ja n'est il mais a mei.
My heart Ever not-is it more to me

Onques encore n'entamai,
Ever yet not-I-broached
ne ne bé pas a entamer
nor not I-aim at-all to broach
mon testament pour autre amer.
my testament for another to-love
A Bel Acueil tout le laissai,
To Fair Welcome all it I-left
car trestout par cueur mon lais sai,
for all by heart my legacy I-know
e oi par grant impacience
and I-had by great impatience
confession senz repentance;
confession without repentance
si ne voudraie pas la rose
so not I-would-wish at-all the rose
changier a vous pour nule chose:
to-exchange for you for any thing
la couvient que mes pensers voise.
there it-behooves that my thought go
Si ne vous tieng pas a courtoise
So not you I-hold at-all for courteous
quant ci m'avez coilles nomees,
when here to-me-you-have balls named
qui ne sont pas bien renomees
which not are at-all well renowned
en bouche a courteise pucele;
in mouth of courteous maiden
vous, qui tant estes sage e bele,
you who so-much are wise and fair

ne sai con nomer les osastes,
not I-know how to-name them you-dared
au meins quant le mot ne glosastes
at-the least when the word not you-glossed
par quelque courteise parole,
by some courteous word
si com preudefame en parole.
so as a-worthy-woman thereof speaks
Souvent vei neïs ces nourrices,
Often I-see even these nurses
don maintes sont baudes e nices,
whereof many are bold and simple
quant leur enfanz tienent e baignent,
when their children they-hold and bathe
qu'eus les debaillent e aplaignent,
that-they them fondle and caress
si les noment eus autrement.
so them name they otherwise
Vous savez or bien se je ment.»
You know now well if I lie
Lors se prist Raison a sourire,
Then herself began Reason to smile
en souriant me prist a dire:
in smiling to-me began to say
«Beaus amis, je puis bien nomer,
Fair friend I can well name
senz mei faire mal renomer,
without me to-make ill renown
apertement, par propre non,
openly by proper name

chose qui n'est se bone non;
a-thing which not-is except good not
veire dou mal seürement
yea of-the evil safely
puis je bien paler proprement,
can I well speak properly
car de nule rien je n'ai honte,
for of any thing I not-have shame
s'el n'est teus qui a pechié monte.
if-it not-is such which to sin amounts
Mais chose ou pechiez se meïst
But thing where sin itself might-put
n'est riens qui faire me feïst,
not-is anything which to-do me could-make
n'onc en ma vie ne pechiai;
nor-ever in my life not I-sinned
n'encor ne faz je pas pechié
nor-yet not do I at-all sin
se je nome les nobles choses
if I name the noble things
par plain texte, senz metre gloses,
by plain text without putting glosses
que mes peres en paradis
which my father in paradise
fist de ses propres mains jadis,
made with his own hands formerly
e touz les autres estrumenz,
and all the other instruments

qui sont pilers e argumenz
which are pillars and proofs
a soutenir nature humaine,
to sustain nature human
qui senz aus fust or casse e vaine;
which without them were now broken and vain
car volentiers, non pas enviz,
for willingly not at-all reluctantly
mist Deus en coilles e en viz
put God in balls and in pricks
force de generacion,
force of generation
par merveilleuse entencion,
by marvelous intention
pour l'espiece aveir toujourz vive
for the-species to-have always living
par renouvelance naïve,
by renewal native
c'est par naissance recheable
this-is by birth re-falling
e par cheance renaissable,
and by falling re-nascent
par quei Deus la fait tant durer
by which God it makes so-long last
qu'el ne peut la mort endurer,
that-it not can the death endure
ausinc fist il aus bestes mues,
likewise did he to-the beasts dumb
qui resont par ce soutenues,
which are-in-turn by this sustained

car, quant les unes bestes meurent,
for when the some beasts die
leur fourmes es autres demeurent.
their forms in-the others remain
— Or vaut pis», dis je, «que devant,
Now is-worth worse said I than before
car bien vois ore apercevant
for well I-go now perceiving
par vostre paleüre baude
by your speech bold
que vous estes fole ribaude;
that you are foolish ribald
car, tout ait Deus les choses faites
for though have God the things made
que ci devant m'avez retraites,
which here before to-me-you-have recounted
les moz au meins ne fist il mie
the words at-the least not made he at-all
qui sont tuit plein de vilenie.
which are all full of villainy
— Beaus amis», dist Raison la sage,
Fair friend said Reason the wise
«folie n'est pas vasselage,
folly not-is at-all prowess
n'onc ne fu ne ja ne sera.
nor-ever not was nor ever not will-be
Tu diras quanqu'il te plaira,
Thou wilt-say whatever-it thee will-please
car bien en as tens e espace,
for well thereof thou-hast time and space

