

OLD FRENCH SERIES • VOLUME 20

THIBAUT DE CHAMPAGNE

THIBAUT DE CHAMPAGNE

Les Chansons de Thibaut de Champagne
Les Chansons de Conon de Béthune
Les Chansons de Colin Muset

The Songs, with Conon de Béthune and Colin Muset

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

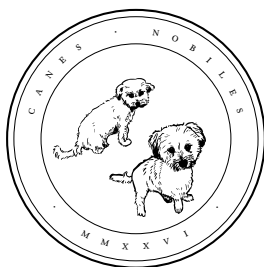


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Volume 20 of the Canes Nobiles Old French interlinear texts

The Old French text follows Axel Wallensköld's *Les Chansons de Thibaut de Champagne* (Paris, 1925) and *Les Chansons de Conon de Béthune* (Paris, 1921), and Joseph Bédier's *Les Chansons de Colin Muset* (Paris, 1912)

Set from page scans of those printings

Translated and composed with AI, edited by Christopher Hench
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Each poet's text and spelling are his editor's, Wallensköld's for Thibaut de Champagne and Conon de Béthune and Bédier's for Colin Muset, and none is harmonized to another. Thibaut's songs stand under his editor's headings by kind, given here in English, and Conon's and Muset's follow their editors' order. *** marks a verse, or the end of one, that the edition counts and does not have, and speech stands between « ».

». The English titles of the songs are this press's.

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THIBAUT DE CHAMPAGNE

Les Chansons de Thibaut de Champagne

The Songs of Thibaut de Champagne

LOVE SONGS

Por conforter ma pesance

I • JASON'S PENANCE

He makes a tune to comfort his heaviness; Jason, who won the fleece, suffered no such penance. Reason calls his prison childish, but he prefers one glance from his lady to another's love, her name to France. He curses whoever turns from love for fear, asks Love for reward, and trusts her good sense.

Por conforter ma pesance

For to-comfort my heaviness

faz un son.

I-make a tune

Bons ert, se il m'en avance,

Good it-will-be if it me-thereby advances

car Jason,

for Jason

cil qui conquist la toison,

he who conquered the fleece

n'ot pas si grief penitance.

not-had at-all so grievous penance

E! é! é!

Eh eh eh

Je meïsmes a moi tence,

I myself with me quarrel

car reson

for reason

me dit que je faz enfance,

me tells that I do childishness

quant prison

when prison

tieng ou ne vaut raençon;

I-hold where not is-worth ransom

si ai mestier d'alejance.

so I-have need of-relief

E! é! é!

Eh eb eb

Ma dame a tel conoissance

My lady has such understanding

et tel renon

and such renown

que g'i ai mis ma fiance

that I-there have put my trust

jusqu'en son.

right-up-to the-top

Meus aim que d'autre amor don

Better I-love than of-other love gift

un regart, quant le me lance.

a glance when it to-me she-casts

E! é! é!

Eh eb eb

Melz aim de li l'acointance

Better I-love of her the-acquaintance

et le douz non

and the sweet name

que le roiaume de France.

than the kingdom of France

Mort Mahon!

Death (of-)Mabomet

Qui d'amer qiert acheson

Who of-loving seeks pretext

por esmai ne pour dotance!

for dismay or for fear

E! é! é!

Eh eh eh

Bien ai en moi remembrance

Well I-have in me remembrance

a compaignon;

for companion

touz jorz remir sa senblance

all days I-gaze-on her likeness

et sa façon.

and her fashion

Aiez, Amors, guerredon!

Have Love guerdon

Ne sosfrez ma mescheance!

Not suffer my mischance

E! é! é!

Eh eh eh

Dame, j'ai entencion

Lady I-have intention

que vos avroiz conoissance.

that you will-have understanding

E! é! é!

Eh eb eb

De touz maus n'est nus plesanz

II · THE SWEET ILL

Of all ills, love's alone is pleasant, sweet, and piercing, with such goods that none should leave it. Hearing his lady spoken of, he cannot grieve. Bound in Love's prison, he would rather die than be ransomed. One kinder look from her would give him more joy than any man alive, and no one has so joyous a torment.

De touz maus n'est nus plesanz

Of all ills not-is any pleasing

fors seulement cil d'amer,

except only that of-loving

mès cil est douz et poignanz

but that is sweet and piercing

et deliteus a penser

and delightful to think

et tant set biau conforter,

and so-much it-knows fairly to-comfort

et de granz biens i a tanz

and of great goods there is so-many

que nus ne s'en doit oster.

that anyone not himself-thence ought to-withdraw

Fins amis obedianz,

True friend obedient

vueil a ma dame encliner.

I-wish to my lady to-bow

Je ne puis estre dolanz,

I not can be sorrowful

quant je oi de li parler;

when I hear of her speak

tant me plect a remenbrer,

so-much me it-pleases to remember

que de touz maus m'est garanz

that from all ills to-me-is protector

sa biauté a recorder.

her beauty to recall

Amors, quant vous m'avez mis

Love when you me-have put

lié en vostre prison,

bound in your prison

melz ameroie estre ocis

rather I-would-love to-be killed

que g'eüsse raençon.

than I-might-have ransom

Tels maus est bien sanz reson

Such ill is well without reason

qui me plect, quant me fet pis,

which me pleases when me it-does worse

ne ja n'en qier garison.

nor ever not-thereof I-seek cure

Quunque il vous est a vis,

Whatever it to-you is to seeming

dame, me senble reson;

lady to-me seems reason

si m'a vostre amor surpris

so me-has your love seized

et vostre plesant façon,

and your pleasing fashion

et biautez a tel foison

and beauty in such abundance

qui resplent en vostre vis

which shines in your face

et dès les piez jusqu'en son.

and from the feet right-up-to the-top

Se de vos peüsse avoir,

If from you I-might have

dame, un pou plus biau senblant,

lady a little more fair semblance

je ne savroie voloir

I not would-know to-wish

querre Dieu merci si grant,

to-ask God mercy so great

que de joie avroie tant

that of joy I-would-have so-much

que tuit autre honme, pour voir,

that all other men for truth

seroient vers moi dolent.

would-be beside me sorrowful

Dame, ou touz mes biens atent,

Lady where all my goods I-await

sachiez, quant vous puis veoir,

know when you I-can see

nus n'a si joieus torment.

anyone not-has so joyous torment

Je ne voi mès nului qui gieut ne chant

III · NO ONE SINGS

No one now sings or makes merry, so he has long kept silent. Whoever holds back for gossip does not love, and a lover must take good and ill with thanks. He has never tired of loving his lady since he became hers and asks only mercy. Had she sworn his death a hundred times, he must stay in her power.

Je ne voi mès nului qui gieut ne chant

I not see more anyone who plays nor sings

ne volentiers face feste ne joie,

nor willingly makes feast nor joy

et pour ce ai je demoré longuement

and for this have I delayed long

que n'ai chanté ensi com je soloie,

that not-I-have sung thus as I was-wont

ne je n'en ai eü conmandement;

nor I not-thereof have had commandment

et pour ice, se je di folement

and for this if I speak foolishly

en ma chançon de ce que je voudroie,

in my song of that which I would-wish

ne m'en doit on reprendre malement.

not me-thereof ought one to-reprove badly

Grant pechié fet qui fin ami reprent,

Great sin does who true friend reproves

n'il n'aime pas qui pour diz se chastoie;

nor-he not-loves at-all who for sayings himself checks

et la coustume est tels de fin amant:

and the custom is such of true lover

plus pense a li, et il plus se desroie.

more he-thinks on her and he more himself goes-astray

Qui en amor a tot cuer et talent,

Who in love has all heart and desire

il doit sousfrir bien et mal merciant,

he ought to-suffer good and ill thanking

et qui ensi nel fet, il se foloie,

and who thus not-it does he himself befools

ne ja n'avra grant joie en son vivant.

nor ever not-will-have great joy in his lifetime

Se m'ait Deus, onques ne vi nului

So me-may-help God ever not I-saw anyone

tres bien amer qui s'en poïst retraire,

very well to-love who himself-thence could withdraw

et cil est fous et fel et plains d'ennui

and he is fool and felon and full of-trouble

qui autrement veut mener son affaire.

who otherwise wishes to-conduct his affair

Ha! s'aviez esté la ou je fui,

Ab if-you-had been there where I was

douce dame, s'ainz riens d'amors conui,

sweet lady if-ever anything of-love I-knew

vostre fins cuers, qui si pert debonaire,

your true heart which so appears gracious

avroit merci, s'onques riens l'ot d'autrui.

would-have mercy if-ever anything it-had of-another

Quant plus m'enchaue amors, et mains la fui;
When more me-pursues love and less her I-flee
 cist maus est bien a touz autres contraire,
this ill is well to all others contrary
 car qui aime, ainz Deus ne fist celui
for who loves ever God not made that-one
 n'estuit souvent de ses maus joie faire.
not-bebooves often of his ills joy to-make
 De vos amer onques ne me recrui
From you to-love ever not myself I-wearied
 puis cele heure, dame, que vostres fui,
since that hour lady that yours I-was
 que mes fins cuers vous fist tant a moi plaire,
that my true heart you made so-much to me please
 dont mau gré soi de ce que je l'en crui.
whereof ill will I-know of this that I it-thereof believed

Si sui pensis que ne sai que je qier
So I-am pensive that not I-know what I seek
 fors que merci, dame, s'il vous agree;
except that mercy lady if-it you pleases
 que bien savez ja n'iert en reprouvier
for well you-know ever not-will-be in proverb
 d'orgueilleus cuer bone chançon chante.
of-proud heart good song sung

Mès par pitié se doit on essaucier,
But by pity oneself ought one to-exalt
 ne ja orguels ne s'i doit herbegier
nor ever pride not itself-there ought to-lodge
 la ou il a d'amors tel renonmee,
there where there is of-love such renown
 ainz doit le sien bien faire et avancier.
rather ought the his good to-do and to-advance

Chançon, di li que tot ce n'a mestier;
Song tell her that all this not-has use
 que, s'ele avoit cent foiz ma mort juree,
for if-she had hundred times my death sworn
 si m'estuet il remaindre en son dangier.
so me-behooves it to-remain in her power

Fueille ne flor ne vaut riens en chantant

IV · LOVE'S ARCHER

He sings to cheer his heart, as comfort cures the sick. A man flees an enemy's arrows, but the more Love shoots at him the less he flees. He knows his lady has a hundred suitors, yet loves her above all things, and asks lovers whether to speak or keep silent. He begs her only to believe that he loves her.

Fueille ne flor ne vaut riens en chantant

Leaf nor flower not is-worth anything in singing

que por default, sanz plus, de rimoier

except for default without more of rhyming

et pour fere solaz vilaine gent

and for to-give solace churlish folk

qui mauvès moz font souvent aboier.

who bad words make often bark

Je ne chant pas por aus esbanoier,

I not sing at-all for them to-amuse

mès por mon cuer fere un pou plus joiant,

but for my heart to-make a little more joyful

q'uns malades en guerist bien souvent

for-a sick-man thereby is-cured well often

par un confort, quant il ne puet mengier.

by a comfort when he not can eat

Qui voit venir son anemi corant

Who sees come his enemy running

pour trere a lui granz saetes d'acier

for to-shoot at him great arrows of-steel

bien se devroit destorner en fuiant

well himself ought to-turn-aside in fleeing

et garantir, s'il pouoit, de l'archier;

and to-shield if-he could from the-archer

mais, quant Amors vient plus a moi lancier,

but when Love comes more at me to-hurl

et mains la fui, c'est merveille trop grant,

and less her I-flee this-is marvel exceedingly great

q'ausic reçoif son coup entre la gent

that-just-so I-receive her blow among the folk

com se g'iere touz seus en un vergier.

as if I-were all alone in an orchard

Je sai de voir que ma dame aime cent

I know of truth that my lady loves hundred

et plus assez: c'est pour moi corrocier.

and more plenty this-is for me to-anger

Mais je l'aim plus que nule riens vivant,

But I her-love more than any thing living

si me doint Deus son gent cors embracier!

so me may-grant God her fair body to-embrace

Ce est la riens que plus avroie chier,

This is the thing that most I-would-have dear

et, se j'en sui parjurs a escient,

and if I-thereof am perjured with knowledge

on me devroit traîner tout avant

one me ought to-drag all first

et puis pendre plus haut que un clochier.

and then to-hang more high than a bell-tower

Se je li di: «Dame, je vous aim tant»,

If I to-her say Lady I you love so-much

ele dira je la vueil engingnier,

she will-say I her wish to-deceive

ne je n'ai pas ne sens ne hardement

nor I not-have at-all neither sense nor boldness

qu'encontre li m'osasse desresnier.

that-against her myself-I-might-dare to-plead

Cuers me faudroit, qui me devroit aidier,

Heart me would-fail which me ought to-aid

ne parole d'autrui n'i vaut noient.

nor word of-another not-there is-worth anything

Que ferai je? Conseilliez moi, amant!

What shall-do I Counsel me lovers

Li quels vaut melz, ou parler ou lessier?

The which is-worth better either to-speak or to-leave

Je ne di pas que nus aint folement,

I not say at-all that anyone loves foolishly

que li plus fous en fet melz a prisier,

that the most fool thereby is better to prize

mès granz eürs i a mestier souvent
but great luck there has use often
 plus que n'a sens ne reson de pledier.
more than has sense or reason of pleading
 De bien amer ne puet nus enseigner
Of well to-love not can anyone teach
 fors que li cuers, qui done le talent.
except that the heart which gives the desire
 Qui plus aime de fin cuer loiaument,
Who more loves with true heart loyally
 cil en set plus et mains s'en set aidier.
he thereof knows more and less himself-thereof knows to-help

Dame, merci! Veuillez cuidier itant
Lady mercy Be-pleased to-believe so-much
 que je vous aim; riens plus ne vous demant.
that I you love anything more not you I-ask
 Vez le forfet dont je vous vueil proier!
See the misdeed whereof I you wish to-pray

Li rosignous chante tant

V · THE NIGHTINGALE

The nightingale sings until it falls dead; so he dies singing, unheard by his lady. Boasting lovers are liars, and she should know their false hearts. Caesar was never so fierce toward Pompey as she is toward him. Love stings worse than a serpent and shoots more often than a Turk. The envoy greets the folk of Champagne.

Li rosignous chante tant

The nightingale sings so-much

que morz chiet de l'arbre jus;

that dead falls from the-tree down

si bele mort ne vit nus,

so fair death not saw anyone

tant douce ne si plesant.

so sweet nor so pleasing

Autresi muir en chantant a hauz criz,

Likewise I-die in singing with loud cries

que je ne puis de ma dame estre oïz,

for I not can by my lady be heard

n'ele de moi pitié avoir ne daigne.

nor-she of me pity to-have not deigns

Chascuns dit q'il aime tant

Each says that-he loves so-much

c'onques si fort n'ama nus.

that-ever so strongly not-loved anyone

Ce fet les amanz confus

This makes the lovers confounded

que trop mentent li truant;

that too-much lie the knaves

mès dame doit conoistre a leur faus diz

but lady ought to-know by their false sayings

que de toz biens s'est leur faus cuers partiz,

that from all good itself-is their false heart parted

n'il n'est pas droiz que pitiez leur en praingne.

nor-it not-is at-all right that pity to-them thereof may-take

Onques fierté n'ot si grant

Ever fierceness not-bad so great

vers Pompee Julius

toward Pompey Julius

que ma dame n'en ait plus

that my lady not-thereof may-have more

vers moi, qui muir desirrant.

toward me who die desiring

Devant li est touz jorz mes esperiz

Before her is all days my spirit

et nuit et jor li crie mil merciz,

and night and day to-her cries thousand mercies

besant ses piez, que de moi li souviengne.

kissing her feet that of me to-her it-may-remember

J'en trerai Dieu a garant

I-thereof shall-take God as warrant

et touz les sainz de lasus

and all the saints from up-there

que, se nus puet amer plus,

that if anyone can love more

que je n'aie amendement

that I not-may-have amends

ne ja de vous ne soie mès oïz,

nor ever by you not may-I-be more heard

ainz me tolez voz debonaires diz

rather from-me take-away your gracious words

et me chaciez com beste de montaigne.

and me chase as beast of mountain

Je ne cuit pas que serpent

I not think at-all that serpent

n'autre beste poigne plus

nor-other beast stings more

que fet Amors au desus;

than does Love at-the top

trop par sont si coup pesant.

too much are her blows heavy

Plus tret souvent que Turs ne Arrabiz,

More she-shoots often than Turk or Arab

n'onques oncor Salemons ne Daviz

nor-ever yet Solomon nor David

ne s'i tindrent ne q'uns fous d'Alemaigne.

not themselves-there held no-more than-a fool of-Germany

N'est merveille se je sui esbahiz,

Not-is marvel if I am dismayed

que li conforz me vient si a enviz

for the comfort to-me comes so with reluctance

que je dout mout que touz biens ne sousfraigne.

that I fear much that all good — may-fail

Dame, de vous ne puis estre partiz,

Lady from you not I-can be parted

si vous en jur les grez et les merciz

so to-you thereof I-swear the favors and the mercies

que je atent c'oncor de vous me viengne.

that I await that-yet from you to-me may-come

Mainz durs assauz m'avra Amors bastiz.

Many hard assaults me-will-have Love built

Chançon, va tost et non pas a enviz

Song go quickly and not at-all with reluctance

et salue nostre gent de Champaigne!

and greet our folk of Champagne

De bone amor vient seance et bonté

VI · LOVE'S RUNNERS

Good love, seemliness, and goodness are three in one. Her glances, runners that have worn a road through his heart, shine by night and hide by day. Her eyes struck him with a dart whose wound only she can heal: her hand could draw the shaft, but not the iron point broken inside. This song is his messenger.

De bone amor vient seance et bonté,

From good love comes seemliness and goodness

et amors vient de ces deus autresi.

and love comes from these two likewise

Tuit troi sunt un, qui bien i a pensé;

All three are one who well thereon has thought

ja a nul jor ne seront departi.

ever on any day not will-be parted

Par un conseil ont ensemble establi

By one counsel have together established

li coreor, qui sont avant alé:

the runners who are before gone

de mon cuer ont fet leur chemin ferré;

of my heart have made their road paved

tant l'ont usé, ja n'en seront parti.

so-much it-have worn ever not-thence will-be parted

Li coreor sunt la nuit en clarté

The runners are the night in brightness

et le jor sont por la gent oscurci:

and the day are for the folk darkened

li douz regart plesant et savoré,

the sweet glances pleasing and savory

la granz biautez et li bien que g'i vi;

the great beauty and the goods that I-there saw

n'est merveille se je m'en esbahi.

not-is marvel if I myself-thereat was-amazed

De li a Deus le siecle enluminé,

With her has God the world illumined

car qui avroit le plus biau jor d'esté,

for who would-have the most fair day of-summer

lez li seroit obscurs a plain midi.

beside her would-be dark at full noon

En amor a paor et hardement:

In love there-is fear and boldness

li dui sont troi et du tierz sont li dui,

the two are three and of-the third are the two

et grant valeur est a eus apendant,

and great worth is to them belonging

ou tout li bien ont retret et refui.

where all the goods have retreat and refuge

Por c'est Amors li hospitaus d'autrui

For this-is Love the host of-others

que nus n'i faut selonc son avenant.

that anyone not-there fails according-to his deserving

G'i ai failli, dame, qui valez tant,

I-there have failed lady who are-worth so-much

a vostre ostel, si ne sai ou je sui.

at your lodging so not I-know where I am

Or n'i a plus fors qu'a li me conmant,

Now not-there is more except that-to her myself I-commend

car touz biens fez ai lessié pour cestui:

for all good deeds I-have left for this-one

ma bele joie ou ma mort i atent,

my fair joy or my death there I-await

ne sai le quel, dès que devant li fui.

not I-know the which since that before her I-was

Ne me firent lors si oeil point d'ennui,

Not me did then her eyes a-whit of-trouble

ainz me vindrent ferir si doucement

rather me came to-strike so sweetly

par mi le cuer d'un amoreus talent;

through mid the heart with-a loving desire

oncore i est li cous que j'en reçui.

still there is the blow that I-thereof received

Li cous fu granz, il ne fet qu'enpoirier,

The blow was great it not does but-worsen

ne nus mires ne m'en porroit saner,

nor any physician not me-thereof could heal

se cele non qui le dart fist lancier.

except she not who the dart had hurled

Se de sa main i daignoit adeser,

If with her hand there she-deigned to-touch

bien en porroit le coup mortel oster

well thereof she-could the blow mortal remove

a tout le fust, dont j'ai grant desirrier;

with all the shaft whereof I-have great longing

mès la pointe du fer n'en puet sachier,

but the point of-the iron not-thence she-can pull

qu'ele bruisa dedenz au cop doner.

which-she broke within at-the blow to-give

Dame, vers vous n'ai autre messagier

Lady toward you not-I-have other messenger

par cui vous os mon corage envoier

by whom to-you I-dare my heart to-send

fors ma chançon, se la volez chanter.

except my song if it you-wish to-sing

Une dolor enossee

VII • A GRIEF TO THE BONE

A grief of love has lodged in his heart; he thinks the one he loves hates him, yet shuts out despair, since longing outweighs suffering. Her beauty so silences him that he never dared complain. He will wait for pity to soften her hard will, worshiping her dwelling like a shrine. The envoy is to Bernart.