ne mei, qui t'amour e ta grace
nor me who thy-love and thy grace
vueil aveir, n'esteut il douter;
wish to-have not-behooves it to-fear
car je sui preste d'escouter
for I am ready to-listen
e de sofrir e de mei taire,
and to suffer and to myself silence
mais que te gardes de pis faire,
provided that thyself thou-guard from worse to-do
combien qu'a laidengier m'acueilles.
however-much that-to reviling me-thou-take
Si semble il par fei que tu vueilles
So seems it by faith that thou wish
que je te respoigne folie;
that I to-thee answer folly
mais ce ne te ferai je mie.
but this not to-thee shall-do I at-all
Je, qui pour ton preu te chastei,
I who for thy profit thee chastise
ne sui mie de tant a tei
not am at-all of so-much to thee
que tel vilenie encomence
that such villainy I-begin
que je mesdie ne ne tence;
that I slander nor not quarrel
qu'il est veirs, e ne te desplaise,
for-it is true and not thee may-displease
tencier est venchance mauvaise;
to-quarrel is vengeance evil

e si deiz saveir que mesdire
and so thou-oughtest know that slandering
est encore venchance pire.
is still vengeance worse
Mout autrement m'en vencheraie,
Much otherwise myself-thereof I-would-avenge
se venchance aveir en voulaie,
if vengeance to-have thereof I-wished
car se tu meffais ou mesdiz,
for if thou misdoest or slanderest
ou par mes faiz ou par mes diz
either by my deeds or by my sayings
secreement t'en puis reprendre,
secretly thee-thereof I-can reprove
pour tei chastier e aprendre,
for thee to-chastise and to-teach
senz blasme e senz diffamement;
without blame and without defamation
ou venchier neïs autrement,
or to-avenge even otherwise
se tu ne me voulaies creire
if thou not me wished to-believe
de ma parole bone e veire,
of my word good and true
par plaindre, quant tens en serait
by complaining when time thereof would-be
au juige, qui dreit m'en ferait;
to-the judge who right me-thereof would-do

ou par quelque fait raisonable
or by some deed reasonable
prendre autre venchance enourable.
to-take other vengeance honorable
Je ne vueil pas aus genz tencier,
I not wish at-all with-the folk to-quarrel
ne par mon dit desavancier
nor by my saying to-set-back
ne diffamer nule persone,
nor to-defame any person
quel qu'ele seit, mauvaise ou bone.
whatever that-she be bad or good
Port chascuns endreit sei son fais,
Let-bear each as-for himself his burden
s'il veaut, si s'en face confès,
if-he wishes so himself-thereof let-him-make confessed
s'il ne veaut, ja ne s'en confesse,
if-he not wishes ever not himself-thereof let-him-confess
je ne leur en ferai ja presse;
I not to-them thereof shall-make ever pressure
n'ai talent de folie faire,
not-I-have desire of folly to-do
pour quei je m'en puisse retraire;
for which I myself-thence may draw-back
ne ja neïs n'iert par mei dite.
nor ever even not-it-will-be by me said
Si rest taire vertu petite;
So is-in-turn to-be-silent virtue small

mais dire les choses a taire,
but to-tell the things to keep-silent
c'est trop grant deablie a faire.
this-is exceedingly great devilry to do

Words and Things, and Reason's Departure

XLIII

The tongue should be restrained except in praising God, Reason says. He wrongs her in calling her a ribald: God taught her to speak properly and left it to her to name things, and had she called balls relics, he would call relics an ugly word; women in France shun the names only for want of custom. Her words hide another sense, as the poets' fables do. The lover says he will gloss them later, but he will love the rose and nothing else, and will leave if she keeps talking. Reason turns and goes, leaving him pensive and gloomy.