Une dolor enossee

A grief bone-deep

s'est dedenz mon cuer

itself-is within my heart

que je ne puis oster fuer

that I not can remove out

por nule riens qui soit nee;

for any thing that may-be born

c'est dolor d'amors,

this-is grief of-love

dont n'ai confort ne secors,

whereof not-I-have comfort nor succor

ainz cuit ce que j'aim me hee.

rather I-think that which I-love me hates

Dolenté desesperee

Grief despairing

doit on geter puer,

ought one to-throw away

ne je ne vueil a nul fuer

nor I not wish at any price

qu'ele soit en moi entree.

that-she be in me entered

Melz aim mes dolours

Rather I-love my griefs

sousfrir et les granz poors,

to-suffer and the great fears

que sousfrir vaint consieurree.

than to-suffer overcomes deprivation

Dame, ainz ne m'osai conplaindre

Lady ever not myself-I-dared complain

a vous tant ne quant,

to you much nor little

que vostre biauté tres grant

for your beauty very great

fet mon sens el cuer estaindre,

makes my sense in-the heart die-out

si que n'ai pouvoir

so that not-I-have power

de vous dire mon voloir;

of to-you to-tell my will

por tant puet touz jorz remaindre.

for so-much it-can all days remain

Bien voi que n'i puis ataindre

Well I-see that not-there I-can attain

par nul mandement,

by any message

n'en qier, voir, parler avant

not-thereof I-seek truly to-speak further

ne aillors ne m'en vueil plaindre;

nor elsewhere not myself-thereof I-wish to-complain

ainz atendrai, voir,

rather I-shall-await truly

sa merci de dur voloir,

her mercy of hard will

se pitiez ne la fet fraindre.

if pity not her makes break

N'os entrer en son repaire,

Not-I-dare to-enter into her dwelling

tant dout son corroz.

so-much I-fear her wrath

As sospirs et as sangloz

To-the sighs and to-the sobs

m'en tieng, que n'en puis plus faire;

myself-thereto I-bold for not-thereof I-can more do

ainz vois aorant

rather I-go worshiping

le leu et merci criant

the place and mercy crying

comme a un haut saintuaire.

as at a high sanctuary

Dame, cui j'aim tant,

Lady whom I-love so-much

quelque bien en delaiant

some good in delaying

me donnez por plus atraire.

me give for more to-attract

Bernart, cil qui sent

Bernart he who feels

mes maus et merci n'atent

my ills and mercy not-awaits

trop a ennui et contraire.

too-much has trouble and adversity

Por mau tens ne por gelee

VIII • VALARA

No bad weather or cold morning will part his thought from love of her, and each stanza ends on the refrain Valara. He begs the fair, blond lady for her love, puts his body and life in her keeping, and asks her not to kill him. He loves no other, stays in her mercy, and cannot stop singing of her.

Por mau tens ne por gelee

For bad weather nor for frost

ne por froide matinee

nor for cold morning

ne por nule autre riens nee

nor for any other thing born

ne partirai ma pensee

not I-shall-part my thought

d'amors que j'ai,

from-love that I-have

que trop l'ai amee

for too-much it-I-have loved

de cuer verai.

with heart true

Valara!

Valara

Bele et blonde et coloree,

Fair and blond and colored

moi plest quanq'il vous agree.

me pleases whatever-it you pleases

He, Deus! car me fust donee

Ab God would-that to-me were given

l'amor que vous ai rouvee!

the-love that of-you I-have asked

Quant prierai,

When I-shall-pray

s'ele m'est veee,

if-she to-me-is refused

je me morrai.

I myself shall-die

Valara!

Valara

Dame, en la vostre baillie

Lady in the your keeping

ai mis mon cors et ma vie.

I-have put my body and my life

Por Deu, ne m'ociez mie!

For God not me-kill at-all

La ou fins cuers s'umilie

There where true heart itself-bumbles

doit on trouver

ought one to-find

merci et aïe

mercy and help

pour conforter.

for to-comfort

Valara!

Valara

Dame, faites cortoisie!

Lady do courtesy

Plaise vos que en ma vie

May-it-please you that in my life

iceste parole die:

this word I-may-say

ma bele, tres douce amie

my fair very sweet friend

vos os nonmer,

you I-dare to-name

c'onques n'oi envie

for-ever not-I-had desire

d'autrui amer.

of-another to-love

Valara!

Valara

Onques jor ne me soi plaindre,

Ever day not myself I-knew-how to-complain

tant seroit ma dolor graindre;

so-much would-be my grief greater

ne d'amer ne me sai faindre,

nor of-loving not myself I-know-how to-shirk

ne mes maus ne puis estaindre,

nor my ills not I-can extinguish

se je ne di

if I not say

que touz vueil remaindre

that wholly I-wish to-remain

en sa merci.

in her mercy

Valara!

Valara

Trop seroit fort a estaindre

Too-much would-be hard to extinguish

chançons de li;

song of her

l'amors est a fraindre,

the-love is to break

dont pens a li.

whereof I-think on her

Valara!

Valara

Tant ai amors servies longuement

IX · LEAVING LOVE

He has served love so long that no one can blame him for leaving. He will not slander Love, as bitter lovers do, and wishes all lovers well. Love made him love the fairest of women, and the lady bids him go, so God has freed him from Love's lordship. He prays to love only Her whom one should adore.

Tant ai amors servies longuement

So-much I-have love served long

que dès or mès ne m'en doit nus reprendre

that from now on not me-thereof ought anyone to-reprove

se je m'en part. Ore a Dieu les conmant,

if I myself-thence part Now to God them I-commend

qu'en ne doit pas touz jorz folie enprendre;

for-one not ought at-all all days folly to-undertake

et cil est fous qui ne s'en set desfendre

and he is foolish who not himself-thereof knows-how to-defend

ne n'i conoist son mal ne son torment.

nor not-there knows his ill nor his torment

On me tendroit dès or mès por enfant,

One me would-hold from now on for child

car chascuns tens doit sa seson attendre.

for each time ought its season to-await

Je ne sui pas si com cele autre gent

I not am at-all so as that other folk

qui ont amé, puis i vuelent contendre

who have loved then there wish to-contend

et dient mal par vilain mautalent.

and speak ill by churlish ill-will

On ne doit pas seigneur servise vendre

One not ought at-all a-lord service to-sell

ne vers Amors mesdire ne mesprendre;

nor toward Love to-slander nor to-transgress

mès qui s'en part parte s'en bonement.

but who himself-thence parts may-part himself-thence graciously

Endroit de moi vueil je que tuit amant

As-for of me wish I that all lovers

aient grant bien, quant je plus n'i puis prendre.

may-have great good since I more not-there can take

Amors m'a fet grant bien enjusqu'ici,

Love me-has done great good up-to-here

qu'ele m'a fet amer sanz vilanie

for-she me-has made love without baseness

la plus tres bele et la meilleur ausi,

the most very fair and the best also

au mien cuidier, qui onques fust choisie.

to-the my thinking who ever was chosen

Amors le veut et ma dame m'en prie

Love it wishes and my lady me-thereof begs

que je m'en parte, et je mult l'en merci.

that I myself-thence may-part and I much her-thereof thank

Quant par le gré ma dame m'en chasti,

Since by the will (of-)my lady myself-thereof I-check

meilleur reson n'ai je a ma partie.

better reason not-have I for my departure

Autre chose ne m'a Amors meri

Other thing not me-has Love rewarded

de tant com j'ai esté en sa baillie,

for so-much as I-have been in her keeping

mès bien m'a Deus par sa pitié gueri,

but well me-has God by his pity cured

quant delivré m'a de sa seignorie.

when delivered me-he-has from her lordship

Quant eschapez li sui sanz perdre vie,

Since escaped from-her I-am without to-lose life

ainz de mes euz si bone heure ne vi,

ever with my eyes so good hour not I-saw

si cuit je fere oncor maint jeu parti

so think I to-make yet many-a game divided

et maint sonet et mainte raverdie.

and many-a little-song and many-a spring-song

Au commencer se doit on bien garder

At-the beginning oneself ought one well to-guard

d'entreprendre chose desmesuree,

from-undertaking thing immoderate

mès bone amor ne let honme apenser

but good love not lets man take-thought

ne bien choisir ou mete sa pensee.

nor well to-choose where he-may-put his thought

Plus tost aime on en estrange contree,

More soon loves one in foreign country

ou on ne puet ne venir ne aler,

where one not can neither come nor go

qu'on ne fet ce qu'on puet toz jorz trouver;

than-one — does that which-one can all days find

issi est bien la folie esprouvee.

thus is well the folly proved

Or me gart Deus et d'amor et d'amer

Now me may-keep God both from-love and from-loving

fors de Celi, cui on doit aourer,

except from Her whom one ought to-adore

ou on ne puet faillir a grant soudee.

where one not can fail of great wage

Douce dame, tout autre pensement

X · THE EYES OF THE HEART

Since he first saw his lady, Love has tormented him more, and only gazing on her in thought soothes him. He fears slanderers, so any love he feigns elsewhere is heartless. Her laughing eyes changed a heart that despised love. Each of her features wounds him, yet he loves these enemies. The envoy says he sang in fear.

Douce dame, tout autre pensement,

Sweet lady all other thought

quant pens a vous, oubli en mon corage.

when I-think on you I-forget in my heart

Dès que vous vi des euz premierement,

Since that you I-saw with-the eyes first

ainz puis Amors ne fu de moi sauvage;

ever since Love not was toward me wild

ançois m'a plus traveillié que devant.

rather me-has more tormented than before

Pour ce voi bien que garison n'atent,

For this I-see well that cure not-I-await

qui m'assoage,

which me-soothes

fors seul de vos remirer

except only of you to-gaze-on

des euz du cuer en penser.

with-the eyes of-the heart in thought

Se je ne puis vers vos aler souvent,
If I not can toward you go often
 ne vos poist pas, bele, cortoise et sage,
not you may-it-grieve at-all fair courteous and wise
 que je me dot forment de male gent
for I myself fear greatly of evil folk
 qui devinant avront fait maint damage;
who guessing will-have done many-a harm
 et se je faz d'aillors amer senblant,
and if I make from-elsewhere to-love semblance
 sachiez que c'est sanz cuer et sanz talent,
know that this-is without heart and without desire
 s'en soiez sage;
so-thereof be wise
 et s'il vous devoit peser,
and if-it you should grieve
 gel leroie ançois ester.
I-it would-leave rather be

Sanz vos ne puis, dame, ne je ne qier,
Without you not I-can lady nor I not seek
 ne ja d'autrui Deus ne me doint mès joie!
nor ever from-another God not me may-grant more joy
 Car j'aim mult melz estre en vostre dangier
For I-love much better to-be in your power
 et sousfrir mal qu'autre bien, se l'avoie.
and to-suffer ill than-other good if it-I-had

Ha! si bel oeil riant a l'acointier

Ab her fair eyes laughing at the-meeting

m'i firent si mon corage changier;

me-there made so my heart change

que je soloie

that I was-wont

blasmer et despire amors;

to-blame and to-despise love

ore en sent mortieus dolors.

now thereof I-feel mortal griefs

Si grant biauté com s'i pot acointier

So great beauty as itself-there could join

en cortois sens, qui son gent cors mestroie,

in courteous sense which her fair body masters

ja li fist Deus por fere merveillier

already to-her gave God for to-make marvel

touz ceus a qui ele veut fere joie.

all those to whom she wishes to-make joy

Nul outrage, dame, je ne vous qier

Any outrage lady I not of-you seek

fors seul itant que daignissiez cuidier

except only so-much that you-might-deign to-believe

que vostres soie;

that yours I-may-be

mult me seroit granz secors

much to-me would-be great succor

et esperance d'amors.

and hope of-love

Ainz riens ne vi en li ne m'ait navré

Ever anything not I-saw in her not me-has wounded

d'un coup parfont a si tres douce lance:

with-a blow deep with so very sweet lance

front, bouche et nés, euz, vis frès coloré,

brow mouth and nose eyes face fresh colored

main, chief et cors et bele contenance.

hands head and body and fair bearing

Ma douce dame, et quant les reverré,

My sweet lady and when them I-shall-see-again

mes anemis, qui si fort m'ont grevé

my enemies which so strongly me-have grieved

par leur puissance

by their power

c'ainz mès nus hons ne fu vis

for-ever before any man not was alive

tant amast ses anemis?

so-much might-love his enemies

Chançon, va t'en a celi que bien sé

Song go thyself-thence to her whom well I-know

et si li di por poor ai chanté

and so to-her say for fear I-have sung

et en doutance;

and in doubt

mes droiz est que fins amis

my right is that true friend

soit a sa dame ententis.

be to his lady attentive

Tuit mi desir et tuit mi grief torment

XI · FOOLISH HOPE

All his desires come from his lady, and he fears that all who see her wish her well; even God loves her and lit the world with her beauty. Foolish hope keeps lovers alive where despair would kill, so folly is good. He laments that he dared neither look at her nor speak. The envoy bids Raoul serve Love.

Tuit mi desir et tuit mi grief torment

All my desires and all my grievous torments

viennent de la ou sont tuit mi pensé.

come from there where are all my thoughts

Grant poor ai, pour ce que toute gent

Great fear I-have for this that all folk

qui ont veü son gent cors acesmé

who have seen her fair body adorned

sont si vers li de bone volenté.

are so toward her of good will

Nès Deus l'aime, gel sai a escient;

Even God her-loves I-it know with knowledge

grant merveille est, quant il s'en suesfre tant.

great marvel is when he himself-thereof holds-back so-much

Touz esbahiz m'obli en merveillant

All amazed myself-I-forget in marveling

ou Deus trouva si estrange biauté;

where God found so strange beauty

quant il la mist ça jus entre la gent,

when he it put here down among the folk

mult nous en fist grant debounereté.

much to-us thereby he-did great kindness

Trestout le mont en a enluminé,

All the world thereby he-has illumined

qu'en sa valor sont tuit li bien si grant;

for-in her worth are all the goods so great

nus ne la voit ne vous en die autant.

anyone not her sees not to-you thereof may-say as-much

Bone aventure aviengne fol espoir,

Good fortune may-befall foolish hope

qui mainz amanz fet vivre et resjoïr!

which many lovers makes live and rejoice

Desperance fet languir et doloir,

Despair makes languish and grieve

et mes fous cuers me fet cuidier guerir;

and my foolish heart me makes think to-recover

s'il fust sages, il me feïst morir.

if-it were wise it me would-make die

Pour ce fet bon de la folie avoir,

For this it-makes good of the folly to-have

qu'en trop grant sens puet il bien mescheoir.

for-in too great sense can it well mischance

Qui la voldroit souvent ramentevoir,

Who her would-wish often to-recall

ja n'avroit mal ne l'esteüst guerir,

ever not-would-have ill not him-bebooved to-cure

car ele fet trestoz ceus melz valoir

for she makes all those better avail

cui ele veut belement acoillir.

whom she wishes fairly to-welcome

Deus! tant me fu grief de li departir!

God so-much to-me was grievous from her to-part

Amors, merci! Fetes li a savoir:

Love mercy Make her to know

cuers qui n'ainme ne puet grant joie avoir.

heart which not-loves not can great joy have

Souviengne vous, dame, du douz acueil

May-it-remember to-you lady of-the sweet welcome

qui ja fu fez par si grant desirrier,

which once was made by so great longing

que n'orent pas tant de pouoir mi oeil

that not-bad at-all so-much of power my eyes

que je vers vous les osasse lancier;

that I toward you them might-dare to-cast

de ma bouche ne vos osai prier,

with my mouth not you I-dared to-pray

ne poi dire, dame, ce que je vueil;

nor I-could say lady that which I wish

tant fui coarz, las, chetis! q'or m'en dueil.

so-much I-was coward alas wretch that-now myself-thereof I-grieve

Dame, se je vos puis mès aresnier,

Lady if I you can more address

je parlerai mult melz que je ne sueil,

I shall-speak much better than I — am-wont

s'Amors me let, qui trop me maine orgueil.

if-Love me lets who too-much to-me shows pride

Chançon, va t'en droit a Raoul noncier

Song go thyself-thence straight to Raoul to-announce

qu'il serve Amors et face bel acueil

that-he may-serve Love and may-make fair welcome

et chant souvent com oiselez en brueil.

and may-sing often as little-bird in thicket

De nouviau m'estuet chanter

XII · SINGING IN GRIEF

He must sing when most grieved and, not daring to speak to her, makes his song his message. Forgetting her beauty would cure him, but he cannot. Others say they die of love; he would rather live, wait, and languish for her reward, since Love rewards those who wait. He yields to her wholly.

De nouviau m'estuet chanter

Of new me-behooves to-sing

el tens que plus sui marriz.

in-the time that most I-am grieved

Quant ne puis merci trouver,

Since not I-can mercy find

bien doi chanter a enviz;

well I-ought to-sing with reluctance

ne je n'os a li parler;

nor I not-dare to her to-speak

de ma chançon faz mesage,

of my song I-make message

que tant est cortoise et sage

for so-much she-is courteous and wise

que ne puis aillors penser.

that not I-can elsewhere think

Se je peüsse oublier

If I could forget

sa biauté et ses bons diz

her beauty and her good sayings

et son tres douz esgarder,

and her very sweet looking

bien peüsse estre gueriz;

well I-could be cured

mès n'en puis mon cuer oster,

but not-thence I-can my heart to-remove

tant i pens de fin corage.

so-much there I-think with true heart

Espoir s'ai fet grant folage,

Perhaps so-I-have done great folly

mès moi l'estuet endurer.

but me it-behooves to-endure

Chascuns dit q'il muert d'amor,

Each says that-he dies of-love

mès je n'en qier ja morir.

but I not-thereof seek ever to-die

Melz aim sousfrir ma dolor,

Rather I-love to-suffer my grief

vivre et atendre et languir,

to-live and to-wait and to-languish

qu'ele me puet bien merir

for-she me can well reward

mes maus et ma consieurree.

my ills and my deprivation

N'aime pas a droit qui bee

Not-loves at-all at right who aims

q'il l'en porroit avenir.

that-it to-him-thereof could befall

Dame, qui a grant poor

Lady who has great fear

souvent l'estuet esbahir

often him-behooves to-be-dismayed

et penser a tel folor

and to-think on such folly

dont je ne me puis tenir.

whence I not myself can hold

S'il est a vostre plesir,

If-it is at your pleasure

s'iert bien ma paine sauvee,

so-will-be well my pain saved

que sol de la desirree

for only from the desiring

me fet mon cuer resbaudir.

me makes my heart rejoice

Nus ne puet grant joie avoir,

Anyone not can great joy have

s'il ne ra des maus apris.

if-he not has-in-turn of-the ills learned

Qui touz jorz fet son voloir

Who all days does his will

a poine ert ja fins amis.

with pain will-be ever true friend

Pour ce fet Amors doloir

For this makes Love (one)-grieve

qu'ele veut guerredon rendre

for-she wisbes guerdon to-render

ceus qui bien sevent atendre

those who well know-how to-wait

et servir a son voloir.

and to-serve at her will

Dame, de tout mon pouoir

Lady with all my power

m'otroi a vous sanz contendre,

myself-I-yield to you without contending

que sanz vous ne me puet rendre

for without you not to-me can render

nus biens ne ne puet valoir.

any good nor not can avail

Nus hons ne puet ami reconforter

XIII • GIVE ME HOPE

Only his lady can comfort him, and none comes from her; every stanza begs her for hope of joy. So many feign love that true lovers are hardly known. Some blame him for not naming his lady, but he tells no one but her. Love has stolen his heart and sets no term for returning it. The envoy goes to Philip at Nanteuil.

Nus hons ne puet ami reconforter

Any man not can friend comfort

se cele non ou il a son cuer mis.

except she not where he has his heart put

Por ce m'estuet souvent plaindre et plorer,

For this me-bebooves often to-lament and to-weep

que nus conforz ne me vient, ce m'est vis,

for any comfort not to-me comes this to-me-is seeming

de la ou j'ai toute ma remembrance.

from there where I-have all my remembrance

Por bien amer ai sovent esmaiance

For well to-love I-have often dismay

a dire voir.

to tell truth

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Je ne puis pas souvent a li parler

I not can at-all often to her speak

ne remirer les biaux euz de son vis.

nor gaze-on the fair eyes of her face

Ce poise moi que je n'i puis aler,

This grieves me that I not-there can go

car adès est mes cuers la ententis.

for ever is my heart there intent

Hé, bele riens, douce sanz conoissance!

Ab fair thing sweet without understanding

Car me metez en meilleur atendance

Now me put in better expectation

de bon espoir!

of good hope

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Je ne sai tant vers li merci crïer

I not know-how so-much toward her mercy to-cry

qu'ele ne cuit que je soie faintis,

that-she not may-think that I be false

que tante gent se sont pris au guiler

for so-many folk themselves are taken to-the cheating

qu'a paine ert mès coneüz fins amis.

that-with pain will-be more known true friend

Ice m'ocit, ice me desavance,

This me-kills this me sets-back

ice me tout ma joie et ma fiance

this from-me takes my joy and my trust

et fet doloir.

and makes grieve

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Aucuns i a qui me seulent blasmer,

Some there are who me are-wont to-blame

quant je ne di a qui je sui amis,

when I not say to whom I am friend

mès ja, dame, ne savra mon penser

but ever lady not will-know my thought

nus qui soit nez, fors vous, cui je le dis

anyone who may-be born except you to-whom I it tell

coardement, pooros, en dotance.

cowardly fearful in doubt

Vos poïstes lors bien a ma senblance

You could then well by my semblance

mon cuer savoir.

my heart know

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Amors, de vos me vueil du tout clamer,

Love of you myself I-wish of-the all to-complain

car en vous est trestouz li larrecins.

for in you is all the theft

Trop savez bien le cuer d'un honme enbler,

Too-much you-know well the heart of-a man to-steal

mès du rendre n'est il termes ne fins,

but of-the giving-back not-is there term nor end

ainz le tenez esmaiant en balance.

rather it you-hold dismayed in balance

Amors, en vous ai fet ma remembrance

Love in you I-have made my remembrance

de mon voloir.

of my will

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Chançon, va t'en a Nantueil sanz faillance!

Song go thyself-thence to Nanteuil without failing

Phelipe di que, s'il ne fust de France,

Philip tell that if-be not were of France

trop puet valoir.

exceedingly he-can avail

Dame, merci! Donez moi esperance

Lady mercy Give me hope

de joie avoir!

of joy to-have

Tout autresi con fraint nois et yvers

XIV • THE SWAN

As winter breaks in summer, the false suitor should fail and the true lover prosper; he stays a magnet though she is not iron to him. He asks Love not to be like the swan that beats its cygnets. Pain that awaits reward is ease. He yields, since killing him gains her nothing, and Love maims lovers as a snare does birds.

Tout autresi con fraint nois et yvers,

All likewise as breaks snow and winter

que vient estez, que li douz tens repaire,

when comes summer when the sweet weather returns

deüst fraindre li faus prierres sers

ought to-break the false suitor serf

et fins amis amender son afaire;

and true friend to-amend his affair

et je dot mult q'il ne me soit divers,

and I fear much that-it — to-me may-be hostile

se il touz est aus autres debonaire;

if it wholly is to-the others gracious

mès tant me fi la ou biautez repaire,

but so-much myself I-trust there where beauty dwells

q'aymanz sui, se tout n'est vers moi fers.

that-magnet I-am if all not-is toward me iron

Par Dieu, Amors, ainz serai vains et pers

By God Love rather I-shall-be faint and livid

et plus destroiz que cil qui porte haire

and more distressed than he who wears hair-shirt

que ne sache de vos un autre vers

than — I-may-know of you an other turn

que n'est icil qui tant me fet mal traire.

than is that-one who so-much me makes ill bear

Ne soiez pas con li cines c'adès

Not be at-all like the swan which-always

bat ses cisniaus, quant il lor doit melz faire,

beats its cygnets when it to-them ought better to-do

quant il sont grant et il vient a son aire,

when they are grown and it comes to its nest

et a premiers les a norriz et ters.

and at first them has nourished and cleaned

Nule paine, qui guerredon atent;

No pain which guerdon awaits

c'est aese, qui bien le set entendre.

this-is ease who well it knows-how to-understand

Car qui adès veut fere son talent,

For who ever wishes to-do his desire

on i puet bien mainte chose reprendre.

one there can well many-a thing reprove

Tel chevauchent mult acemeement

Such ride very elegantly

qui ne sevent leur grant honor atendre.

who not know-how their great honor to-await

En Amors a maint guerredon a prendre

In Love there-is many-a guerdon to take

dont el puet bien son dru faire joiant.

whereby she can well her beloved make joyful

Certes, dame, bien cuit a escient

Certainly lady well I-think with knowledge

n'i doi perdre, se ne m'i puis desfendre.

not-there I-ought to-lose if not myself-there I-can defend

De vos amer me va Amors hastant,

Of you to-love me goes Love hastening

que je me claim vaincu sanz plus coup rendre;

that I myself declare vanquished without more blow to-render

et vos tenez le baston en estant,

and you hold the staff in standing

si fetes tant c'on ne vos puist reprendre;

so do so-much that-one not you could reprove

et je vos vueil avuec itant apprendre:

and I you wish besides so-much to-teach

se m'ociez, n'i gaaigniez noient.

if me-you-kill not-there you-gain anything

Enviz prent nus nul oiselet au broi

Hardly takes anyone any little-bird at-the snare

q'il nel mehaint ou ocie ou afole,

that-he not-it maims or kills or cripples

et Amors prent tout autretel conroi

and Love takes wholly such-like course

de mult de ceus qu'ele tient a s'escole;

of many of those that-she holds at her-school

gent les atret, si leur moustre pour quoi;

nobly them she-draws so to-them she-shows for what

a premiers est chascuns si liez q'il vole.

at first is each so glad that-he flies

Mult m'atrest bel, mès ci me faut parole,

Much me-she-drew fairly but here me fails word

car vos dirai de qui ce poise moi.

for to-you I-shall-tell of whom this grieves me

Chançon, va t'en cele part ou je voi

Song go thyself-thence that way where I see

douz cuer au mains, que que die en parole;

sweet heart at-the least what ever she-may-say in word

et se mi oeil sont loing, ice m'afole,

and if my eyes are far this me-maddens

mès je me fi tout adès en ma foi.

but I myself trust all ever in my faith

Amors me fet conmençier

XV • A NEW SONG

Love makes him begin a new song, teaching him to love the fairest lady alive, for whom his heart leaps. True love summons him to serve and obey her above all things; if she makes him languish to death, his soul will be saved. If he wins her, lovers will say he has achieved his quest. She herself can confess that Love hastened for her.

Amors me fet conmençier

Love me makes begin

une chançon nouvele,

a song new

qu'ele me veut enseigner

for-she me wishes to-teach

a amer la plus bele

to love the most fair

qui soit el mont vivant:

who is in-the world living

c'est la bele au cors gent,

this-is the fair-one with-the body noble

c'est cele dont je chant.

this-is she of-whom I sing

Deus m'en doint tel nouvele

God me-thereof may-grant such news

qui soit a mon talent!

which may-be to my desire

Que menu et souvent

For quick and often

mes cuers por li sautele.

my heart for her leaps

Bien me porroit avancier

Well me could advance

ma douce dame bele,

my sweet lady fair

s'ele me voloit aidier

if-she me would aid

a ceste chançonele.

with this little-song

Je n'aim nule riens tant

I not-love any thing so-much

conme li seulement

as her only

et son afetement,

and her bearing

qui mon cuer renouvele.

which my heart renews

Amors me lace et prent

Love me snares and takes

et fet lié et joiant,

and makes glad and joyful

por ce qu'a soi m'apele.

for this that-to herself me-she-calls

Qant fine amor me semont,

When true love me summons

mult me plest et agree,

much me pleases and suits

que c'est la riens en cest mont

for this-is the thing in this world

que j'ai plus desirree.

that I-have most desired

Or la m'estuet servir

Now her me-behooves to-serve

— ne m'en puis plus tenir —

not myself-thence I-can more hold

et du tout obeïr

and of-the all to-obey

plus qu'a riens qui soit nee.

more than-to thing which may-be born

S'ele me fet languir

If-she me makes languish

et vois jusqu'au morir,

and I-go up-to-the dying

m'ame en sera sauvee.

my-soul thereby will-be saved

Se la mieudre de cest mont

If the best of this world

ne m'a s'amor donee,

not me-has her-love given

tuit li amoraus diront

all the lovers will-say

ci a fort destinee.

here there-is hard destiny

S'a ce puis ja venir

If-to that I-can ever come

qu'aie, sanz repentir,

that-I-may-have without repenting

ma joie et mon plesir

my joy and my pleasure

de li, qu'ai tant amee,

from her whom-I-have so-much loved

lors diront, sanz mentir,

then they-will-say without lying

qu'avrai tout mon desir

that-I-shall-have all my desire

et ma queste achevee.

and my quest achieved

Cele pour qui sospir,

She for whom I-sigh

la blonde coloree,

the blond colored

puet bien dire et gehir

can well say and confess

que por li, sanz mentir,

that for her without lying

s'est Amors mult hastee.

herself-is Love much hastened

En chantant vueil ma dolor descouvrir

XVI · WHETHER HE SINGS OR WEEPS

He sings his grief at losing what he most desired, yet knows he will have joy, if loyal service brings anyone to good love. His songs are so full of grief that he cannot tell if he sings or weeps, but hopes Love will turn her mind toward him. He trusts her worth and sends the song for her to sing.

En chantant vueil ma dolor descouvrir,

In singing I-wish my grief to-uncover

quant perdu ai ce que plus desirroie.

since lost I-have that which most I-desired

Las! si ne sai que puisse devenir,

Alas so not I-know what I-may become

que m'amors est ce dont g'espoire joie;

for my-love is that whence I-hope joy

si m'estouvra a tel dolor languir,

so me-will-behoove in such grief to-languish

quant je ne puis ne veoir ne oïr

since I not can neither see nor hear

la bele riens a qui je m'atendoie.

the fair thing on whom I myself-relied

Quant m'en souvient, grief en sont li souspir,

When to-me-thereof it-remembers grievous thereof are the sighs

et c'est toz jorz, ne ja n'en recrerroie.

and this-is all days nor ever not-thereof I-would-desist

Por li m'estuet mainte gent obeïr,

For her me-behooves many folk to-obey

que je ne sai se nus va cele voie;
for I not know if anyone goes that way
 mès, se nus puet a bone amor venir
but if anyone can to good love come
 par bien amer et loiaument servir,
by well to-love and loyally to-serve
 ge sai de voir qu'encore en avrai joie.
I know of truth that-yet thereof I-shall-have joy

Mi chant sont tuit plain d'ire et de dolor
My songs are all full of-anger and of grief
 por vos, dame, que je ai tant amee,
for you lady whom I have so-much loved
 que je ne sai se je chant ou je plor;
for I not know if I sing or I weep
 ensi m'estuet sousfrir ma destinee.
thus me-behooves to-suffer my destiny

Mès, se Deu plest, oncor verrai le jor
But if (to-)God it-pleases yet I-shall-see the day
 qu'Amors sera changiee en autre tor,
that-Love will-be changed in other turn
 si vos donra vers moi meillor pensee.
so to-you will-give toward me better thought

Souviengne vos, dame, de fine amor,
May-it-remember to-you lady of true love
 que loiautez ne vos ait oubliee,
that loyalty not you may forget

que je me fi tant en vostre valor

for I myself trust so-much in your worth

qu'adès m'est vis que merci ai trouvee,

that-ever to-me-is seeming that mercy I-have found

et ne por quant je muir et nuit et jor!

and not for all-that I die both night and day

Or vous doint Deus, pour oster ma dolor,

Now to-you may-grant God for to-remove my grief

que par vos soit m'ire reconfortee!

that by you be my-anger comforted

Dame, bien vueil que vous sachiez de voir

Lady well I-wish that you may-know of truth

c'onques par moi ne fu mès dame amee,

that-ever by me not was before lady loved

ne ja de vous ne me qier mès mouvoir;

nor ever from you not myself I-seek more to-move

mon cuer i ai et m'entente atornee.

my heart there I-have and my-intent turned

Je n'ai mestier, dame, de decevoir,

I not-have need lady of deceiving

que de tel mal ne me sueil pas doloir.

for of such ill not myself I-am-wont at-all to-grieve

Ne m'esfreez, s'il vous plect, a l'entree!

Not me-frighten if-it you pleases at the-entry

Chançon, va t'en, garde ne remanoir!

Song go thyself-thence take-care not to-remain

Prie celi qui plus i a pooir

Pray her who most there has power

que tu soies souvent par li chantee.

that thou be often by her sung

Je me cuidoie partir

XVII • THE WHITE STAG

He thought he could leave Love, but memory keeps him sleepless. Could he catch the white stag with golden tresses, guarded by envious wolves, none would be as joyful as Thibaut. No knight or starving wolf grieves like him. He asks if killing a true lover is a sin and bids his lady kill him if she will.

Je me cuidoie partir

I myself thought to-part

d'Amors, mès riens ne me vaut.

from-Love but anything not me is-worth

Li douz maus du souvenir,

The sweet ill of-the remembering

qui nuit et jor ne m'i faut,

which night and day not me-there fails

le jor m'i fet maint assaut,

the day me-there makes many-an assault

et la nuit ne puis dormir,

and the night not I-can sleep

ainz plain et pleur et souspir.

rather I-lament and weep and sigh

Deus! tant art quant la remir,

God so-much I-burn when her I-gaze-on

mès bien sai q'il ne l'en chaut.

but well I-know that-it not to-her-thereof matters

Nus ne doit Amors traïr

Anyone not ought Love to-betray

fors que garçon et ribaut;

except that knave and ribald

et, se n'est par son plesir,

and if not-it-is by her pleasure

je n'i voi ne bas ne haut;

I not-there see neither low nor high

ainz vueil qu'ele me truist baut

rather I-wish that-she me may-find blithe

sanz guiler et sanz mentir;

without cheating and without lying

mès se je puis consvir

but if I can overtake

le cerf, qui tant puet fouir,

the stag which so-much can flee

nus n'est joianz a Thiebaut.

anyone not-is joyful beside Thibaut

Li cers est aventureus

The stag is adventurous

et si est blans conme nois

and so is white as snow

et si a les crins andeus

and so has the tresses both

plus sors que or espanois.

more tawny than gold Spanish

Li cers est en un defois

The stag is in a preserve

a l'entrer mult perilous

at the-entering very perilous

et si est gardez de leus:

and so is guarded by wolves

ce sont felon envïeus

these are felons envious

qui trop grieveent aus cortois.

who too-much grieve to-the courteous

Ainz chevaliers angoisseus

Ever knight anguished

qui a perdu son hernois,

who has lost his harness

ne vielle qui art li feus

nor old-woman for-whom burns the fire

mesons, vignes, blez et pois,

bouses vines wheat and peas

ne chacierres qui prent sois,

nor hunter whom takes thirst

ne leus qui est fameilleus

nor wolf which is famished

n'est avers moi dolereus,

not-is beside me sorrowful

que je ne soie de ceus

lest I — may-be of those

qui aiment deseur leur pois.

who love against their will

Dame, une riens vous demant:

Lady a thing of-you I-ask

cuidiez vous que soit pechiez

think you that it-be sin

d'ocirre son vrai amant?

of-killing one's true lover

Oïl, voir! bien le sachiez!

Yes truly well it know

S'il vos plest, si m'ociez,

If-it you pleases so me-kill

que je le vueil et creant,

for I it wish and grant

et se melz m'amez vivant,

and if better me-you-love living

je le vos di en oiant,

I it to-you say in hearing

mult en seroie plus liez.

much thereof I-would-be more glad

Dame, ou nule ne se prent,

Lady to-whom anyone not herself compares

mès que vos vueilliez itant

provided that you may-wish so-much

c'un pou i vaille pitiez!

that-a little there may-avail pity

Renaut, Phelippe, Lorent,

Renaut Philip Lorent

mult sont or li mot sanglent

very are now the words bloody

dont couvient que vos riez.

whereof it-behooves that you laugh

De ma dame souvenir

XVIII · THE GOODS OF LOVE

Remembering his lady gladdens his heart, and he is hers without falsehood; each stanza ends that no one can pay too much for the goods Love gives. Love's custom makes a lover's griefs please him, and her fresh color is a mirror in his heart. He expects no mercy, yet waits in trust. The envoy goes to his friend Blazon.

De ma dame souvenir

Of my lady remembering

fet Amors lié mon corage,

makes Love glad my heart

qui me fet joiant morir,

who me makes joyful die

si la truis vers moi sauvage.

so her I-find toward me wild

La bele que tant desir

The fair-one whom so-much I-desire

fera de moi son plesir,

will-do of me her pleasure

que touz sui siens sanz fausser.

for wholly I-am hers without falsehood

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Bele et bone, a vos servir

Fair and good to you serve

vueil estre tout mon aage,

I-wish to-be all my age

si sui vostres sanz faillir

so I-am yours without failing

et de cuer et de corage.

both with heart and with spirit

Car me daigniez retenir,

Now me deign to-retain

Amors, par vostre plesir!

Love by your pleasure

Fetes li de moi menbrer!

Make her of me remember

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Une costume a Amors,

A custom has Love

qui ami forment guerroe:

which friend strongly wars

plere li fet ses dolours.

please him makes his griefs

Ce me senble, por la moie,

This to-me seems for the mine

que nus biens ne puet d'ailors

that any good not can from-elsewhere

venir fors du haut secors

come except from-the high succor

qu'en li me doit Deus trouver.

that-in her me may-grant God to-find

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Et qui ses tres granz valors

And who her very great worth

recorderoit, toute voie

would-recount all the-same

est ele sor les meilleurs;

is she above the best

qu'adès m'estuet que la voie

for-ever me-bebooves that her I-may-see

et que sa fresche colors

and that her fresh color

soit en mon cuer mireors.

be in my heart mirror

Deus! con s'i fet biau mirer!

God how oneself-there it-makes fair to-gaze

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Atendre m'estuet ensi,

To-wait me-behooves thus

si m'est vis que je foloie.

so to-me-is seeming that I act-foolishly

Ja n'i cuit trouver merci,

Ever not-there I-think to-find mercy

si feré, voir, toute voie;

so I-shall-do truly all the-same

qu'en ma dame trop me fi,

for-in my lady too-much myself I-trust

ne je n'ai pas deservi

nor I not-have at-all deserved

que si me doie grever.

that so me she-should grieve

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Chançon, va t'en tost et di

Song go thyself-thence quickly and say

a Blazon, a mon ami,

to Blazon to my friend

que il te face chanter!

that he thee may-make be-sung

Nus ne puet trop acheter

Anyone not can too-much purchase

les biens qu'Amors set doner.

the goods that-Love knows-how to-give

Li douz penser et li douz souvenir

XIX · FROM BEYOND THE SEA

Sweet thoughts make him sing, since Love can make men rejoice in dismay, and no one keeps sense and honor who has not felt love's ills. He dares not address his lady, and her beauty wounds him. Far from her he is the saddest man alive, and all his good and ill come from her. He sends her greetings from beyond the sea.

Li douz penser et li douz souvenir

The sweet thoughts and the sweet memories

m'i font mon cuer esprendre de chanter,

me-there make my heart kindle with singing

et fine Amor, qui ne m'i let durer,

and true Love who not me-there lets endure

qui fet les siens en joie maintenir

who makes the hers in joy be-maintained

et met es cuers la douce remembrance.

and puts in-the hearts the sweet remembrance

Pour c'est Amors de trop haute poissance,

For this-is Love of exceedingly high power

qui en esmai fet honme resjoïr

who in dismay makes man rejoice

ne pour doloir nel let de li partir.

nor for grieving not-him lets from her to-part

Sens et honor ne puet nus maintenir,

Sense and honor not can anyone maintain

s'il n'a en soi senti les maus d'amer,

if-be not-has in himself felt the ills of-loving

n'a grant valor ne puet pour riens monter,
nor-to great worth not can for anything climb
 n'onques oncor nel vit nus avenir;
nor-ever yet not-it saw anyone happen
 pour ce vous pri, d'Amors droite senblance,
for this you I-pray of-Love right semblance
 c'on ne s'en doit partir pour esmaiance,
that-one not oneself-thence ought to-part for dismay
 ne ja de moi nou verroiz avenir,
nor ever of me not-it you-will-see happen
 que touz parfez vueil en amors morir.
for wholly perfect I-wish in love to-die

Dame, se je vos osasse prier,
Lady if I you might-dare to-pray
 mult me seroit, ce cuit, bien avenu,
much to-me would-be this I-think well befallen
 mès il n'a pas en moi tant de vertu
but there not-is at-all in me so-much of virtue
 que devant vous vous os bien aresnier;
that before you you I-dare well to-address
 ice me font et m'ocit et m'esmaie.
this me melts and me-kills and me-dismays
 Vostre biauté fet a mon cuer tel plaie
Your beauty makes to my heart such wound
 que de mes euz seul ne me puis aidier
that of my eyes alone not myself I-can aid
 dou regarder dont je ai desirrier.
of-the looking whereof I have longing

Quant me couvient, dame, de vous loignier,

When me it-behooves lady from you to-go-far

onques, certes, plus dolenz hons ne fu;

ever certainly more sorrowful man not was

et Deus feroit, ce croi, pour moi vertu,

and God would-do this I-believe for me miracle

se je jamès vous pouoie aprochier;

if I ever you could approach

que touz les biens et touz les maus que j'aie

for all the goods and all the ills that I-may-have

ai je de vous, douce dame veraie,

have I from you sweet lady true

ne ja sanz vous nus ne me puist aidier!

nor ever without you anyone not me may aid

Non fera il, q'il n'i avroit mestier.

Not will-do he for-he not-there would-have use

Ses granz biautez, dont nus hons n'a pouvoir

Her great beauty whereof any man not-has power

q'il en deïst la cinquantisme part,

that-he thereof might-say the fiftieth part

li dit plesant, li amoreus regart

the words pleasing the loving glances

m'i font souvent resjoïr et doloir.

me-there make often rejoice and grieve

Joie en atent, que mes cuers a ce bee,

Joy thereof I-await for my heart to that aims

et la poors rest dedenz moi entree.

and the fear is-in-turn within me entered

Ensi m'estuet morir par estouvoir

Thus me-behooves to-die by necessity

en grant esmai, en joie et en voloir.

in great dismay in joy and in will

Dame, de qui est ma granz desirree,

Lady of whom is my great desire

saluz vos mant d'outre la mer salee,

greetings to-you I-send from-beyond the sea salt

conne a celi ou je pens main et soir;

as to her on-whom I think morning and evening

n'autres pensers ne me fet joie avoir.

nor-other thought not me makes joy have

Chanter m'estuet, que ne m'en puis tenir

XX · THE PHOENIX

He sings in despair, not as one loved, and would rather die recalling her than be lord of the world. Love hates him and his lady forgets him. Like the phoenix seeking its pyre, he sought his death in seeing her. Reason bids him leave; his heart says only love. The envoy warns Philip, gone to court, that ladies will hardly love him.