Langue deit estre refrenee,
Tongue ought be restrained
car nous lisons de Tholomee
for we read of Ptolemy
une parole mout oneste,
a word very honest
au comencier de l'Almageste:
at-the beginning of the-Almagest
que sages est cil qui met peine
that wise is he who puts pain
a ce que sa langue refreine,
to this that his tongue he-restrain
fors, senz plus, quant de Deu parole.
except without more when of God he-speaks

La n'a l'en pas trop de parole,
There not-has one at-all too-much of speech
car nus ne peut Deu trop loer
for anyone not can God too-much to-praise
ne trop pour seigneur avoer,
nor too-much for lord to-avow
trop craindre ne trop obeïr,
too-much to-fear nor too-much to-obey
trop amer ne trop beneïr,
too-much to-love nor too-much to-bless
crier merci ne graces rendre;
to-cry mercy nor thanks to-render
a ce ne peut nus trop entendre,
to this not can anyone too-much to-attend
car toujourz reclamer le deivent
for always invoke him ought
tuit cil qui biens de lui receivent.
all those who goods from him receive
Chatons meïsmes s'i acorde,
Cato himself himself-thereto agrees
s'il est qui son livre recorde:
if-there is who his book recalls
la peuz en escrit trouver tu
there canst in writing to-find thou
que la prumeraine vertu
that the first virtue
c'est de metre a sa langue frein.
this-is to put to one's tongue bridle

Donte donc la teue e refrain
Tame then the thine and restrain
de folies dire e d'outrages,
from follies to-say and from-outrages
si feras que preuz e que sages;
so thou-wilt-do as valiant and as wise
qu'il fait bon creire les paiens
for-it is good to-believe the pagans
con de leur diz granz biens aiens.
as from their sayings great goods we-have
Mais une chose te puis dire
But one thing to-thee I-can tell
senz point de haïne ne d'ire,
without a-whit of hatred nor of-anger
e senz blasme e senz ataïne,
and without blame and without provocation
car fos est qui genz ataïne:
for a-fool is who folk provokes
que, sauve ta grace e ta pais,
that saving thy grace and thy peace
tu vers mei, qui t'ain e t'apais,
thou toward me who thee-love and thee-appease
trop mesprenz quant si te reveles
exceedingly misdoest when so thyself revoltest
que fole ribaude m'apeles,
that foolish ribald me-thou-callest
e senz deserte me laidenges,
and without desert me revilest
quant mes peres, li reis des anges,
when my father the king of-the angels

Deus, li courteis senz vilenie,
God the courteous without villainy
de cui meut toute courteisie,
from whom moves all courtesy
e m'a nourrie e enseigniee,
and me-has nourished and taught
ne m'en tient a mal enseigniee,
not me-thereof holds for ill taught
anceis m'aprist cete maniere;
rather me-taught this manner
par son gré sui je coustumiere
by his will am I accustomed
de paler proprement des choses
to speak properly of-the things
quant il me plaist, senz metre gloses.
when it me pleases without putting glosses
E quant me reveauz oposer,
And when to-me thou-wishest-in-turn to-object
tu, qui me requiers de gloser.
thou who me requirest to gloss
Veauz oposer! Anceis m'oposes
Wishest to-object Rather me-thou-objectest
que, tout ait Deus faites les choses,
that though have God made the things
au meins ne fist il pas le non,
at-the least not made he at-all the name
ci te respon: espeir, que non,
here to-thee I-answer perhaps that not
au meins celui qu'eles ont ores;
at-the least that-one which-they have now

si les pot il bien nomer lores
yet them could he well name then
quant il prumierement cria
when he first created
tout le monde e quanqu'il i a;
all the world and whatever-it there has
mais il vost que nons leur trouvasse
but he wished that names for-them I-should-find
a mon plaisir e les nomasse
at my pleasure and them should-name
proprement e comunement,
properly and commonly
pour creistre nostre entendement;
for to-increase our understanding
e la parole me dona,
and the speech to-me gave
ou mout trés precieus don a.
wherein very very precious gift there-is
E ce que ci t'ai recité
And that which here to-thee-I-have recited
peuz trouver en auctorité,
thou-canst find in authority
car Platons lisait en s'escole
for Plato read in his-school
que donee nous fu parole
that given to-us was speech
pour faire noz vouleirs entendre,
for to-have our wills understood
pour enseignier e pour aprendre.
for to-teach and for to-learn