Chanter m'estuet, que ne m'en puis tenir,

To-sing me-behooves for not myself-thence I-can bold

et si n'ai je fors qu'ennui et pesance;

and so not-have I except that-trouble and heaviness

mès tout adès se fet bon resjoïr,

but all ever oneself it-makes good to-rejoice

qu'en fere duel nus del mont ne s'avance.

for-in making grief anyone of-the world not himself-advances

Je ne chant pas com hons qui soit amez,

I not sing at-all as man who may-be loved

mès com destroiz, pensis et esgarez;

but as distressed pensive and bewildered

que je n'ai mès de bien nule esperance,

for I not-have more of good any hope

ainz sui toz jorz a parole menez.

rather I-am all days to speech led

Je vous di bien une riens sanz mentir:

I to-you say well a thing without lying

qu'en Amors a eür et grant cheance.

that-in Love there-is fortune and great chance

Se je de li me poïsse partir,

If I from her myself could part

melz me venist qu'estre sires de France.

better to-me it-would-come than-to-be lord of France

Ore ai je dit com fous desesperez:

Now have I spoken as fool despairing

melz aim morir recordant ses biautez

rather I-love to-die recalling her beauty

et son grant sens et sa douce acointance

and her great sense and her sweet acquaintance

qu'estre sires de tout le mont clamez.

than-to-be lord of all the world proclaimed

Ja n'avrai bien, gel sai a escient,

Ever not-I-shall-have good I-it know with knowledge

qu'Amors me het et ma dame m'oublie,

for-Love me hates and my lady me-forgets

s'est il resons, qui a amer entent,

so-is it reason who to love intends

q'il ne dout mort ne paine ne folie.

that-be not fear death nor pain nor folly

Puis que me sui a ma dame donez,

Since that myself I-am to my lady given

Amors le veut, et quant il est ses grez,

Love it wishes and since it is her will

ou je morrai ou je ravrai m'amie,

either I shall-die or I shall-have-in-turn my-friend

ou ma vie n'iert mie ma santez.

or my life not-will-be at-all my health

Li Fenix qiert la busche et le sarment

The Phoenix seeks the log and the vine-twigg

en quoi il s'art et gete fors de vie.

in which it itself-burns and casts out of life

Ausi quis je ma mort et mon torment,

Likewise sought I my death and my torment

qant je la vi, se pitiez ne m'aïe.

when I her saw if pity not me-aids

Deus! tant me fu li veoirs savorez

God so-much to-me was the seeing savory

dont j'avrai puis tant de maus endurez!

whereof I-shall-have since so-many of ills endured

Li souvenirs me fet morir d'envie

The remembering me makes die of-longing

et li desirs et la granz volentez.

and the desire and the great will

Mult est Amors de merveilleus pouoir,

Much is Love of marvelous power

qui bien et mal fet tant com li agree.

who good and ill does so-much as to-her it-pleases

Moi fet ele trop longuement doloir;

Me makes she too long grieve

resons me dit que g'en ost ma pensee.

reason to-me says that I-thence may-remove my thought

Mès j'ai un cuer, ains teus ne fu trouvez;

But I-have a heart ever such not was found

touz jorz me dit: «Amez! amez! amez!»,

all days to-me says Love love love

n'autre reson n'iert ja par lui moustree,

nor-other reason not-will-be ever by it shown

et j'amerai, n'en puis estre tornez.

and I-shall-love not-thence I-can be turned

Dame, merci! qui touz les biens savez.

Lady mercy who all the good-things know

Toutes valors et toutes granz bontez

All worths and all great goodnesses

sont plus en vous qu'en dame qui soit nee.

are more in you than-in lady who may-be born

Secourez moi, que fere le poëz!

Succor me for to-do it you-can

Chançon, Phelipe, a mon ami, courez!

Song Philip to my friend run

Puis que il s'est dedenz la cort boutez,

Since that he himself-is within the court thrust

bien est s'amors en haïne tornee;

well is his-love into hatred turned

a paine ert ja de bele dame amez.

with pain he-will-be ever by fair lady loved

Tout autresi con l'ente fet venir

XXI · PYRAMUS

As water makes a graft grow, remembering makes love flower. Would that she were Thisbe, since he is Pyramus. Had he served God as he serves her, no reward in Paradise would match his, but cruelty vanquishes mercy and pride has more power than sweet will. He calls her Eagle: a smile from her is worth more than paradise.

Tout autresi con l'ente fet venir

All likewise as the-graft makes come

li arrouers de l'eve qui chiet jus,

the watering of the-water which falls down

fet bone amor nestre et croistre et florir

makes good love be-born and grow and flower

li ramenbrers par coustume et par us.

the remembering by custom and by use

D'amors loial n'iert ja nus au desus,

Of-love loyal not-will-be ever anyone at-the top

ainz li couvient au desouz maintenir.

rather him it-bebooves at-the bottom to-keep

Por c'est ma douce dolor

For this-is my sweet grief

plaine de si grant poor,

full of so great fear

dame, si faz grant vigor

lady so I-do great effort

de chanter, quant de cuer plor.

of singing when from heart I-weep

Pleüst a Dieu, pour ma dolor garir,

Might-it-please to God for my grief to-cure

qu'el fust Tisbé, car je sui Pirus;

that-she were Thisbe for I am Pyramus

mès je voi bien ce ne puet avenir:

but I see well this not can happen

ensi morrai que ja n'en avrai plus.

thus I-shall-die that ever not-thereof I-shall-have more

Ahi, bele! con sui pour vous confus!

Ah fair-one how I-am for you confounded

Que d'un qarrel me venistes ferir,

For with-a bolt me you-came to-strike

espris d'ardant feu d'amor,

kindled with-burning fire of-love

quant vos vi le premier jor.

when you I-saw the first day

Li ars ne fu pas d'aubor,

The bow not was at-all of-laburnum

qui si trest par grant douçor.

which so shot with great sweetness

Dame, se je servisse Dieu autant

Lady if I served God as-much

et priasse de vrai cuer entier

and prayed with true heart entire

con je faz vous, je sai certainement

as I do you I know certainly

qu'en Paradis n'eüst autel loier;

that-in Paradise not-would-be such reward

mès je ne puis ne servir ne prier

but I not can neither serve nor pray

nului fors vous, a qui mes cuers s'atent,

anyone except you on whom my heart itself-waits

si ne puis apercevoir

so not I-can perceive

que ja joie en doie avoir,

that ever joy thereof I-ought to-have

et si ne vos puis vooir

and so not you I-can see

fors d'euz clos et de cuer noir.

except with-eyes closed and with heart black

La prophete dit voir, qui pas ne ment,

The prophet says truth who at-all not lies

que en la fin faudront li droiturier,

that in the end will-fail the righteous

et la fins est venue voirement,

and the end is come truly

que cruautez vaint merci et prier,

that cruelty vanquishes mercy and praying

ne services n'i puet avoir mestier,

nor service not-there can have use

ne bone amor n'atendre longuement,

nor good love nor-to-wait long

ainz a plus orgueus pouoir

rather has more pride power

et beubanz que douz vouloir,

and arrogance than sweet will

n'encontre Amor n'a savoir

nor-against Love not-is wisdom

q'atendue sanz espoir.

than-waiting without hope

Aygles, sanz vos ne puis merci trouver.

Eagle without you not I-can mercy find

Bien sai et voi qu'a touz biens ai failli,

Well I-know and see that-of all good-things I-have failed

se vous ensi me volez eschiver,

if you thus me wish to-shun

que vous de moi n'aiez quelque merci.

that you of me not-may-have any mercy

Ja n'avrez mès nul si loial ami

Ever not-you-will-have more any so loyal friend

ne ne porroiz a nul jor recovrer.

nor not you-will-be-able on any day to-recover

Et je me morrai chetis,

And I myself shall-die wretched

ma vie sera mès pis

my life will-be henceforth worse

loing de vostre biau cler vis,

far from your fair bright face

ou nest la rose et li lis.

where is-born the rose and the lily

Aygle, j'ai touz jorz apris

Eagle I-have all days learned

a estre loiaus amis,

to be loyal friend

si me vaudroit melz un ris

so to-me would-avail better a laugh

de vous qu'autre paradis.

from you than-other paradise

A enviz sent mal qui ne l'a apris

XXII · NARCISSUS

His ill passes all others, yet hope of joy comforts him, and he wonders that Love holds back from one wholly his lady's. He dares not pray to her, dreading refusal, and fears that if Pity falls at her feet for him, she will overcome Pity. If she scorns him, he is Narcissus, drowned by himself and far from his cure.

A enviz sent mal qui ne l'a apris:

With reluctance feels ill who not it-has learned

guerir l'estuet ou morir ou remaindre,

to-recover him-behooves or to-die or to-remain

et li miens maus, las! dont je ne m'os plaindre,

and the my ill alas whereof I not myself-dare complain

icil par est seur touz poosteïs.

that-one much is above all powerful

Morir en vueil, mès quant me vient devant

To-die thereof I-wish but when to-me comes before

l'esperance de la grant joie ataindre,

the-hope of the great joy to-attain

lors me confort. Voire, qui poïst tant

then myself I-comfort Truly who could so-much

sousfrir en pais, mès ne puis, ce m'est vis!

suffer in peace but not I-can this to-me-is seeming

Et cil qui est d'Amors si entrepris

And he who is by-Love so overtaken

qu'il li estuet a sa volenté maindre,

that-it him behooves at her will to-remain

mult me merveil s'Amors se puet tant faindre
much myself I-marvel if-Love herself can so-much hold-back

vers moi, qui sui a ma dame ententis;
toward me who am to my lady attentive

despuis que vi son biau cors droit et gent
since that I-saw her fair body straight and noble

et son cler vis, qui trop m'i set destraindre,
and her bright face which too-much me-there knows-how to-constrain

nel cuidai pas trouver si decevant
not-it I-thought at-all to-find so deceiving

conme il estoit; oncor m'en va il pis.
as it was still to-me-thereof goes it worse

Mès cil qui sert et merci i atent,
But he who serves and mercy there awaits

cil doit avoir joie fine et entiere;
he ought to-have joy fine and entire

et je, qui n'os vers li fere proiere
and I who not-dare toward her to-make prayer

— tant par redout son escondisement —,
so much I-dread her refusal

g'en deüsse partir, voire par foi,
I-thence ought to-part truly by faith

mès je ne puis veoir en quel maniere.
but I not can see in what manner

Estre ne puet ensi, a li m'otroi,
Be not it-can thus to her myself-I-grant

qu'en mon dangier n'est ele de noient.
for-in my power not-is she of anything

Dès ore mès vueil prier en chantant,

From now on I-wish to-pray in singing

et, se li plect, ne me sera tant fiere,

and if to-her it-pleases not to-me she-will-be so fierce

car je ne cuit que nus hons qui requiere

for I not think that any man who may-ask

merci d'amors, qu'il n'ait le cuer plorant,

mercy of-love that-he not-has the heart weeping

que, se Pitiez li chiet aus piez por moi,

that if Pity to-her falls at-the feet for me

si dout je mult qu'ele ne la conquire.

so fear I much that-she — her may-conquer

Ensi ne sai se faz sens ou foloi,

Thus not I-know if I-do sense or act-foolishly

car cist esgarz va par son jugement.

for this judgment goes by her judging

Se ma dame ne prent oncor conroi

If my lady not takes yet care

de moi, qui l'aim par si grant couvoitise,

of me who her-love with so great covetousness

mult la desir et, s'ele me desprise,

much her I-desire and if-she me despises

Narcisus sui, qui noia tout par soi.

Narcissus I-am who drowned all by himself

Noiez sui près, loing est ma garison,

Drowned I-am near far is my cure

s'entendré je touz jorz a son servise.

so-shall-attend I all days to her service

Servir doi bien pour si grant guerredon;

To-serve I-ought well for so great guerdon

mult voudroie qu'ele en seüst ma foi.

much I-would-wish that-she thereof might-know my faith

Dame, merci! qu'aie de vos pardon!

Lady mercy that-I-may-have from you pardon

Se je vous aim, ci a bele entreprise.

If I you love here there-is fair enterprise

Je ne puis pas bien couvrir ma reson,

I not can at-all well cover my speech

si le savez encor, si con je croi.

so it you-will-know yet so as I believe

Chançon ferai, que talenz m'en est pris

XXIII · BETTER THAN TRISTAN

He sings of the best lady in the world, then doubts it, since she has no pity. He was without love until he saw her. Love chooses without reason, yet his heart thanks his eyes for so fair a face. One evening with her would give him more joy than Tristan ever had. He thinks only of her: why does she not think of him?

Chançon ferai, que talenz m'en est pris,

Song I-shall-make for desire to-me-thereof is taken

de la meilleur qui soit en tout le mont.

of the best who may-be in all the world

De la meilleur? Je cuit que j'ai mespris.

Of the best I think that I-have erred

S'ele fust teus, se Deus joie me dont,

If-she were such so God joy me may-grant

de moi li fust aucune pitié prise,

of me to-her were some pity taken

qui sui touz siens et sui a sa devise.

who am wholly hers and am at her disposal

Pitiez de cuer, Deus! que ne s'est assise

Pity of heart God why not itself-is seated

en sa biauté? Dame, qui merci proi,

in her beauty Lady whom mercy I-pray

je sent les maus d'amer por vos.

I feel the ills of-loving for you

Sentez les vos por moi?

Feel them you for me

Douce dame, sanz amor fui jadis,

Sweet lady without love I-was formerly

quant je choisi vostre gente façon;

when I chose your noble fashion

et quant je vi vostre tres biau cler vis,

and when I saw your very fair bright face

si me raprist mes cuers autre reson:

so me taught-in-turn my heart other reason

de vos amer me semont et justise,

of you to-love me summons and constrains

a vos en est a vostre comandise.

to you thence it-is at your command

Li cors remaint, qui sent felon juïse,

The body remains which feels cruel judgment

se n'en avez merci de vostre gré.

if not-thereof you-have mercy of your will

Li douz mal dont j'atent joie

The sweet ill whence I-await joy

m'ont si grevé

me-have so grieved

morz sui, s'ele m'i delaie.

dead I-am if-she me-there delays

Mult a Amors grant force et grant pouoir,

Much has Love great force and great power

qui sanz reson fet choisir a son gré.

who without reason makes choose at her will

Sanz reson? Deus! je ne di pas savoir,

Without reason God I not say at-all wisdom

car a mes euz en set mes cuers bon gré,
for to my eyes thereof knows my heart good thanks

qui choisirent si tres bele senblance,
which chose so very fair semblance

dont jamès jor ne ferai desevrance,
whence ever day not I-shall-make separation

ainz sousfrirai por li grief penitance,
rather I-shall-suffer for her grievous penance

tant que pitiez et merciz l'en prendra.
until that pity and mercy her-thereof will-take

Diré vos qui mon cuer enblé m'a?
I-shall-tell you who my heart stolen me-has

Li douz ris et li bel oeil qu'ele a.
The sweet laugh and the fair eyes that-she has

Douce dame, s'il vos plesoit un soir,
Sweet lady if-it you pleased one evening

m'avriez vos plus de joie doné
me-would-have you more of joy given

c'onques Tristans, qui en fist son pouoir,
than-ever Tristan who thereof did his power

n'en pout avoir nul jor de son aé;
thereof could have any day of his age

la moie joie est tornee a pesance.
the my joy is turned to heaviness

Hé, cors sanz cuer! de vos fet grant venjance
Ab body without heart of you makes great vengeance

cele qui m'a navré sanz defiance,
she who me-has wounded without defiance

et ne por quant je ne la lerai ja.

and not for all-that I not her shall-leave ever

L'en doit bien bele dame amer

One ought well fair lady to-love

et s'amor garder, qui l'a.

and her-love to-keep who it-has

Dame, por vos vueil aler foloiant,

Lady for you I-wish to-go acting-foolishly

que je en aim mes maus et ma dolor,

for I thereof love my ills and my grief

qu'après les maus la grant joie en atent

for-after the ills the great joy thereof I-await

que je avrai, se Deu plest, a brief jor.

which I shall-have if (to-)God it-pleases at short day

Amors, merci! ne soiez oublïee!

Love mercy not be forgetful

S'or me failliez, c'iert traïson doublee,

If-now me you-fail it-will-be treason doubled

que mes granz maus por vos si fort m'agree.

for my great ill for you so strongly me-pleases

Ne me metez longuement en oubli!

Not me put long in oblivion

Se la bele n'a de moi merci,

If the fair-one not-has of me mercy

je ne vivrai mie longuement ensi.

I not shall-live at-all long thus

La grant biautez qui m'esprent et agree,

The great beauty which me-kindles and pleases

qui seur toutes est la plus desirree,

which above all is the most desired

m'a si lacié mon cuer en sa prison.

me-has so snared my heart in her prison

Deus! je ne pens s'a li non.

God I not think except-on her not

A moi que ne pense ele donc?

On me why not thinks she then

Contre le tens qui devise

XXIV · THE LIGHT OF THE EYES

*At the turn of the season he makes a song, and Love has struck him with her dart.
He finds no mercy in his lady, only a fierceness born of her beauty. He thinks only
of her and fears a childishness keeps her from showing him a kind thought. Love
passed the light of her eyes through his heart, and he begs her mercy.*

Contre le tens qui devise

Against the season which divides

yver et pluie d'esté,

winter and rain from-summer

et la mauvis se debrise,

and the thrush herself breaks

qui de lonc tens n'a chanté,

which for long time not-has sung

ferai chançon, car a gré

I-shall-make song for to liking

me vient que j'ai enpensé.

to-me comes that-which I-have conceived

Amors, qui en moi s'est mise,

Love who in me herself-is put

bien m'a droit son dart geté.

well me-has straight her dart cast

Douce dame, de franchise

Sweet lady of nobleness

n'ai je point en vous trouvé,

not-have I a-whit in you found

s'ele ne s'i est puis mise

if-she not herself-there is since put

que je ne vous esgardé.

that I — you looked-at

Trop avez vers moi fierté,

Too-much you-have toward me fierceness

mès ce fet vostre biauté,

but this does your beauty

ou il n'a point de devise;

where there not-is a-whit of limit

tant en i a grant plenté.

so-much thereof there is great plenty

En moi n'a pas abstinence

In me not-is at-all abstinence

que je puisse ailleurs penser

that I may elsewhere think

fors qu'a li, ou conoissance

except that-to her where understanding

ne merci ne puis trouver.

nor mercy not I-can find

Bien fui fez pour li amer,

Well I-was made for her to-love

car ne m'en puis saouler,

for not myself-thereof I-can sate

et qant plus avrai cheance,

and when more I-shall-have chance

plus la me couvient douter.

more her me it-behooves to-fear

D'une riens sui en dotance

Of-a thing I-am in doubt

que je ne puis plus celer:

which I not can more conceal

qu'en li n'ait un pou d'enfance.

that-in her there-be a little of-childishness

Ce me fet desconforter

This me makes be-disheartened

que, s'a moi a bon penser,

that if-toward me she-has good thought

ne l'ose ele demoustrer.

not it-dares she to-show

Si feïst qu'a sa senblance

So she-might-do that-by her semblance

le peüsse deviner!

it I-might guess

Dès que je li fis priere

Since that I to-her made prayer

et la pris a esgarder,

and her I-took to look

me fist Amors la lumiere

me made Love the light

des euz par le cuer passer.

of-the eyes through the heart pass

Cist conduiz me fet grever,

This conduct me makes grieve

dont je ne me sai garder,

whence I not myself know-how to-guard

n'il ne puet torner arriere;

nor-it not can turn back

li cuers melz voudroit crever.

the heart rather would-wish to-burst

Dame, a vos m'estuet clamer

Lady to you me-behooves to-cry

et que merci vos requiere.

and that mercy of-you I-may-ask

Deus m'i dont merci trouver!

God me-there may-grant mercy to-find

Dame, l'en dit que l'en muert bien de joie

XXV · DYING OF JOY

They say one can die of joy, and he thought to die in her arms, but love's grief is worse. Only fear of grieving her keeps him alive, and he would not want Paradise without her. Flatterers part loyal lovers from their joy. She calls his words invention; a lady who takes a prisoner owes him the grain after the straw.

Dame, l'en dit que l'en muert bien de joie.

Lady one says that one dies well of joy

Je l'ai douté, mès ce fu pour noient

I it-have feared but this was for nothing

que je cuidai, s'entre voz braz estoie,

for I thought if-between your arms I-were

que je fenisse enqui joieusement.

that I would-end there joyfully

Si douce morz fust bien a mon talent,

So sweet death would-be well to my desire

que la dolor d'amors qui me guerroe

for the grief of-love which me wars

par est si grant que du morir m'esfroie.

much is so great that of-the dying me-frightens

Se Deus me doint ce que je li querroie,

So God me may-grant that which I of-him would-ask

ce me retient a morir seulement,

this me holds-back from dying only

que resons est, se je por li moroie,

for reason is if I for her died

qu'ele en eüst por moi son cuer dolent;

that-she thereof might-have for me her heart sorrowful

et je me doi garder a escient

and I myself ought to-guard with knowledge

de corocier li, qu'estre ne voudroie

from angering her for-to-be not I-would-wish

en Paradis, s'ele n'i estoit moie.

in Paradise if-she not-there were mine

Deus nous pramet que, qui porra ataindre

God to-us promises that who can attain

a Paradis, q'il porra souhedier

to Paradise that-he can wish

quanq'il voudra; ja puis ne l'estuet plaindre,

whatever-he will-wish ever then not him-behooves to-lament

que il l'avra tantost sanz delaier;

for he it-will-have at-once without delaying

et, se je puis Paradis gaaignier,

and if I can Paradise gain

la avrai je ma dame sanz contraindre,

there shall-have I my lady without constraining

ou Deus fera sa parole remaindre.

or God will-make his word cease

Tres granz amors ne puet partir ne fraindre,

Very great love not can part nor break

s'el n'est en cuer desloial, losengier,

if-it not-is in heart disloyal flatterers

faus, guileor, qu'a mentir et a faindre

false deceivers who-by lying and by feigning

font les loiaus de leur joie esloignier.

make the loyal from their joy go-far

Mès ma dame set bien, au mien cuidier,

But my lady knows well to-the my thinking

a ses doz moz cointes si bel ataindre

with her sweet words elegant so fairly to-reach

qu'ele i conoist ce qui la fet destraindre.

that-she there knows that which her makes be-constrained

Se je puis tant vivre que il li chaille

If I can so-long live that it to-her may-matter

de mes dolors, bien porroie guerir;

of my griefs well I-could recover

mès ele tient mes diz a controuvaille

but she holds my sayings for invention

et dit toz jorz que je la vueil traïr;

and says all days that I her wish to-betray

et je l'aim tant et la vueil et desir

and I her-love so-much and her wish and desire

q'el mont n'a bien qui sanz li riens me vaille.

that-in-the world not-is good which without her anything to-me may-avail

Melz vaut la morz que trop vilaine faille.