Cete sentence ci rimee
This sentence here rhymed
trouveras escrite en Timee
thou-wilt-find written in Timaeus
de Platon, qui ne fu pas nices.
of Plato who not was at-all simple
E quant tu, d'autre part, obices
And when thou on-other side objectest
que lait e vilain sont li mot,
that ugly and churlish are the words
je te di, devant Deu qui m'ot:
I to-thee say before God who me-hears
se je, quant mis les nons aus choses
if I when I-put the names to-the things
que si reprendre e blasmer oses,
which so to-reprove and to-blame thou-darest
coilles reliques apelasse
balls relics had-called
e reliques coilles clamasse,
and relics balls had-named
tu, qui si m'en morz e depiques,
thou who so me-therefore bitest and prickest
me redeïsses de reliques
to-me wouldst-say-in-turn of relics
que ce fust laiz moz e vilains.
that this were ugly word and churlish
Coilles est beaus nons e si l'ains;
Balls is fair name and so it-I-love
si sont, par fei, coillon e vit;
so are by faith ballocks and prick

onc nus plus beaus guieres ne vit.
ever anyone more fair much not saw
Je fis les moz e sui certaine
I made the words and am certain
qu'onques ne fis chose vilaine;
that-ever not I-made thing churlish
e Deus, qui est sages e fis.
and God who is wise and sure
Tient a bien fait quanque je fis,
Holds for well done whatever I made
coment, pour le cors saint Omer!
how for the body (of-)saint Omer
N'oserai je mie nomer
Not-shall-dare I at-all to-name
proprement les euvres mon pere?
properly the works (of-)my father
Couvient il que je le compere?
Behooves it that I it pay-for
Nons couvenait il qu'eus eüssent,
Names behooved it that-they had
ou genz nomer ne les seüssent;
or folk to-name not them would-know-how
e pour ce teus nons leur meïsmes
and for this such names to-them we-put
qu'en les nomast par ceus meïsmes.
that-one them should-name by those same
Se fames nes noment en France,
If women not-them name in France
ce n'est fors desacoustumance,
this not-is except disuse

car li propres nons leur pleüst,
for the proper name them would-have-pleased
qui acoustumé leur eüst;
who accustomed them had
e se proprement les nomassent,
and if properly them they-named
ja certes de riens n'i pechassent.
ever certainly in anything not-there they-would-sin
Acoustumance est trop poissanz;
Custom is exceedingly powerful
e, se bien la sui quenoissanz,
and if well it I-am knowing
mainte chose desplaist nouvele
many-a thing displeases new
qui par acoustumance est bele.
which by custom is fair
Chascune qui les va nomant
Each-woman who them goes naming
les apele ne sai coment:
them calls not I-know how
bourses, harneis, riens, piches, pines,
purses tackle things pikes pins
ausinc con ce fussent espines;
just as this were thorns
mais quant les sentent bien joignanz,
but when them they-feel well joining
eus nes tienent pas a poignanz;
they not-them hold at-all for pricking
or les noment si come eus seulent.
now them name so as they are-wont

Quant proprement nomer nes veulent,
When properly to-name not-them they-wish
je ne leur en ferai ja force;
I not to-them thereof shall-do ever force
mais a rien nule ne m'efforce,
but to thing any not myself-I-exert
quant riens vueil dire apertement,
when anything I-wish to-say openly
tant come a paler proprement.
so-much as to speak properly
Si dist l'en bien en noz escoles
So says one well in our schools
maintes choses par paraboles
many things by parables
qui mout sont beles a entendre;
which very are fair to understand
si ne deit l'en mie tout prendre
so not ought one at-all all to-take
a la letre quanque l'en ot.
to the letter whatever one hears
En ma parole autre sen ot,
In my word other sense there-was
au meins quant de coilles palaie,
at-the least when of balls I-spoke
don si briement paler voulaie,
whereof so briefly to-speak I-wished
que celui que tu i veauz metre;
than that-one which thou there wishest to-put
e qui bien entendrait la letre,
and who well would-understand the letter