Better is-worth the death than too base failing

Dame, qui veut son prison bien tenir

Lady who wishes her prisoner well to-keep

et si l'a pris a si dure bataille,

and so him-has taken in so hard battle

doner li doit le grain après la paille.

to-give to-him she-ought the grain after the straw

Je ne puis pas bien metre en nonchaloir

XXVI • CONCEALING

He cannot keep from singing when Love summons him, though he dares not reveal his thought. After great ills joy returns, and he awaits it from her alone. He will conceal his heart and learn whether Love can reward, though concealing harms him while chatterers win mercy. He gives himself to her, humble and silent.

Je ne puis pas bien metre en nonchaloir

I not can at-all well put in neglect

que je ne chant, quant Amors m'en semont,

that I — sing when Love me-thereto summons

que de ç'ai je le greigneur duel du mont

for of this-have I the greatest grief of-the world

que je n'os pas descouvrir ma pensee,

that I not-dare at-all to-uncover my thought

ce dont je voi les autres decevoir.

that whereby I see the others deceive

Tels fet senblant d'amor qui point n'i bee;

Such makes semblance of-love who at-all not-there aims

por ce chant je que g'en refraig mon plor,

for this sing I that I-thereby check my weeping

et s'en atent joie après ma dolor.

and so-thereof I-await joy after my grief

Ceste dolor me devroit mult seoir

This grief me ought much to-suit

qui est sanz rive et n'i a point de font;

which is without bank and not-there is a-whit of bottom

et s'il est nus qu'autrement m'en respont,

and if-there is anyone who-otherwise to-me-thereof answers

je l'en avrai mult tost reson moustree;

I to-him-thereof shall-have very soon reason shown

qu'après granz maus, ce dit on tot por voir,

that-after great ill this says one all for truth

est mainte foiz grant joie recouvree.

is many-a time great joy recovered

S'il ensi est, dont n'ai je pas poor

If-it thus is then not-have I at-all fear

que de mes maus n'aie bien le retor.

that of my ill not-I-may-have well the return

Ice retor, Deus! et quant l'avrai gié?

This return God and when it-shall-have I

Certes, dame, de vos sole l'atent.

Certainly lady from you alone it-I-await

Les voz biautez et vostre fin senblant

The your beauties and your true semblance

me font avoir une bone esperance;

me make have a good hope

et si ne sai se je ai foloïé,

and so not I-know if I have acted-foolishly

que mult redout de vous fausse senblance.

for much I-dread from you false semblance

Ensi le di, que ne m'en puis celer,

Thus it I-say for not myself-thereof I-can conceal

ne ne m'en puis partir ne remuër.

nor not myself-thence I-can part nor move

Dou remuër ja ne prendrai congié,

Of-the moving ever not I-shall-take leave

nel feroie por riens qui soit vivant;

not-it I-would-do for anything that may-be living

si i parra, quant mis m'en sui en tant

so there it-will-appear when put myself-thereto I-am in so-much

que j'atendrai queus sera ma cheance,

that I-shall-await what will-be my chance

et couvrirai ensi mon cuer irié

and I-shall-cover thus my heart angered

et si savrai s'Amors a conoissance,

and so I-shall-know if-Love has understanding

ne s'ele set ami guerredoner.

or if-she knows-how friend to-reward

Ja n'i perdrai pour belement celer.

Ever not-there I-shall-lose for fairly concealing

Celer dit on que mult vaut a ami,

Concealing says one that much is-worth to friend

mès ne m'en puis apercevoir de rien.

but not myself-thereof I-can perceive of anything

Li miens celers me fet plus mal que bien,

The my concealing me does more ill than good

que jangleor, qui poignent et atisent,

for chatterers who sting and stir-up

vont tant parlant que tantost ont merci,

go so-much speaking that at-once they-have mercy

ne le mentir une feve ne prisent.

nor the lying a bean not they-prize

Et je, dame, me rent a vos pensis,

And I lady myself render to you pensive

humbles, celanz et fins, loiaus amis.

humble concealing and true loyal friend

Nus hons n'ert ja de bien amer espris,

Any man not-will-be ever with well to-love kindled

s'il est de cuer decevanz et faintis.

if-be is of heart deceiving and false

Empereor ne roi n'ont nul pouoir

XXVII · STRONGER THAN KINGS

Emperors and kings can give land and pardon, but Love can guard a man from death and give lasting joy, and should be loved above all. She will not reward as she could, yet he stays her servant whatever the end, and his life and death are in his lady. The envoy tells Raoul that he who serves and pleads needs help.

Empereor ne roi n'ont nul pouoir

Emperors nor kings not-have any power

envers Amors, ice vous vueil prouver:

toward Love this to-you I-wish to-prove

il puënt bien doner de leur avoir,

they can well give of their wealth

terres et fiez, et mesfez pardonner,

lands and fiefs and misdeeds pardon

mès Amors puet honme de mort garder

but Love can man from death guard

et doner joie qui dure,

and give joy which lasts

plaine de bone aventure.

full of good fortune

Amors fet bien un honme melz valoir,

Love makes well a man better avail

que nus fors li ne porroit amender;

than anyone except her — could amend

le grant desir done du douz voloir,

the great desire she-gives of-the sweet will

tel que nus hons ne puet autre penser.

such that any man not can other think

Seur toute riens doit on Amors amer;

Above all things ought one Love to-love

en li ne faut fors mesure

in her not fails except measure

et ce qu'ele m'est trop dure.

and this that-she to-me-is too hard

S'Amors vosist guerredoner autant

If-Love would-wish to-reward as-much

conme ele puet, mult fust ses nons a droit,

as she can much were her name by right

mès el ne veut, dont j'ai le cuer dolent,

but she not wishes whence I-have the heart sorrowful

qu'ensi me tient sanz guerredon destroit;

for-thus me she-holds without guerdon distressed

et je sui cil, quels que la fins en soit,

and I am he what ever the end thereof may-be

qui a li servir s'otroie.

who to her serve himself-grants

Empris l'ai, n'en recreerroie.

Undertaken it-I-have not-thence I-would-desist

Dame, avra ja bien qui merci atent?

Lady will-have ever good who mercy awaits

Vous savez bien de moi au parestroit

You know well of me at-the last

que vostres sui, ne puet estre autrement;

that yours I-am not can be otherwise

je ne sai pas se ce mal me feroit.

I not know at-all if this ill me would-do

De tant d'essais fetes petit d'exploit,

Of so-many of-trials you-make little of-profit

que, se je dire l'osoie,

for if I say it-I-dared

trop me demeure la joie.

too-much to-me delays the joy

Je ne cuit pas q'il onques fust nus hon

I not think at-all that-there ever were any man

qu'Amors tenist en point si perilleus.

whom-Love held in point so perilous

Tant m'i destraint que g'en pert ma reson;

So-much me-there she-constrains that I-thereof lose my reason

bien sent et voi que ce n'est mie a gieus.

well I-feel and see that this not-is at-all in game

Quant me moustroit ses senblanz amoreus,

When to-me she-showed her semblance loving

bien cuidai avoir amie,

well I-thought to-have friend

mès oncor ne l'ai je mie.

but yet not her-have I at-all

Dame, ma mort et ma vie

Lady my death and my life

est en vous, que que je die.

is in you what ever I may-say

Raoul, cil qui sert et prie

Raoul he who serves and prays

avroit bien mestier d'aïe.

would-have well need of-help

Por froidure ne por yver felon

XXVIII · THE COLD SEASON

Cold will not stop his song. Everyone says a lover should repent if he can, but whoever loves well cannot leave until death, and the more he reasons with himself the more dismayed he grows. He cannot fail his lady; the sea will dry for want of rain first. He sends his song weeping to her and will wait in long hope.

Por froidure ne por yver felon

For cold nor for winter cruel

ne lesserai

not I-shall-leave

que ne face d'amors une chançon,

that — I-may-make of-love a song

et si dirai

and so I-shall-say

que qui aime repente s'en, s'il puet.

that who loves may-repent himself-thereof if-he can

Chascuns le dit, mès mentir l'en estuet.

Each it says but to-lie him-thereof behooves

Qui bien aime, il ne s'en puet partir,

Who well loves he not himself-thence can part

tant que l'ame li soit du cors partie.

until that the-soul to-him be from-the body parted

Por moi le di, que j'ai mis a reson:

For me it I-say for I-have put to reason

a moi tençai.

with me I-quarreled

Plus pren conseil de si fete acheson,

More I-take counsel of so made occasion

plus m'en esmai,

more myself-thereat I-am-dismayed

que li esmais de mon fin penser muet.

for the dismay from my true thought moves

Plus pens a li, et plus en i apluet.

More I-think on her and more thereof there rains-in

Dame, merci! je ne vos puis faillir;

Lady mercy I not you can fail

ançois sera mers por pluie faillie.

sooner will-be sea for rain failed

Dame, se j'ai de mes granz maus poor,

Lady if I-have of my great ills fear

ne vous poist pas,

not you may-grieve at-all

que bien poëz alegier ma dolor.

for well you-can lighten my grief

Et tu, t'en vas,

And thou thyself-thence goest

chançon, a li, si li di en plorant

song to her so to-her say in weeping

qu'une merciz d'amors en souspirant

that-a mercy of-love in sighing

vaut bien cent tanz a fin, loial ami

is-worth well hundred times to true loyal friend

que ne porroit pour riens cuidier s'amie.

than — could for anything think bis-friend

Fort sont li laz et grant li couvertor

Strong are the snares and great the covers

— ce n'est pas gas —

this not-is at-all jest

en que cil est qui aime par amor.

in which he is who loves by love

Et qu'en diras,

And what-thereof thou-wilt-say

puis que je sai et conois son senblant

since that I know and recognize her semblance

et je me tieng ensi devers sa gent?

and I myself hold thus toward her folk

M'a ele donc pris, lié ne saisi?

Me-has she then taken bound or seized

Oïl, certes, ja n'en ert dessaisie.

Yes certainly ever not-thereof she-will-be dispossessed

Puis qu'ensi est, j'atendrai bonement

Since that-thus it-is I-shall-await patiently

en lonc espoir,

in long hope

car il n'est riens que je vousisse tant

for there not-is anything that I would-wish so-much

con son vouloir

as her will

faire par tout sanz acheson trouver,

to-do in all without pretext to-find

et el seüst mon cuer et mon penser;

and she might-know my heart and my thought

que par ce cuit que j'avroie merci.

for by this I-think that I-would-have mercy

Deus, quant verrai pour quoi je la mercie!

God when I-shall-see for which I her thank

Nus ne porroit de cestui mal esmer

Anyone not could of this ill reckon

fors vos, dame, combien il puet durer;

except you lady how-long it can last

et, s'il vous plest, nel metez en oubli,

and if-it you pleases not-it put in oblivion

que nule foiz mes cuers ne vous oublie.

for any time my heart not you forgets

Coustume est bien, quant on tient un prison

XXIX · THE PRISONER

A jailer will not hear his prisoner, and he dares not speak of ransom. He fears the many who surround her and tell her that no rich man loves; they lie. Loving so loyally, he never saw his folly. In thought she holds him in her arms, and when his sense returns he curses himself; if she does not reward him, he will live ill.

Coustume est bien, quant on tient un prison,

Custom is well when one holds a prisoner

qu'on ne le veut oïr ne escouter,

that-one not him wishes to-hear nor to-listen

car nule riens ne fet tant cuer felon

for any thing not makes so-much heart cruel

con grant pouoir, qui mal en veut user.

as great power who ill thereof wishes to-use

Pour ce, dame, de moi m'estuet douter,

For this lady for me me-behooves to-fear

car je n'i os parler de raençon

for I not-there dare speak of ransom

n'estre ostagiez s'en bele guise non.

nor-to-be hostaged except-in fair guise not

Après tout ce ne puis je eschaper.

After all this not can I escape

D'une chose ai au cuer grant soupeçon,

Of-a thing I-have at-the heart great suspicion

et c'est la riens qui plus me fet douter:

and this-is the thing which most me makes fear

que tant de genz li vont tout environ.

that so-many of folk to-her go all around

Je sai de voir que c'est por moi grever;

I know of truth that this-is for me to-grieve

adès d'ient: «Dame, on vos veut guiler;

ever they-say Lady one you wishes to-deceive

ja par amors n'amera riches hom».

ever by love not-will-love rich man

Mès il mentent, li losengier felon,

But they lie the flatterers cruel

car qui plus a, melz doit amors garder.

for who more has better ought love to-keep

Se ma dame ne veut amer nului,

If my lady not wishes to-love anyone

moi ne autrui, cinq cenx merciz l'en rent,

me nor another five hundred thanks to-her-thereof I-render

qu'assez i a d'autres que je ne sui

for-plenty there are of-others than I — am

qui la priënt de faus cuer baudement.

who her pray with false heart boldly

Esbaudise fet gaaingnier souvent,

Boldness makes win often

mès ne sé riens, quant je devant li sui;

but not I-know anything when I before her am

tant ai de mal et de paine et d'ennui,

so-much I-have of ill and of pain and of-trouble

quant me couvient dire: «A Dieu vous conmant!»

when me it-bebooves to-say To God you I-commend

Vous savez bien qu'en ne conoist en lui

You know well that-one not knows in himself

ce qu'en conoist en autrui plainement.

that which-one knows in another plainly

Ma grant folie onques jor ne conui,

My great folly ever day not I-knew

tant ai amé de fin cuer loiaument;

so-much I-have loved with true heart loyally

mès une riens m'i fet alegement:

but a thing me-there makes relief

qu'en esperance ai un pou de refui.

for-in hope I-have a little of refuge

Li oiselez se va ferir el glui,

The little-bird itself goes to-strike in-the birdlime

quant il ne puet trouver autre garant.

when it not can find other protection

Souvent m'avient, quant je pens bien a li,

Often to-me-it-happens when I think well on her

qu'a mes dolors une douçors me vient

that-to my griefs a sweetness to-me comes

si granz au cuer que trestouz m'entroubli,

so great at-the heart that wholly myself-I-forget

et m'est a vis qu'entre ses braz me tient;

and to-me-is to seeming that-between her arms me she-holds

et après ce, quant li sens me revient

and after this when the sense to-me returns

et je voi bien qu'a tout ce ai failli,

and I see well that-of all this I-have failed

lors me courrouz et ledange et maudi,

then myself I-anger and insult and curse

car je sai bien que il ne l'en souvient.

for I know well that it not to-her-thereof remembers

Bele du tout et dure de merci,

Fair of-the all and hard of mercy

se mi travail ne sont par vous meri,

if my labors not are by you rewarded

mult vivrai mal, s'a vivre me couvient.

much I-shall-live ill if-to live me it-behooves

Savez por quoi Amors a non amors

XXX · THE HAND HE KISSES

Why is Love called love, who grieves only her own? She is like a devil to those who trust her, yet he is hers and grieves for her faults as a good servant chastens his lord. Once, when Love led him to see his lady, she touched him with her white hand in greeting, and kissing that hand makes him think he has found mercy.

Savez por quoi Amors a non amors,

Know-you for what Love has name love

qui ne grieve fors les siens soulement?

who not grieves except the hers only

Qui le savra s'en die son talant,

Who it will-know so-thereof may-be-say his desire

car je nel sai, se Deus me doint secors!

for I not-it know so God me may-grant succor

Amors semble deable qui maistrie:

Love seems devil who masters

plus engigne celui qu'en li se fie;

more she-deceives him who-in her himself trusts

et poise m'en, se j'aie ja merci,

and it-grieves me-thereof so I-may-have ever mercy

plus que por moi cent mile tanz por li,

more than for me hundred thousand times for her

quant on la puet rester de felonnie.

when one her can charge with felony

Je sui touz siens et s'en sent les dolors,

I am wholly hers and so-thereof feel the griefs

et me poise de son mal durement,

and me it-grieves of her ill greatly

et en son bien cuit mon avancement,

and in her good I-think my advancement

car de seignors vient granz biens a plusors;

for from lords comes great good to many

et cil sert bien son seignor qui chastie,

and he serves well his lord who chastens

a cui poise, quant il fait vilenie.

to whom it-grieves when he does baseness

Mais Amors n'a cure de nul chasti,

But Love not-has care of any chastening

car ele a tant et veü et oï

for she has so-much both seen and heard

que ne li chaut de rien que on li die.

that not to-her matters of anything that one to-her may-say

Amors m'a fait tantes foiz corrocier

Love me-has made so-many times be-angry

qu'en mon corrouz n'a mès point de pooir,

that-in my anger not-is more a-whit of power

ainz sui plus siens, quant plus me desespoir.

rather I-am more hers when more myself I-despair

Ausi con cil qui delez le foier

Just as he who beside the hearth

gist malades et ne se puet desfendre

lies sick and not himself can defend

et menace la gent par mi a fendre,

and threatens the folk through mid to cleave

ausi di je ce por moi desenflier.

just-so say I this for me to-deflate

Il fait grant bien, quant on en ot parler;

It does great good when one thereof hears speak

mieuz en puet on l'assaut d'Amors atendre.

better thereby can one the-assault of-Love await

Se je m'en duil, ne fait a merveillier,

If I myself-thereof grieve not it-is to marvel

que Deus la fist pour gent faire doloir.

for God her made for folk to-make grieve

La ou Amors la m'amena veoir

There where Love her me-led to-see

oi je adès un tres douz atochier

had I at-once a very sweet touching

qu'ele me fist de sa blanche main tendre,

that-she me made with her white hand tender

quant par la main me prist au salu rendre.

when by the hand me she-took at-the greeting to-render

Mieuz aim la main dont me volt adesper

Better I-love the hand wherewith me she-wished to-touch

que l'autre cors ou ce me fait penser,

than the-other body where this me makes think

car dou confort set Amors as siens rendre.

for of-the comfort knows-how Love to-the hers to-render

Qui set amer, il savroit bien haïr,

Who knows-how to-love he would-know well to-hate

se il voloit, plus que nus autres hom,

if he wished more than any other man

mais n'est pour ce loiautez ne raison,

but not-is for this loyalty nor reason

qui bien aime, qu'il en doie partir;

who well loves that-he thence ought to-part

ainz doit chascuns amer sa renonmee.

rather ought each to-love his renown

Et se Amors estoit bien apensee,

And if Love were well advised

ele donroit a fin ami loial

she would-give to true friend loyal

joie et secors pour sosfrir trop grant mal;

joy and succor for to-suffer too great ill

ensi seroit servie et honoree.

thus she-would-be served and honored

Dame, merci! La mains enbausmee

Lady mercy The hand embalmed

que nuit et jor bais cent foiz d'un estal

which night and day I-kiss hundred times at-one stretch

me fait parler de vos si a cheval

me makes speak of you so on horseback

qu'il m'est a vis que merci ai trouuee.

that-it to-me-is to seeming that mercy I-have found

Les douces dolors

XXXI • SWEET GRIEFS

Love's sweet griefs burn, and foolish boldness finds little help; he was bold once and still fears. Loving loyally is folly, yet a tower would be carried down by flowers before he recanted. Long delay kills him. He sings to console himself and has set all his heart in her, and cannot endure until she calls him Friend.

Les douces dolors

The sweet griefs

et li mal plesant

and the ill pleasing

qui viennent d'amors

which come from-love

sont douz et cuisant,

are sweet and burning

et qui fet fol hardement

and who does foolish boldness

a paines avra secors.

with pains will-have succor

G'en fis un dont la poors

I-thereof did one whereof the fear

me tient el cors que g'en sent.

me holds in-the body that I-thereof feel

Bien est grant folors

Well it-is great folly

d'amer loiaument.

of-loving loyally

Qui porroit aillors

Who could elsewhere

changier son talent!

change his desire

Hé, Deus! g'en ai appris tant

Ab God I-thereof have learned so-much

q'ançois seroit une tors

that-sooner would-be a tower

portee a terre de flors

carried to ground by flowers

qu'on m'en veïst recreant.

than-one me-thereof would-see recreant

Lonc respit m'ont mort

Long delay me-have killed

et grant desirrier

and great longing

et ce qu'a son tort

and this that-at her wrong

me veut corrocier.

me she-wishes to-anger

Mains en fera a prisier,

Less thereof she-will-be to prize

se je n'ai de li confort,

if I not-have from her comfort

qu'el mont n'a chose si fort

for-in-the world not-is thing so hard

por li ne me fust legier.

for her not to-me would-be light

Je chant et deport

I sing and disport

pour moi solacier

for myself to-solace

et voi en ma sort

and I-see in my lot

ennui et dangier,

trouble and resistance

si porrai bien perillier

so I-shall-be-able well to-founder

quant ne puis venir a port,

since not I-can come to port

ne je n'ai aillors resort

nor I not-have elsewhere recourse

sanz ma lejançe brisier.

without my allegiance to-break

Dame, j'ai tout mis

Lady I-have all put

— et cuer et penser —

both heart and thought

en vous et assis

in you and set

sanz ja remuër.

without ever moving

Se je voloie aconter

If I wished to-recount

vostre biauté, vostre pris,

your beauty your worth

j'avroie trop anemis;

I-would-have too-many enemies

por ce ne m'en os parler.

for this not myself-tbereof I-dare speak

Dame, je n'i puis durer,

Lady I not-there can endure

car tout adès m'ira pis,

for all ever to-me-will-go worse

tant que vous diez: «Amis,

until that you say Friend

je vous vueil m'amor donner».

I to-you wish my-love to-give

Por ce se d'amer me dueil

XXXII · THE HEART IN PRISON

Loving grieves him, yet recalling her beauty comforts him. His heart, body, and eyes fight against him, and she holds the heart, the strongest of them. Love strikes without respite. He has lost his heart into her keeping and asks some sweetness of her; a summer would be too short to praise her beauty.

Por ce se d'amer me dueil,

For this if of-loving myself I-grieve

si i ai je grant confort,

so there have I great comfort

car adès en li recort,

for ever on her I-recall

Deus! ce que virent mi oeil:

God that which saw my eyes

c'est sa grant biauté veraie

this-is her great beauty true

qui en pluseurs sens m'essaie,

which in several senses me-tries

que ce que j'ai, ce se combat a moi:

for that which I-have this itself fights with me

c'est cuers et cors et li oeil dont la voi;

this-is heart and body and the eyes whereby her I-see

mès le cuer a, qu'est de greigneur pouoir.

but the heart she-has which-is of greater power

Or me dont Deus les autres vueille avoir!

Now me may-grant God the others she-may-wish to-have

Maintes genz ont un escueil,

Many folk have one onset

ou soit a droit ou a tort,

either be-it by right or by wrong

et Amors fiert sanz deport;

and Love strikes without respite

ja n'i douterà orgueil.

ever not-there she-will-fear pride

Li sages plus s'en esmaie,

The wise-man more himself-thereat dismays

que trop set fere grant plaie.

for too-well she-knows-how to-make great wound

Grant la me fist, quant le cuer a de moi.

Great it me she-made when the heart she-has of me

En sa prison biau m'est quant je l'i voi;

In her prison fair to-me-is when I it-there see

melz l'aim en li qu'en nul autre pouvoir.

better it-I-love in her than-in any other power

Or li dont Deus garder a mon vouloir!

Now to-her may-grant God to-keep at my will

Dame, qui pert au besoing

Lady who loses at-the need

por son ami ce qu'il a,

for his friend that which-he has

se cil le guerredon n'a,

if he the guerdon not-has

honiz en est par tesmoing;

shamed thereby he-is by witness

et je pert, sanz reconquerre,

and I lose without recovering

mon cuer, que tenez en serre.

my heart which you-hold in lock

Perdu non ai, nel perdrai pas ensi,

Lost not I-have not-it I-shall-lose at-all thus

que pour le cuer priera tant merci

for for the heart will-pray so-much mercy

li cors vers vos que merveilles ert grant,

the body toward you that marvel will-be great

se ne fraigniez vers lui vostre talent.

if not you-break toward it your will

Se je a un honme doing

If I to a man give

— aucuns de tels genz i a, —

some of such folk there are

demain autant me harra,

tomorrow as-much me he-will-bate

se ne li remet el poing.

if not to-him I-put-back in-the hand

Mult grant sens a a biau querre

Very great sense there-is in fair asking

et a doner sanz requerre;

and in giving without asking

et je, dame, mil foiz vos cri merci:

and I lady thousand times to-you cry mercy

de ce qui miens deüst estre vos pri;

for that which mine ought to-be you I-pray

que n'espoir pas, a vostre douz senblant,

for not-I-hope at-all at your sweet semblance

que la merciz me viengne au cuer devant.

that the mercy to-me may-come at-the heart before

Dame, ore ai dit ma poor.

Lady now I-have said my fear

Mult voudroie ore escouter

Much I-would-wish now to-hear

se ja daigneroiz penser

if ever you-will-deign to-think

vers moi aucune douçor

toward me some sweetness

ne riens nule qui me vaille,

nor thing any which me may-avail

si que li cuers en tressaille

so that the heart thereof leaps

en la prison, la ou vos le tenez.

in the prison there where you it hold

Deus! fu ainz mès cuers si bien enchantez?

God was ever before heart so well enchanted

Nenil, certes! Mès se li cors pris fust

No certainly But if the body taken were

avec le cuer, ja ne li despleüst.

with the heart ever not to-it would-displease

Dame, ne puis loër voz granz biautez,

Lady not I-can praise your great beauties

que trop petiz me seroit uns estez;

for too little to-me would-be a summer

mès, se riens puis fere qui vos pleüst,

but if anything I-can do which you might-please

n'iert ja si grief que mie me neüst.

not-will-be ever so grievous that at-all me it-might-harm

Une chançon oncor vueil

XXXIII · A LOOK AT PARTING

He renews his song for the lady he grieves over. He thought her simple and without pride, but her welcome was only to grieve him. Waking and sleeping his heart begs her mercy, and he trusts her pity so much that he forgets himself for joy. Love seizes quickly and rewards slowly; one look she gave at parting holds his heart.

Une chançon oncor vueil

A song yet I-wish

fere por moi conforter.

to-make for me to-comfort

Pour celi dont je me dueil

For her whereof I myself grieve

vueil mon chant renouveler;

I-wish my song to-renew

pour ce ai talent de chanter

for this I-have desire of singing

que, quant je ne chant, mi oeil

for when I not sing my eyes

tornent souvent a plorer.

turn often to weeping

Simple et franche, sanz orgueil

Simple and noble without pride

cuidai ma dame trouver.

I-thought my lady to-find

Mult me fu de bel acueil,

Much to-me she-was of fair welcome

si le fist por moi grever.

so it she-did for me to-grieve

Si sont a li mi penser

So are on her my thoughts

que la nuit, quant je sonmeil,

that the night when I sleep

vet mes cuers merci crier.

goes my heart mercy to-cry

En dormant et en veillant

In sleeping and in waking

est mes cuers du tout a li

is my heart of-the all to her

et li prie doucement,

and to-her prays sweetly

conme a sa dame, merci.

as to his lady mercy

En sa pitié tant me fi

In her pity so-much myself I-trust

que, quant g'i pens durement,

that when I-there think hard

de joie toz m'entroubli.

for joy wholly myself-I-forget

Joie et duel a cil souvent

Joy and grief has he often

qui le mien mal a senti.

who the my ill has felt

Mes cuers plore, et ge en chant;

My heart weeps and I thereof sing

ensi m'ont mi oeil traï.

thus me-have my eyes betrayed

Amors, tost avez saisi,

Love soon you-have seized

mès vous guerredonez lent;

but you reward slow

ne pour qant de moi vous pri.

not for all-that for me you I-pray

Hé, las! s'il ne li souvient

Ab alas if-it not to-her remembers

de moi, morz sui sanz faillir.

of me dead I-am without failing

S'el savoit dont mes maus vient,

If-she knew whence my ill comes

bien l'en devroit souvenir.

well to-her-thereof ought to-remember

Cist maus me fera morir,

This ill me will-make die

se ma dame n'en soustient

if my lady not-thereof bears

une part par son plesir.

a part by her pleasure

Chançon, di li sanz mentir

Song tell her without lying

c'uns resgarz le cuer me tient

that-a look the heart me holds

que li vi fere au partir.

which her I-saw make at-the parting

Ausi conme unicorne sui

XXXIV · THE UNICORN

Like the unicorn that swoons in the maiden's lap and is killed, he has been killed by Love and his lady. His heart lies in a sweet prison with pillars of desire, doors of fair seeing, and rings of good hope, kept by Fair Semblance, Beauty, and the churl Danger. Here one wins by humility, and only mercy helps.

Ausi conme unicorne sui

Just as unicorn I-am

qui s'esbahist en regardant,

which itself-amazes in looking

quant la pucele va mirant.

when the maiden it-goes gazing-at

Tant est liee de son ennui,

So it-is glad of its trouble

pasmee chiet en son giron;

swooned it-falls in her lap

lors l'ocit on en traïson.

then it-kills one in treason

Et moi ont mort d'autel senblant

And me have killed with-such semblance

Amors et ma dame, por voir:

Love and my lady for truth

mon cuer ont, n'en puis point ravoir.

my heart they-have not-thence I-can a-whit have-back

Dame, quant je devant vous fui

Lady when I before you was

et je vous vi premierement,

and I you saw first

mes cuers aloit si tressaillant

my heart went so leaping

qu'il vous remest, quant je m'en mui.

that-it with-you remained when I myself-thence moved

Lors fu menez sanz raençon

Then it-was led without ransom

en la douce chartre en prison

into the sweet jail in prison

dont li piler sont de talent

whereof the pillars are of desire

et li huis sont de biau veoir

and the doors are of fair seeing

et li anel de bon espoir.

and the rings of good hope

De la chartre a la clef Amors

Of the jail has the key Love

et si i a mis trois portiers:

and so there she-has put thre porters

Biau Senblant a non li premiers,

Fair Semblance has name the first

et Biautez cele en fet seignors;

and Beauty that-one thereof makes lord

Dangier a mis a l'uis devant,

Danger she-has put at the-door front

un ort, felon, vilain, puant,

a filthy felon churl stinking

qui mult est maus et pautoniers.

who very is evil and rascally

Cil troi sont et viste et hardi:

Those three are both quick and bold

mult ont tost un homme saisi.

very they-have soon a man seized

Qui porroit sousfrir les tristors

Who could suffer the sorrows

et les assauz de ces huissiers?

and the assaults of these ushers

Onques Rollanz ne Oliviers

Ever Roland nor Oliver

ne vainquirent si granz estors;

not vanquished so great battles

il vainquirent en combatant,

they vanquished in fighting

mès ceus vaint on humiliant.

but those vanquishes one humbling

Sousfrirs en est gonfanoniers;

Suffering thereof is standard-bearer

en cest estor dont je vous di

in this battle whereof I to-you tell

n'a nul secors fors de merci.

not-is any succor except of mercy

Dame, je ne dout mès riens plus

Lady I not fear more anything more

que tant que faille a vous amer.

that so-much that I-may-fail to you love

Tant ai appris a endurer

So-much I-have learned to endure

que je sui vostres tout par us;

that I am yours all by use

et se il vous en pesoit bien,

and if it you thereof grieved well

ne m'en puis je partir pour rien

not myself-thence can I part for anything

que je n'aie le remenbrer

that I not-may-have the remembering

et que mes cuers ne soit adès

and that my heart not be ever

en la prison et de moi près.

in the prison and from me near

Dame, quant je ne sai guiler,

Lady since I not know-how to-deceive

merciz seroit de seson mès

mercy would-be in season henceforth

de soustenir si greveus fès.

of sustaining so grievous burden

Qui plus aime plus endure

XXXV · THE DREAM

Whoever loves most endures most, since Love leads her friend to death before giving him joy. His lady laughs at his grief; reason bids him leave, but his heart refuses. He asks whether one who surrenders deserves death. In sleep he held her, and woke to weep. The envoy bids Raoul return soon: no Turk or Arab has taken what is his.

Qui plus aime plus endure,

Who more loves more endures

plus a mestier de confort,

more has need of comfort

qu'Amors est de tel nature

for-Love is of such nature

que son ami maine a mort;

that her friend she-leads to death

puis en a joie et deport,

then thereof he-has joy and pleasure

s'il est de bone aventure;

if-he is of good fortune

mès je n'en puis point avoir,

but I not-thereof can a-whit have

ainz m'a mis en nonchaloir

rather me-has put in neglect

cele qui n'a de moi cure.

she who not-has of me care

Onques riens ne fu si dure

Ever anything not was so hard

d'aymant en mon recort.

of-diamond in my recollection

Des soursirs et de l'ardure

Of-the sighs and of the-burning

et des lermes que je port

and of-the tears that I bear

sui perciez par la plus fort

I-am pierced through the most strongly

et mis a desconfiture,

and put to discomfiture

et je n'ai vers li pouoir,

and I not-have toward her power

ainz rit, quant me voit doloir:

rather she-laughs when me she-sees grieve

ci faut pitiez et mesure.

here fails pity and measure

Puis que pitiez est faillie,

Since that pity is failed

bien m'en devoie partir;

well myself-thence I-ought to-part

mes sens m'en semont et prie,

my sense me-thereto summons and prays

mès mes cuers nel veut sousfrir,

but my heart not-it wishes to-allow

ainz me het por li servir;

rather me hates for her to-serve

tant aime sa seignorie.

so-much it-loves her lordship

Dame, une riens vos demant:

Lady a thing of-you I-ask

que vous jugiez qui se rent,

that you judge who himself surrenders

se il a mort deservie.

if he has death deserved

Par maintes foiz l'ai sentie

By many times her-I-have felt

en dormant tout a loisir,

in sleeping all at leisure

mès quant pechiez et envie

but when sin and envy

m'esveilloit et que tenir

me-woke and that to-hold

la cuidoie a mon plesir,

her I-thought at my pleasure

et ele n'i estoit mie,

and she not-there was at-all

lors ploroie durement

then I-wept grievously

et melz vousisse en dormant

and rather I-would-wish in sleeping

li tenir toute ma vie.

her to-hold all my life

Ma grant joie en dormant iere

My great joy in sleeping was

si granz que nel puis conter.

so great that not-it I-can recount

En veillant ne truis maniere

In waking not I-find manner

de ma dolor conforter.

of my grief to-comfort

Bien me deüst trestorner

Well for-me ought to-turn-around

Amors ce devant deriere

Love this front behind

li dormirs fust en oubli

the sleeping would-be in oblivion

et g'eüsse en veillant li;

and I-might-have in waking her

lors seroit ma joie entiere.

then would-be my joy entire

Quant li vueil crier merci,

When to-her I-wish to-cry mercy

lors ai tel poor de li

then I-have such fear of her

que n'os dire ma proiere.

that not-I-dare say my prayer

Raoul, Turc ne Arrabi

Raoul Turk nor Arab

n'ont riens dou vostre sesi;

not-have anything of-the yours seized

revenez par tens arriere!

come-back in time back

De grant joie me sui toz esmeüz

XXXVI · THE LADY'S GREETING

His lady has sent him greetings, and he cannot keep from singing. He has never dared send her word, fearing a bad answer would kill him. No lover should despair, since so precious a reward is worth awaiting. Far away, he sees her with the heart's eyes, sends her his heart in this song, and prays his longing not cost him dear.

De grant joie me sui toz esmeüz

With great joy myself I-am all moved

en mon voloir, qui mon fin cuer esclaire:

in my will which my true heart brightens

quant ma dame m'a envoié saluz,

since my lady me-has sent greetings

je ne me puis ne doi de chanter taire.

I not myself can nor ought from singing to-be-silent

De ce present doi je estre si liez

Of this present ought I to-be so glad

com de celui qui a, bien le sachiez,

as of her who has well it know

fine biauté, cortoisie et vaillance;

fine beauty courtesy and valor

pour ce i ai mis trestoute m'esperance.

for this there I-have put all my-hope

Dame, pour Dieu ne soie deceüz

Lady for God not may-I-be deceived

de vos amer, que ne m'en puis retraire!

of you to-love for not myself-thence I-can withdraw

De touz amis sui li plus elleüz,

Of all friends I-am the most choice

mès ne vos os descouvrir mon afaire.

but not to-you I-dare to-uncover my affair

Tant vous redout forment a corrocier

So-much you I-dread greatly to anger

c'onques vers vous n'osai puis envoyer,

that-ever toward you not-I-dared since to-send

que, se de vous eüsse en atendance

for if from you I-had in expectation

mauvès respons, morz fusse sanz doutance.

bad answer dead I-would-be without doubt

Onques ne soi decevoir ne trichier

Ever not I-knew-how to-deceive nor to-cheat

— ne je pour rien aprendre nel voudroie —

nor I for anything to-learn not-it would-wish

envers celi qui me puet avancier.

toward her who me can advance

Faire et desfaire et donner bien et joie,

To-do and to-undo and to-give good and joy

tout c'est en li et en sa volenté.

all this-is in her and in her will

Deus! s'el savoit mon cuer et mon pensé,

God if-she knew my heart and my thought

je sai de voir que j'avroie conquise

I know of truth that I-would-have conquered

douce dame, ce que mes cuers plus prise.

sweet lady that which my heart most prizes

Nus qui aime ne se doit esmoier,

Anyone who loves not himself ought to-dismay

se fine amor le destraint et mestroie,

if true love him constrains and masters

car qui atent si precieus loier,

for who awaits so precious reward

il n'est pas droiz que d'amer se recroie,

it not-is at-all right that from-loving himself be-desist

car qui plus sert, plus en doit avoir gré;

for who more serves more thereof ought to-have thanks

et je me fi tant en sa grant biauté,

and I myself trust so-much in her great beauty

qui des autres se desoivre et devise,

which from-the others itself separates and distinguishes

que il me plest a estre en son service.

that it me pleases to be in her service

Des euz du cuer, dame, vous puis veoir,

With-the eyes of-the heart lady you I-can see

car trop sont loing li mien oil de ma chiere,

for too are far the my eyes from my dear-one

qui tant m'ont fet pour vous pensee avoir.

which so-much me-have made for you thought have

Dès celui jor que je vous vi premiere,

From that day that I you saw first

de vous veoir ai volenté trop grant.

of you to-see I-have will too great

Par ma chançon vous envoi en present

By my song to-you I-send in present

mon cuer et moi et toute ma pensee.

my heart and me and all my thought

Recevez le, dame, s'il vous agree!

Receive it lady if-it you pleases

Dame, de vous sont tuit mi pensement,

Lady of you are all my thoughts

et a vous sui remés a mon vivant.

and with you I-am remained at my lifetime

Pour Dieu vous pri, se mes fins cuers i bee,

For God you I-pray if my true heart there aims

ma volenté ne soit trop comparee.

my will not be too-much paid-for

JEUX-PARTIS

Baudoÿn, il sunt dui amant

XXXVII · WORTH OR BEAUTY

Thibaut asks Baldwin which of two lovers deserves a maiden more, one who loves her worth and courtesy or one who loves her beauty. Baldwin speaks for worth, Thibaut for beauty, without which no heart is given. Ugly old women may be courteous but are worthless to touch, says Thibaut; worth holds Baldwin's heart.

Baudoÿn, il sunt dui amant

Baldwin there are two lovers

qui ainment de cuer sanz trichier

who love with heart without cheating

une pucele de jovent.

a maiden of youth

Li quelx la doit mieuz desraignier?

The which her ought better to-claim

Li uns l'ainme por ses valors

The one her-loves for her worth

et por sa cortoisie ausi;

and for her courtesy also

li autres l'ainme par amours

the other her-loves by love

por la grant beauté qu'est en li.

for the great beauty which-is in her

— Sire, saichiez certainement

Lord know certainly

que celui doit tenir plus chier

that him she-ought to-hold more dear

qui por son bon ensoignement

who for her good breeding

l'ainme de leal cuer entier;

her-loves with loyal heart entire

car cortoisie et granz honors

for courtesy and great honors

plaisent plus a leal ami

please more to loyal friend

que beautez ne fresche colors

than beauty or fresh color

ou il n'a pitié ne merci.

where there not-is pity nor mercy

— Baudoin, la tres grant beauté

Baldwin the very great beauty

a valor et mainte vertu.

has worth and many-a virtue

S'ele disoit grant niceté,

If-she said great silliness

onques si cortois moz ne fu.

ever so courteous word not was

Granz beautez fait cuer forsenner

Great beauty makes heart go-mad

plus que nule autre rien vivant,

more than any other thing living

ne nuns ne puet son cuer doner,

nor anyone not can his heart give

se la beautez n'i est avant.

if the beauty not-there is before

— Sire, saichiez de verité:

Lord know of truth

beautez a tout son non perdu,

beauty has all its name lost

puis que valors a alevé

since that worth has raised

a dame son non et creü;

to lady her name and increased

car cortoisie fait loër

for courtesy makes be-praised

dames et bel acointement

ladies and fair acquaintance

et toz jors en bon pris monter,

and all days in good worth climb

ce dont beautez ne fait noiant.

this whereof beauty not does anything

— Baudoin, assez trueve l'en

Baldwin plenty finds one

vielles plus laides que nuns chiens

old-women more ugly than any dog

qui ont cortoisie et grant sen,

who have courtesy and great sense

mais au touchier ne valent riens.

but at-the touching not they-are-worth anything

Si la fait or si bon amer

So her it-makes now so good to-love

por ce que bel vos parlera?

for this that fair to-you she-will-speak

La bele ne puet mesparler,

The fair-one not can misspeak

ainz est bon quanque me dira.

rather is good whatever to-me she-will-say

— Sire, je ne dirai oian

Lord I not shall-say henceforth

qu'a vielle soie, ne ja siens

that-to old-woman I-may-be nor ever hers

ne serai mais, si con j'entent.

nor I-shall-be more so as I-intend

Blamer me volez les granz biens

To-blame me you-wish the great goods

que bele dame set mostrer

which fair lady knows-how to-show

qui cortoisie et bon pris a.

who courtesy and good worth has

Mieuz devriez celui blamer

Better you-ought him to-blame

qui por beauté valour laira.

who for beauty worth will-leave

— Baudoÿn, soul d'un resgarder

Baldwin only of-a looking

ou d'un ris, quant le me fera,

or of-a laugh when it to-me she-will-make

la bele que je n'os nonmer

the fair-one whom I not-dare to-name

vaut quanque la laide donra.

is-worth whatever the ugly-one will-give

— Sire, li miens cuers remuër

Lord the my heart to-move

ne se veut de cele qui l'a.

not itself wishes from her who it-has

Valors l'a fait emprisoner,

Worth it-has had imprisoned

qui cortoisie li dona.

which courtesy to-her gave

Une chose, Baudoÿn, vos demant

XXXVIII · MOUTH OR FEET

*When a lady grants her lover a meeting, should he first kiss her mouth or her feet?
Baldwin says the mouth, since that kiss descends to the heart; Thibaut says the feet,
since humility wins more love, and one kisses a shepherd's daughter on the mouth.
Baldwin answers that a man snared by Love soon forgets the feet.*

Une chose, Baudoÿn, vos demant:

A thing Baldwin of-you I-ask

s'il avenoit a fin, leal ami,

if-it happened to true loyal friend

qui sa dame a amee longuement

who his lady has loved long

et proïee tant qu'ele en a merci

and prayed so-much that-she thereof has mercy

et li mande que parler veingne a li

and to-him sends-word that to-speak he-may-come to her

tout por sa volenté faire,

all for his will to-do

que fera il tot avant por li plaire,

what will-do be all first for her to-please

quant li dira: «Beaus amis, bien veingniez?»

when to-him she-will-say Fair friend well come

Baisera il ou sa bouche ou ses piez?