le sen verrait en l'escriture
the sense would-see in the-writing
qui esclarcist la fable ocure;
which clarifies the fable obscure
la verité dedenz reposte
the truth within hidden
serait clere s'ele iert esposte;
would-be clear if-it were expounded
bien l'entendras se bien repetes
well it-thou-wilt-understand if well thou-repeatest
les integumenz aus poetes:
the integuments of-the poets
la verras une grant partie
there thou-wilt-see a great part
des secrez de philosophie,
of-the secrets of philosophy
ou mout te voudras deliter,
wherein much thyself thou-wilt-wish to-delight
e si pourras mout profiter;
and so thou-wilt-be-able much profit
en delitant profiteras,
in delighting thou-wilt-profit
en profitant deliteras,
in profiting thou-wilt-delight
car en leur jeus e en leur fables
for in their games and in their fables
gisent deliz mout profitables,
lie delights very profitable

souz cui leur pensees couvrirent
under which their thoughts they-covered
quant le veir des fables vestirent;
when the truth with-the fables they-clothed
si te couvendrait a ce tendre,
so thee it-would-behoove to this to-tend
se bien veauz la parole entendre.
if well thou-wishest the word to-understand
Mais puis t'ai teus deus moz renduz,
But since to-thee-I-have such two words rendered
e tu les as bien entenduz,
and thou them hast well understood
qui pris deivent estre a la letre
which taken ought be to the letter
tout proprement, senz glose metre.
all properly without gloss to-put
— Dame bien les i puis entendre,
Lady well them there I-can understand
qu'il i sont si legier a prendre
for-they there are so easy to take
qu'il n'est nus qui franceis seüst
that-there not-is anyone who French knew
qui prendre ne les i deüst;
who to-take not them there ought
n'ont mestier d'autres declarances.
not-they-have need of-other declarations
Mais des poetes les sentences,
But of-the poets the sentences

les fables e les metaphores
the fables and the metaphors
ne bé je pas a gloser ores;
not aim I at-all to gloss now
mais se ja puis estre gueriz,
but if ever I-can be healed
e li servises m'iert meriz,
and the service to-me-will-be repaid
don si grant guerredon atens,
whereof so great recompense I-await
bien les gloserai tout a tens,
well them I-shall-gloss all in time
au meins ce qui m'en aferra,
at-the least that which to-me-thereof will-befit
si que chascuns cler i verra.
so that each clear there will-see
Si vous tieng pour bien escusee
So you I-hold for well excused
de la parole ainsinc usee
of the word thus used
e des deus moz desus nomez,
and of-the two words above named
quant si proprement les nomez
when so properly them you-name
qu'il ne m'i couvient plus muser,
that-it not me-there behooves more to-dally
ne mon tens en gloser user.
nor my time in glossing to-use
Mais je vous cri pour Deu merci:
But I to-you cry for God mercy

ne me blasmez plus d'amer ci.
not me blame more for-loving here
Se je sui fos, c'est mes domages;
If I am a-fool this-is my loss
mais au meins fis je lors que sages,
but at-the least did I then as wise
de ce cuit je bien estre fis,
of this think I well to-be sure
quant omage a mon maistre fis;
when homage to my master I-did
e se je sui fos ne vous chaille:
and if I am a-fool not to-you let-it-matter
je vueil amer, coment qu'il aille,
I wish to-love however that-it go
la rose ou je me sui voez;
the rose to-which I myself am vowed
ja n'iert mes cueurs d'autre doez;
ever not-will-be my heart to-other endowed
e se m'amour vous prometaie,
and if my-love to-you I-promised
ja veir promesse n'en tendraie,
ever true promise not-thereof I-would-keep
lors si seraie decevierres
then so I-would-be deceiver
vers vous, ou vers mon maistre lierres,
toward you or toward my master thief
se je vous tenaie couvent.
if I to-you kept covenant

Mais je vous ai bien dit souvent
But I to-you have well said often
que je ne vueil ailleurs penser
that I not wish elsewhere to-think
qu'a la rose ou sont mi penser.
than-on the rose where are my thoughts
E quant ailleurs penser me faites
And when elsewhere to-think me you-make
par voz paroles ci retraites,
by your words here recounted
que je sui ja touz las d'oïr,
which I am already all weary of-hearing
ja m'en verreiz de ci foïr,
soon me-thence you-will-see from here to-flee
se ne vous en taisiez atant,
if not yourself thereof you-silence forthwith
puis que mes cueurs ailleurs s'atent.»
since that my heart elsewhere itself-attends
Quant Raison m'ot, si s'en retourne,
When Reason me-heard so herself-thence returns
si me relait pensif e mourne.
so me leaves-again pensive and gloomy