Will-kiss he either her mouth or her feet

— Sire, je lo que il premierement

Lord I advise that he first

en la bouche la baist, car je vos di

on the mouth her may-kiss for I to-you say

que de baisier la boche au cuer descent

that from kissing the mouth to-the heart descends

une douçours dont sunt tuit accompli

a sweetness whereby are all fulfilled

li grant desir par qu'il s'entrainment si;

the great desires by which-they each-other-love so

et joie qui cuer esclaire

and joy which heart brightens

ne puet celer læus amis ne taire,

not can conceal loyal friend nor keep-silent

ainz li semble qu'il soit toz alegiez,

rather to-him seems that-he be all relieved

quant de la boche a sa dame est baisiez.

when by the mouth of his lady he-is kissed

— Baudoin, voir! je n'en mentirai ja:

Baldwin truly I not-thereof shall-lie ever

qui sa dame vuet tout avant baisier

who his lady wishes all first to-kiss

en la bouche, de cuer onques n'ama;

on the mouth with heart ever not-loved

qu'ainsi baise on la fille a un bergier.

for-thus kisses one the daughter of a shepherd

J'aing mieuz baisier ses piez et mercïer

I-love better to-kiss her feet and to-thank

que faire si grant outrage.

than to-do so great outrage

L'en doit cuidier que sa dame soit sage,

One ought to-think that his lady be wise

et sens done que granz humilitez

and sense gives that great humility

doit bien valoir a estre mieuz amez.

ought well to-avail to be better loved

— Sire, j'ai bien oï dire pieç'a

Lord I-have well heard say long-since

qu'umilitez fait l'amant avancier,

that-humility makes the-lover advance

et puis qu'Amors par humilité l'a

and since that-Love by humility him-has

tant avancié que rende le loier,

so-much advanced that she-renders the reward

qu'il ait cele que tant ainme et tient chier,

that-he may-have her whom so-much he-loves and holds dear

je di qu'il feroit folage

I say that-he would-do folly

s'en la bouche ne li feïst hommage,

if-on the mouth not to-her he-did homage

car j'oï dire, et vos bien le savez:

for I-heard say and you well it know

qui bouche lait por piez, c'est nicetez.

who mouth leaves for feet this-is silliness

— Baudoin, voir! ice ne di je pas

Baldwin truly this not say I at-all

qu'en sa bouche laist por ses piez avoir,

that-one her mouth may-leave for her feet to-have

mais baisier vuil ses piez eneslepas

but to-kiss I-wish her feet straightway

et puis après sa bouche a mon vouloir

and then after her mouth at my will

et son beau cors, c'on ne tient mie a noir,

and her fair body which-one not holds at-all for black

et ses beaux eulz et sa face

and her fair eyes and her face

et son chief blond, qui le fin or efface.

and her head blond which the fine gold outshines

Mais vos estes bauz et desmesurez,

But you are bold and immoderate

si semble bien que pou d'amour savez.

so it-seems well that little of-love you-know

— Sire, bien est et recreanz et las

Lord well he-is both recreant and weary

qui congié a de baisier et d'avoir

who leave has of kissing and of-having

le douz solaz dou cors lonc, graille et gras

the sweet solace of-the body long slender and plump

et met douçour de bouche en nonchaloir

and puts sweetness of mouth in neglect

por piez baisier; ne fait mie savoir.

for feet to-kiss not does at-all wisdom

Ja Deus ne doint que il face

Ever God not may-grant that he may-do

jamès chose par quoi il ait sa grace,

ever thing by which he may-have her grace

que mil tanz est li baisiers savorez

for thousand times is the kiss savory

de la bouche que cil des piez assez!

of the mouth than that of-the feet much

— Baudoÿn, cil qui tant chace

Baldwin he who so-much hunts

que il ataint, bien se tient a eschache,

that he overtakes well himself holds on stilts

quant a ses piez ne chiet toz enclinez;

when at her feet not falls all bowed

je di qu'il est deables forsennez.

I say that-he is devil mad

— Sire, cil cui Amors lace

Lord he whom Love snares

ne puet muër, quant il a leu n'espace

not can refrain when he has place nor-space

qu'asevir puist toutes ses volentez,

that-to-fulfill he-may all his wills

tost n'ait les piez por la boche obliez.

soon may-have the feet for the mouth forgotten

Phelipe, je vous demant

XXXIX · THE LOVED OR THE SUITOR

Thibaut asks Philip which of two young lovers should rise higher, the one who is loved or the one still suing. Philip says the loved one, free of dismay, does more good; Thibaut says the suitor, who strives for so high a gift. If joy lessened worth, Philip replies, all lovers would be shamed. Auberon and Rodrigue judge.

Phelipe, je vous demant:

Philip I of-you ask

dui ami de cuer vrai

two friends of heart true

sont qui aiment loiaument,

there-are who love loyally

bachelor novel et gai.

young-men new and gay

Li uns a tout son talent,

The one has all his desire

li autres est a l'essai.

the other is at the-trial

Qui doit plus venir avant,

Who ought more to-come forward

li amez ou cil qui prie?

the loved-one or he who prays

— Cuens, sachiez certainement:

Count know certainly

li amez est fors d'esmai

the loved-one is out of-dismay

et pour c'est il plus en grant

and for this-is he more in great(-desire)

de melz valoir, bien le sai;

of better to-avail well it I-know

quant plus a, et plus enprent

when more be-has and more be-undertakes

et plus fet bien sanz delai;

and more does good without delay

ne cil ne puet valoir tant

nor he not can avail so-much

qui qiert merci et aïe.

who seeks mercy and help

— Phelipe, cil qui requiert

Philip he who asks

doit melz valoir par raison,

ought better to-avail by reason

que toute bontez affiert

for all goodness befits

a atendre a si haut don.

to await to so high gift

Cil s'esforce qui conqiert,

He himself-strives who conquers

mès cil qui en est a son

but he who thereof is at top

jamès partir ne se qiert

ever to-part not himself seeks

por nul pris d'avec s'amie.

for any worth from-with his-friend

— Cuens, ja li prierres n'iert

Count ever the suitor not-will-be

qui n'ait duel et soupeçon,

who not-may-have grief and suspicion

et pensee au cuer le fiert

and thought at-the heart him strikes

comment il avra pardon;

how he will-have pardon

mès cil qui a ce q'il qiert

but he who has that which-he seeks

ne pense s'a valoir non:

not thinks except-to avail not

joie son pris li porqiert

joy his worth for-him procures

et sa dame, qui l'en prie.

and his lady who him-thereof prays

— Phelipe, plus doit valoir

Philip more ought to-avail

cil qui veut entendre a li

he who wishes to-attend to her

et qui atent main et soir

and who waits morning and evening

de sa dame avoir merci.

from his lady to-have mercy

Cist pensers li fet avoir

This thought him makes have

le cuer vaillant et hardi.

the heart valiant and bold

Trop fet cil mains son pouoir

Much does he less his power

qui a sa joie aconplie.

who has his joy fulfilled

— Cuens, sachiez vos bien de voir

Count know you well of truth

que ci avez vos failli:

that here have you failed

s'on vaut mains por joie avoir,

if-one is-worth less for joy to-have

dont sunt tout amant honi.

then are all lovers shamed

Se cil qui se doit doloir

If he who himself ought to-grieve

vaut melz de joieus ami,

is-worth better than joyful friend

dont fasons dames savoir

then let-us-make ladies know

par tot c'on nes ainme mie.

through all that-one not-them loves at-all

— Phelipe, je faz savoir

Philip I make know

a Auberon, mon ami,

to Auberon my friend

q'il nos en die le voir,

that-be to-us thereof may-tell the truth

u sa langue soit honie!

or his tongue be shamed

— Cuens, a Rodrigue le Noir

Count to Rodrigue the Black

mant de par vos et li pri

I-send on behalf-of you and him I-pray

q'il nos en mant son voloir

that-be to-us thereof may-send his will

qui a droit de la partie.

who has right of the part

Cuens, je vous part un gieu par aatie

XL · THE LOYAL AND THE FALSE

Guy offers the count a choice: of two knights, one loyal and one false, which bears the worse? Thibaut defends the loyal one, never sad while he waits; the deceiver sleeps in his trickery. Guy says the loyal lover bears the worse, a grief Thibaut has not known; Thibaut, that a lady's smile is Paradise. They name Gilon and Sir Peter.

Cuens, je vous part un gieu par aatie

Count I to-you divide a game by challenge

et si m'en met seur vostre jugement:

and so myself-thereof I-put upon your judgment

dui chevalier aiment chascuns s'amie;

two knights love each bis-friend

li uns des deus aime mult loiaument,

the one of-the two loves very loyally

et li autres guile mult durement.

and the other deceives very greatly

Li quels tret pis, se Deus vous beneïe,

The which bears worse so God you may-bless

ou li loiaus ou cil qui triche et ment

either the loyal or he who cheats and lies

et deçoit?

and deceives

Dites m'en droit,

Tell me-thereof right

sire, tout orendroit

lord all right-now

et si prenez l'un des deus maintenant,

and so take the-one of-the two at-once

et j'avrai l'autre partie

and I-shall-have the-other part

et respondrai avenant,

and I-shall-answer fittingly

selonc voz diz, en chantant.

according-to your sayings in singing

— Mesire Guis, mult me siet la partie,

My-lord Guy much me suits the part

mès du meilleur vous dirai mon senblant;

but of-the better to-you I-shall-tell my opinion

que loiautez n'iert ja par moi perie,

for loyalty not-will-be ever by me perished

oncor la bé a tenir mon vivant.

yet it I-aim to hold my lifetime

Li desloiaus ne bien ne mal ne sent,

The disloyal-one neither good nor ill not feels

qu'endormiz est en sa vil tricherie,

for-asleep he-is in his vile cheating

si ne li chaut li quels chiés voist avant,

so not to-him matters the which heed may-go first

tort ou droit,

wrong or right

quant il deçoit

when he deceives

celi qui tout metroit,

her who all would-put

et cuer et cors, en son comandement.

both heart and body in his command

Dehez ait qui plus s'i fie!

Curse may-have who more himself-there trusts

Qui bien a et bien atent

Who well has and well awaits

ja n'avra son cuer dolent.

ever not-will-have his heart sorrowful

— Cuens, je sai bien auques vostre pensee;

Count I know well somewhat your thought

ne savez pas d'amors jusqu'au doloir:

not you-know at-all of-love up-to-the grieving

toutes dolors sont vers celi rousee

all griefs are toward that-one dew

d'ome qui aime et n'en puet joie avoir;

of-man who loves and not-thereof can joy have

et je pri Dieu q'il vous face savoir

and I pray God that-he you may-make know

quel mal cil sent qui bien aime a celee.

what ill he feels who well loves in secret

Adonc primes savroiz vos bien de voir,

Then first will-know you well of truth

ce m'est vis,

this to-me-is seeming

que mult est pris

that much is taken

cil qui aime et trait pis

he who loves and bears worse

que li autres, qui guile a son pooir

than the other who deceives at his power

et a toute honor quitee.

and has all honor quit

Endroit moi, pour nul avoir

As-for me for any wealth

ne vueil avoir tel voloir.

not I-wish to-have such will

— Messires Guis, touz jorz ert honoree

My-lord Guy all days will-be honored

la bone amor la ou ele est, por voir!

the good love there where it is for truth

Mains trait de mal qui toute a sa pensee

Less bears of ill who all has his thought

en la joie dont muevent tuit savoir.

in the joy whence move all wisdom

La fole gent n'i puënt remanoir,

The foolish folk not-there can remain

ainz dit chascuns que trop atent qui bee.

rather says each that too-much waits who aims

Fins amerres doit touz jorz mentevoir

True lover ought all days to-recall

son cler vis

her bright face

et son douz ris,

and her sweet laugh

qui li est Paradis,

which to-him is Paradise

si ne se doit pas puis de li doloir

so not himself ought at-all then of her to-grieve

dont atent joie honoree.

whence he-awaits joy honored

Qui s'i fet apercevoir,

Who himself-there makes be-perceived

tuit l'en doivent mal vouloir.

all him-thereof ought ill to-wish

— A Gilon pri q'il en die le voir,

To Gilon I-pray that-he thereof may-tell the truth

qui a tort de la meslee

who has wrong of the quarrel

ne qui s'en doit plus doloir.

nor who himself-thereof ought more to-grieve

Die le por pès avoir!

May-be-tell it for peace to-have

— Sor dan Perron m'en met a son voloir,

Upon sir Peter myself-thereof I-put at his will

qui du vis resenble espee,

who of-the face resembles sword

qui nos face remanoir

who us may-make remain

et voir die a son pooir.

and truth may-say at his power

Sire, ne me celez mie

XLI • NIGHT OR DAY

William asks Thibaut whether he would rather lie naked beside his lady by night, unseen, or meet her by day in a meadow to kiss and embrace. Thibaut takes the night and leaves William the meadow. William says he knows nothing of love's pains; Thibaut says the meadow gives only a false smile. Gilon and John judge.

Sire, ne me celez mie

Lord not from-me conceal at-all

li queus vous ert melz a gré:

the which to-you will-be better to liking

s'il avient que vostre amie

if-it happens that your friend

vous ait parlement mandé

to-you may-have meeting sent

nu a nu lez son costé

naked to naked beside her side

par nuit que n'en verroiz mie,

by night that not-thereof you-will-see at-all

ou de jorz vous best et rie

or by days you she-may-kiss and may-laugh

en un biau pré

in a fair meadow

et enbrast, mès ne di mie

and may-embrace but not I-say at-all

q'il i ait de plus parlé.

that-it there may-have of more spoken

— Guillaume, c'est grant folie,

William this-is great folly

quant ensi avez chanté;

when thus you-have sung

li bergiers d'une abeïe

the shepherd of-an abbey

eüst assez melz parlé.

would-have much better spoken

Quant j'avrai lez mon costé

When I-shall-have beside my side

mon cuer, ma dame, m'amie,

my heart my lady my-friend

que j'avrai toute ma vie

whom I-shall-have all my life

desirré,

desired

lors vous quit la druërie

then to-you I-quit the love-dealing

et le parlement dou pré.

and the meeting of-the meadow

— Sire, je di qu'en s'enfance

Lord I say that-in one's-childhood

doit on aprendre d'amors;

ought one to-learn of-love

mès mult faites mal senblance

but much you-make ill semblance

que n'en sentez les dolors.

that not-thereof you-feel the griefs

Pou prisiez esté ne flors,

Little you-prize summer nor flowers

gent cors ne douce acointance,

noble body nor sweet acquaintance

biaus regarz ne contenance

fair looks nor bearing

ne colors.

nor color

En vous n'a point d'abstinence;

In you not-is a-whit of-abstinence

ce deüst prendre uns priors.

this ought to-take a prior

— Guillaume, qui ce commence,

William who this begins

bien le demaine folors,

well him leads folly

et mult a pou conoissance

and very has little understanding

qui n'en va au lit le cors;

who not-thence goes to-the bed (at-)the run

que desouz biaux couvertors

for beneath fair covers

prent on tele seürtaunce

takes one such assurance

dont on s'oste de doutance

whereby one oneself-removes from doubt

et de freors.

and from fears

Tant com je soie en balance,

So-long as I be in balance

n'ert ja mes cuers sanz poors.

not-will-be ever my heart without fears

— Sire, pour riens ne voudroie

Lord for anything not I-would-wish

que nus m'eüst a ce mis.

that anyone me-had to that put

Quant celi qui j'amerioie

When her whom I-would-love

et qui tout m'avroit conquis

and who all me-would-have conquered

puis veoir en mi le vis

I-can see in mid the face

et besier a si grant joie

and kiss with so great joy

et embracier toute voie

and embrace all the-same

a mon devis,

at my choice

sachiez, se l'autre prenoie,

know if the-other I-took

ne seroie pas amis.

not I-would-be at-all friend

— Guillaume, se Deus me voie,

William so God me may-see

folie avez entrepris,

folly you-have undertaken

que, se nue la tenoie,

for if naked her I-held

n'en prendroie Paradis.

not-for-it I-would-take Paradise

Ja por resgarder son vis

Ever for looking-at her face

a paiez ne me tendroie,

for paid not myself I-would-hold

s'autre chose n'en avoie.

if-other thing not-thereof I-had

J'ai melz pris,

I-have better chosen

qu'au partir, s'el vos convoie,

for-at-the parting if-she you escorts

n'en porteroiz c'un faus ris.

not-thence you-will-carry but-a false laugh

— Sire, Amors m'a si surpris

Lord Love me-has so seized

que siens sui, ou que je soie,

that hers I-am where ever I may-be

et sor Gilon m'en metroie

and upon Gilon myself-thereof I-would-put

a son devis,

at his choice

li quels va plus droite voie

the which goes more straight way

ne li quels maintient le pris.

nor the which maintains the prize

— Guillaume, fous et pensis

William fool and pensive

i remaindroiz toute voie;

there you-will-remain all the-same

et cil qui ensi dosnoie

and he who thus courts

est bien chaitis.

is well wretched

Bien vueil que Gilon en croie,

Well I-wish that Gilon thereof one-may-believe

mès sor Jehan m'en sui mis.

but upon John myself-thereof I-am put

Rois Thiebaut, sire, en chantant responnez

XLII · CARRYING HER TO ANOTHER

Baldwin asks King Thibaut whether, to have his lady, he would carry her on his neck to the house of a man she loves or bring that man to lie with her in his own. Thibaut would carry her, since a true lover must attain or die, and never admit his enemy; Baldwin calls that sluggish and would bear her will in his own house.

Rois Thiebaut, sire, en chantant responnez:

King Thibaut lord in singing answer

joene dame tres bele et avenant

young lady very fair and comely

seur toute riens de fin cuer amerez,

above all things with true heart you-will-love

mès n'en porrez avoir vostre talent,

but not-thereof you-will-be-able to-have your desire

s'a vostre col gesir ne la portez

if-on your neck to-lie not her you-carry

chiés un autre qui de li est amez,

at-the-house-of an other who by her is loved

ou se celui ne li fetes venir

or if him not to-her you-make come

en vostre ostel pour avec li gesir.

into your lodging for with her to-lie

— Baudoin, voir! mauvès gieu me partez!

Baldwin truly bad game to-me you-divide

Mès, por avoir ma dame, a son talent

But for to-have my lady at her desire

la porterai, puis que il est ses grez,

her I-shall-carry since that it is her will

entre mes braz, besant et acolant.

between my arms kissing and embracing

Ja ne crerrai tels soit sa volentez,

Ever not I-shall-believe such be her will

se me juroit cent foiz sainz Barnabez,

if to-me swore hundred times saint Barnabas

après tel bien que me vueille traïr.

after such good that me she-may-wish to-betray

Fins amis doit ou ataindre ou morir.

True friend ought either to-attain or to-die

— Par Dieu, sire, trop avez meschoisi,

By God lord too-much you-have ill-chosen

quant vous de li voulez saisir celui

when you of her wish to-invest him

qui ele tient pour son loial ami.

whom she holds for her loyal friend

Ne la verrez jamès jour sanz ennui,

Not her you-will-see ever day without trouble

puis que celui en avrïez saisi.

since that him thereof you-would-have invested

Trop a le cuer mauvès et endormi

Too-much has the heart evil and asleep

qui s'amie porte autrui a son col.

who his-friend carries (to-)another on his neck

J'aim melz sousfrir qu'en m'en tenist por fol.

I-love better to-suffer than-one me-thereof held for fool

— Baudoin, cil a bien d'amors menti

Baldwin he has well of-love lied

qui sa dame veut lessier a nului.

who his lady wishes to-leave to anyone

S'en m'en devoit detrenchier tout par mi,

If-one me-thereof should cut-up all through mid

ne la puis je guerpier, dès que siens sui.

not her can I forsake since that hers I-am

Ainz me plest tant l'atente de merci

Rather me pleases so-much the-waiting of mercy

que le vilain enuieus en oubli,

that the churl envious thereby I-forget

que je mult haz, foi que je doi saint Pol;

whom I much hate faith that I owe saint Paul

mès tot le mont ne pris sanz li un chol.

but all the world not I-prize without her a cabbage

— Certes, sire, de cuer onques n'ama

Certainly lord with heart ever not-loved

qui s'amie veut chiés autrui lessier;

who his-friend wishes at-the-house-of another to-leave

et qui de ce a droit jugier voudra,
and who of this at right to-judge will-wish
 je doi servir ce qu'ele aime et tient chier,
I ought to-serve that which-she loves and holds dear
 tout m'ennuit il ce que ele en fera.
all me-may-vex it that which she thereof will-do
 Melz vueil sousfrir de ce qu'ele amera
Rather I-wish to-suffer of this that-she will-love
 qu'en mon ostel en face son voloir
that-in my lodging thereof she-may-do her will
 qu'il fust saisiz et j'amasse en espoir.
than-he were invested and I-loved in hope

— Baudoin, voir! ja chiés moi n'entrera
Baldwin truly ever at-the-house-of me not-will-enter
 mes anemis por ma dame baillier,
my enemy for my lady to-hand-over
 mès ma dame la ou il li plera
but my lady there where it to-her will-please
 vueil je porter et servir sanz dangier;
wish I to-carry and to-serve without resistance
 ne ja por riens mes cuers n'en retrera.
nor ever for anything my heart not-thence will-withdraw
 S'ele me dit: «Biaus amis, je vois la»,
If-she to-me says Fair friend I go there
 c'est faintise, je nel cuit pas de voir;
this-is pretense I not-it think at-all of truth
 qu'ele le dit por moi fere doloir.
for-she it says for me to-make grieve

Sire, loëz moi a choisir
XLIII · SEEING OR TOUCHING

Raoul asks whether it is better to embrace one's lady in the dark without seeing or speaking, or to see and speak with her always without touching. Thibaut chooses sight and speech. Raoul mocks his stuffed belly, Thibaut Raoul's crutch. Thibaut ends courteously: seeing, hearing, and sweet words are better than groping in the dark.

Sire, loëz moi a choisir

Lord advise me to choose

d'un gieu! Li quels doit melz valoir:

of-a game The which ought better to-avail

ou souvent s'amie sentir,

either often his-friend to-feel

besier, acoler, sanz veoir,

to-kiss to-embrace without seeing

sanz parler et sanz plus avoir

without speaking and without more to-have

a touz jorz mès de ses amors,

for all days more of her love

ou parler et veoir touz jorz,

or to-speak and to-see all days

sanz sentir et sanz atouchier?

without feeling and without touching

Se l'un en couvient a lessier,

If the-one thereof it-behooves to leave

dites li quels est mains joianz

say the which is less joyful

et du quel la joie est plus granz.

and of-the which the joy is more great

— Raoul, je vous di sanz mentir

Raoul I to-you say without lying

que il ne puet nul bien avoir

that he not can any good have

en prendre ce dont a morir

in taking that whereof to die

couvient ami par estouvoir;

behooves friend by necessity

mès, quant il ne puet remanoir,

but since it not can remain

el veoir a plus de secors

in-the seeing there-is more of succor

et el parler qui est d'amors.

and in-the speaking which is of-love

Si bel ris et si solacier

Her fair laughs and her solacing

feront ma dolor alegier,

will-make my grief lighten

que je ne vueil estre senblanz

for I not wish to-be resembling

Meremellin ne ses paranz.

Meremellin nor his kin

— Sire, vous avez mult bien pris

Lord you have very well chosen

de vostre amie regarder,

of your friend to-look-at

que voz ventres gros et farsis

for your belly fat and stuffed

ne porroit sousfrir l'adeser,

not could suffer the-touching

et por ce amez vous le parler

and for this love you the speaking

que voz solaz n'est preus aillors.

for your solace not-is worth elsewhere

Ensi vait des faus pledeors,

Thus it-goes of-the false pleaders

dont li senblant sont mençongier.

whereof the semblances are lying

Mès d'acoler et de besier

But of-embracing and of kissing

fet bone dame a son ami

makes good lady to her friend

cuer large, loial et hardi.

heart generous loyal and bold

— Raoul, du regart m'est a vis

Raoul of-the looking to-me-is to seeming

q'il doit plus ami conforter

that-it ought more friend to-comfort

qu'estre de nuiz lez li pensis

than-to-be by nights beside her pensive

la ou l'en ne puet alumer,

there where one not can light

veoir, oïr, joie mener;

see hear joy lead

l'en n'i doit avoir fors que plors.

one not-there ought to-have except that tears

Et s'ele met sa main aillors,

And if-she puts her hand elsewhere

quant vous cuidera enbracier,

when you she-will-think to-embrace

se la potence puet baillier,

if the crutch she-can handle

plus avra duel, je vous aï,

more she-will-have grief I to-you affirm

que de mon gros ventre farsî.

than of my fat belly stuffed

— Rois, vous resenblez le gaignon

King you resemble the cur

qui se revenge en abaïant;

which itself avenges in barking

por ce avez mors en mon baston

for this you-have bitten on my staff

de quoi je m'aloïe apuiant.

on which I myself-went leaning

Mès pris avez a loi d'enfant;

But chosen you-have in fashion of-child

car il n'est si granz tenebrors,

for there not-is so great darkness

se je pouoïe les douçors

if I could the sweetnesses

de ma douce dame enbracier,

of my sweet lady embrace

qui ja me poïst ennuier;

which ever me could vex

et si me puis melz delivrer

and so myself I-can better deliver

de mon bordon que vous d'enfler.

of my staff than you of-swelling

— Raoul, j'aing melz nostre tençon

Raoul I-love better our dispute

a lessier tout cortoisement

to leave all courteously

que dire mal, dont li felon

than to-say ill whereof the felons

riroient et vilaine gent,

would-laugh and churlish folk

et nous en serions dolent;

and we thereof would-be sorrowful

mès mult vaudroit melz en amors

but much would-avail better in love

veoir et oïr qu'estre aillors,

to-see and to-hear than-to-be elsewhere

rire, parler et solacier

to-laugh to-speak and to-solace

douz moz, qui font cuer tatouillier,

sweet words which make heart flutter

et resjoïr et saouler

and rejoice and be-sated

que en tenebres tastoner.

than in darkness to-grope

Bons rois Thiebaut, sire, conseiliez moi

XLIV · THE CLERK'S QUESTION

A clerk asks King Thibaut whether true lovers suffer in silence or tell their pain. Thibaut advises service, covert words, and signs; the clerk answers that a true lover cannot hide his pain. Thibaut says a true lover dares not speak before her, and blames the clerk's loins. Scorned, he bids the clerk beg mercy at her feet.

Bons rois Thiebaut, sire, conseiliez moi!

Good king Thibaut lord counsel me

Une dame ai, mult a lonc tens, amee

A lady I-have very it-is long time loved

de cuer loial, sachiez, en bone foi,

with heart loyal know in good faith

mès ne li os descouvrir ma pensee,

but not to-her I-dare to-uncover my thought

tel poor ai que ne m'i soit veece

such fear I-have that — to-me-there be refused

de li l'amors qui me destraint souvent.

by her the-love which me constrains often

Dites, sire, qu'en font li fin amant?

Say lord what-thereof do the true lovers

Suesfrent il tuit ausi si grant dolor,

Suffer they all also so great grief

ou il dient le mal q'il ont d'amor?

or they tell the ill that-they have of-love

— Clers, je vous lo et pri que teigniez quoi;

Clerk I you advise and pray that you-keep quiet

ne dites pas pour quoi ele vous hee,

not say at-all for which she you may-hate

mès servez tant et fetes le, pour quoi

but serve so-much and do it for which

qu'ele sache ce que vostre cuers bee;

that-she may-know that which your heart aims

que par servir est mainte amor donee.

for by serving is many-a love given

Par moz couverz et par cointe senblant

By words covert and by elegant semblance

et par signes doit on moustrer avant,

and by signs ought one to-show forward

qu'ele sache le mal et la dolor

that-she may-know the ill and the grief

que fins amanz tret pour li nuit et jor.

which true lover bears for her night and day

— Par Dieu, sire, tel conseil me donez

By God lord such counsel me you-give

ou ma mort gist et ma grant mesestance,

where my death lies and my great distress

que mot couvert et signe, ce savez,

for word covert and sign this you-know

et tel senblant viennent de decevance.

and such semblance come from deceit

Assez trueve on qui set fere senblance

Plenty finds one who knows-how to-make semblance

de bien amer sanz grant dolor sousfrir;

of well loving without great grief to-suffer

mès fins amis ne puet son mal couvrir

but true friend not can his ill cover

q'il ne die ce dont au cuer souvient

that-he not may-say that whereof at-the heart it-remembers

par l'angoisse du mal que il soustient.

by the-anguish of-the ill that he sustains

— Clers, je voi bien que haster vous voulez,

Clerk I see well that to-hasten yourself you-wish

et bien est droiz, qu'en clerc n'a abstinence;

and well is right that-in clerk not-is abstinence

mès s'amiez autant con dit avez,

but if-you-loved as-much as said you-have

nel diriez pour quanq'il a en France;

not-it you-would-say for whatever-there is in France

car, quant on est devant li en presence,

for when one is before her in presence

adonc viennent trembler et grief souspir,

then come trembling and grievous sighs

et li cuers faut, quant doit la bouche ouvrir;

and the heart fails when ought the mouth to-open

n'est pas amis qui sa dame ne crient,

not-is at-all friend who his lady not fears

car la crieme de la grant amor vient.

for the fear from the great love comes

— Par Dieu, sire, po sentez, ce m'est vis,

By God lord little you-feel this to-me-is seeming

la grant dolor, le mal et le juïse

the great grief the ill and the judgment

que nuit et jor tret fins, loiaus amis;

which night and day bears true loyal friend

ne savez pas comment Amors justise

not you-know at-all how Love rules

ce que sien est et en sa conmandise.

that which hers is and in her command

Je sai de voir que, se le seüssiez,

I know of truth that if it you-knew

ja du dire ne me repreïssiez;

ever of-the saying not me you-would-reprove

car pour ce fet Amors ami doloir

for for this makes Love friend grieve

que de son mal regehisce le voir.

that of his ill be-may-confess the truth

— Clers, je voi bien que tant estes espris

Clerk I see well that so-much you-are kindled

que la corone est bien en vous assise.

that the tonsure is well on you set

Quant du prier par estes si hastis,

Since of-the praying much you-are so hasty

ce fait li maus des rains qui vous atise;

this does the ill of-the loins which you stirs

itels amors n'est pas el cuer assise.

such love not-is at-all in-the heart set

Dites li tost, quant si vous angoissiez;

Tell her soon since so you anguish

ou tost l'aiez, ou vous tost la lessiez,

either soon her-may-you-have or you soon her may-leave

car bien puet on a voz diz parveoir

for well can one by your sayings perceive

qu'aillors voulez changier vostre voloir.

that-elsewhere you-wish to-change your will

— Par Dieu, sire, j'aing de cuer sanz faintise,

By God lord I-love with heart without pretense

mès vos guilez Amors. Pour ce cuidiez

but you deceive Love For this you-think

que je soie tout ausi tost changiez

that I may-be all as soon changed

con vous estes, qui mis en nonchaloir

as you are who put in neglect

avez Amors et ceus de son pooir.

have Love and those of her power

— Clers, puis qu'a moi avez tel guerre enprise

Clerk since that-with me you-have such war undertaken

et vous de riens mon conseil ne prisiez,

and you in anything my counsel not prize

criez merci, mains jointes, a ses piez

cry mercy hands joined at her feet

et li dites tout le vostre voloir;

and to-her tell all the your will

el vous crerra, et ce sera bien voir.

she you will-believe and this will-be well true

Girart d'Amiens, Amours, qui a pouoir

XLV · GIRART OF AMIENS

Thibaut sets Girart of Amiens a choice: to have his lady at once and be hated, or be loved while another has her too. Girart takes the lady: no true friend lets another share her. Thibaut calls that disloyal; Girart answers that nothing is worse than a rival having his will of her, and curses any man who allows it.

Girart d'Amiens, Amours, qui a pouoir

Girart of-Amiens Love who has power

sor toutes gens, vous et un autre esprendre

above all folk you and an other kindle

fait de son feu — dont mieus devez valoir —

makes with her fire whereby better you-ought to-avail

d'une dame ou il n'a que reprendre.

for-a lady in-whom there not-is what to-reprove

Se vous voulez, tantost, sans plus atendre,

If you wish at-once without more waiting

ou vous plaira avecques vous l'avrez,

where you it-will-please with you her-you-will-have

mais bien sachiez: de li haïs serez;

but well know by her hated you-will-be

ou, en tel point que je vos di, l'avra

or in such point as I to-you tell her-will-have

autre avec lui, et el vous ainmera.

another with him and she you will-love

— Roy de Navarre, il doit bien mescheoir

King of Navarre it ought well to-befall-ill

a tout honme qui le bien n'osse prendre,

to every man who the good not-dares to-take

puis qu'il le puet, sans lui mesfaire, avoir;

since that-he it can without himself to-misdo have

car nus amis ne porroit tant mesprendre

for any friend not could so-much transgress

que de sousfrir, s'il le pouoit desfandre,

as of allowing if-he it could forbid

c'autres fust ja de sa dame privés;

that-another were ever with his lady intimate

par coi le bien qui m'iert abandonnez

by which the good which to-me-will-be abandoned

par tel eür ne refuserai ja,

by such fortune not I-shall-refuse ever

n'autres, mon gré, nul jour n'i partira.

nor-another my will any day not-there will-share

— Girart d'Amiens, huimais puis percevoir

Girart of-Amiens now I-can perceive

que vous le cuer avez et fol et tendre

that you the heart have both foolish and tender

a un tel fait desloial conscevoir,

to a such deed disloyal to-conceive

si vueil que vous, pour la folie entendre,

so I-wish that you for the folly to-understand

sachiez qu'amis n'est pas chilz qui engendre

know that-friend not-is at-all he who engenders

riens dont il soit haïs ne disfamés

anything whereby he be hated nor defamed

de la dame dont il seroit amez,

by the lady by-whom he would-be loved

s'il li plessoit, et dont haïs sera,

if-it to-her pleased and by-whom hated he-will-be

quant tout premiers, son gré, la decevra.

when all first his will her he-will-deceive

— Pour pis que mort ne rage recevoir,

For worse than death or madness to-receive

sire, ne puis connoistre ne apprendre

lord not I-can know nor learn

qu'il m'en peüst nesun bien escheoir.

that-it to-me-thereof could any good befall

Comment pourroie a plus grant douleur tendre

How I-could to more great grief tend

que de lessier tant ma dame souprendre

than of letting so-much my lady be-seized

qu'autres eüst de li ses volentez?

that-another had of her his wills

Plus ne pourroie estre desesperés,

More not I-could be despairing

s'elle me het. Amours pourchacera

if-she me hates Love will-procure

qu'amés en ier si tost que li plera.

that-loved thereof I-shall-be as soon as to-her it-will-please

— Girart d'Amiens, quant plus vous voy mouvoir

Girart of-Amiens when more you I-see move

d'ensi parler, plus m'est vostre sens mendre.

of-thus speaking more to-me-is your sense less

Nus hons n'entant sa dame a decevoir

Any man not-intends his lady to deceive

ne deserve que l'en le doie pendre.

not may-deserve that one him ought to-hang

Se mes eürs fait ma dame destendre

If my fortune makes my lady unbend

a un tel fait, n'en vueil estre encombrés;

to a such deed not-thereof I-wish to-be encumbered

j'ain mieus qu'autre que moy en soit blasmés.

I-love better that-another than me thereof be blamed

S'amer me vueut, plus me profitera;

If-to-love me she-wishes more me it-will-profit

c'uns tieulz deduiz jamais ne vous vaudra.

than-a such delight ever — you will-avail

— Sire, ne puis en pensee mannoir

Lord not I-can in thought abide

c'uns teus profits se puist en bien estandre

that-a such profit itself can into good extend

dont li amis cherra en desespoir,

whereby the friend will-fall into despair

qu'il n'osse en riens qu'il parçoive contendre;

that-he not-dares in anything that-he may-perceive to-contend

par quoi ja jour ne me quier vaincu rendre,

by which ever day not myself I-seek vanquished to-render

que mieus ne vueille ensi joïr assez

that better not I-may-wish thus to-enjoy plenty

de celle a cui je sui touz que de lés

of her to whom I am wholly than from beside

reveingne autres qui en esplotera.

may-come-back another who thereof will-profit

Honnis soit cilz qui ce otrïera!

Shamed be he who this will-grant

DEBATES

Phelipe, je vous demant

XLVI · WHERE LOVE HAS GONE

Thibaut asks Philip where love has gone, since no one courts any more. Philip blames the lovers, the slanderers, the old women, and bad husbands, but not the ladies; Thibaut blames the ladies' disdain, which drives knights to despair. Philip answers that lovers want their joy too soon and that ladies make the world worth something.

Phelipe, je vous demant

Philip I of-you ask

que est devenue amors:

what is become love

en cest país ne aillors

in this country or elsewhere

ne fet nus d'amer senblant.

not makes anyone of-loving semblance

Trop me merveil durement

Exceedingly myself I-marvel greatly

por qu'ele demore ensi,

for why-she delays thus

s'ai oï

so-I-have heard

des dames grant plaint,

about-the ladies great lament

et chevalier en font maint.

and knights thereof make many-a-one

— Sire, sachiez voirement

Lord know truly

qu'amors faut par ameors,

that-love fails through lovers

s'en remaint joie et valors

so-thereby ceases joy and worth

et faillent tornoiement,

and fail tournaments

si ont corpes mesdisant,

so have blame slanderers

vielles et mauvès mari;

old-women and bad husbands

n'est failli

not-is failed

par dames qu'en aint,

by ladies that-one may-love

mès es chevaliers remaint.

but in-the knights it-remains

— Phelipe, bien m'i acort

Philip well myself-there I-agree

q'il remaint es chevaliers,

that-it remains in-the knights

mès tout ce fet li dangiers

but all this does the resistance

que dames mainent tant fort.

which ladies lead so strongly

Quant il sont jusqu'a la mort,

When they are up-to the death

lors lor metent achesons.

then to-them they-put pretexts

Bon respons

Good answer

n'i puënt trouver,

not-there they-can find

s'en font maint desesperer.

so-therby make many-a-one despair

— Sire, il s'en partent a tort

Lord they themselves-thence part at wrong

et s'en plaignent volentiers.

and themselves-thereof complain willingly

Plus lor plest li aaisiers

More them pleases the easing

qu'atendre d'Amors confort,

than-to-await from-Love comfort

n'aiment valor ne deport,

not-they-love worth nor pleasure

ainz tolent et font mesons;

rather they-take and make houses

n'est resons:

not-is reason

cil qui veut amer

he who wishes to-love

se doit du tout amender.

himself ought of-the all to-amend

— Phelipe, legierement

Philip lightly

s'en partent qui poor ont,

themselves-thence part who fear have

que les dames trop leur sont

that the ladies too-much to-them are

de sauvage acointement.

of wild acquaintance

Dame doit atrere lent

Lady ought to-attract slow

por melz fere a li baer,

for better to-make to her aspire

que d'amer

that of-loving

doit dame savoir

ought lady to-know

por plus faire ami valoir.

for more to-make friend avail

— Sire, trop hastivement

Lord too hastily

vuelent mès par tout le mont

wish now through all the world

cil qui amoureux se font

those who amorous themselves make

avoir joie entierement,

to-have joy entirely

mès dames a lor talent

but ladies at their desire

doivent lor amis mener.

ought their friends to-lead

Endurer

To-endure

doit on lor vouloir

ought one their will

sanz plaindre et sanz decevoir.

without complaining and without deceiving

— Phelipe, ami voir

Philip friends true

n'en sevent pas le pooir.

not-thereof know at-all the power

— Sire, tout pour voir,

Lord all for truth

dames font le mont valoir.

ladies make the world avail

Dame, merci! Une riens vos demant

XLVII · WHEN WE DIE

Thibaut asks his lady what will become of Love when they die, since she has such worth and he loves so much. She answers that Love will not perish for any death, and teases that he is not yet thin. He says his joy restored his fat; she tells him to be silent. If she had to love, she has a heart that would not feign.

Dame, merci! Une riens vos demant,

Lady mercy A thing of-you I-ask

dites m'en voir, se Deus vous beneïe:

tell me-thereof truth so God you may-bless

quant vous morrez et je — mès c'iert avant,

when you will-die and I but it-will-be before

car après vous ne vivroie je mie —,

for after you not would-live I at-all

que devendra Amors, cele esbahie,

what will-become Love that bewildered-one

que tant avez sens, valor, et j'aim tant

for so-much you-have sense worth and I-love so-much

que je croi bien qu'après nous ert faillie?

that I believe well that-after us she-will-be failed

— Par Dieu, Thiebaut, selonc mon escient

By God Thibaut according-to my knowledge

Amors n'iert ja pour nule mort perie,

Love not-will-be ever for any death perished

ne je ne sai se vous m'alez guilant,

nor I not know if you me-go deceiving

que trop megres n'estes oncore mie.

for too thin not-you-are yet at-all

Quant nos morrons (Deus nos dont bone vie!),

When we shall-die God to-us may-grant good life

bien croi qu'Amors damage i avra grant,

well I-believe that-Love harm there will-have great

mès toz jorz ert valors d'amors conplie.

but all days will-be worth of-love fulfilled

— Dame, certes ne devez pas cuidier,

Lady certainly not you-ought at-all to-think

mès bien savoir que trop vous ai amee.

but well to-know that too-much you I-have loved

De la joie m'en aim melz et tieng chier

From the joy myself-thereof I-love better and hold dear

et pour ce ai ma graisse recouvree

and for this I-have my fat recovered

qu'ainz Deus ne fist si tres bele riens nee

that-ever God not made so very fair thing born

com vos, mès ce me fet trop esmaier,

as you but this me makes too-much be-dismayed

quant nos morrons, qu'Amors sera finee.

when we shall-die that-Love will-be ended

— Thiebaut, tesiez! Nus ne doit conmenier

Thibaut be-silent Anyone not ought to-begin

reson qui soit de touz droiz desevree.

argument which may-be from all rights separated

Vous le dites por moi amoloier

You it say for me to-soften

encontre vous, que tant avez guilee.

toward you whom so-much you-have deceived

Je ne di pas, certes, que je vos hee,

I not say at-all certainly that I you may-bate

mès, se d'Amors me couvenoit jugier,

but if of-Love me it-behooved to-judge

ele seroit servie et honoree.

she would-be served and honored

— Dame, Deus doint que vos jugiez a droit

Lady God may-grant that you may-judge at right

et conoissiez les maus qui me font plaindre,

and may-know the ills which me make lament

que je sai bien, quels li jugemenz soit,

for I know well whatever the judgment be

se je i muir, Amors couvient a faindre,

if I there die Love it-behooves to falter

se vous, dame, ne la fetes remaindre

if you lady not her make remain

dedenz son lieu arriers ou ele estoit;

within her place back where she was

q'a vostre sens ne porroit nus ataindre.

for-to your sense not could anyone attain

— Thiebaut, s'Amors vous fet pour moi destraindre,

Thibaut if-Love you makes for me be-constrained

ne vous griet pas, que, s'amer m'estouvoit,

not you may-grieve at-all for if-to-love me-behooved

j'ai bien un cuer qui ne se savroit faindre.

I-have well a heart which not itself would-know-how to-feign

L'autre nuit en mon dormant

XLVIII · LOVE IN A DREAM

In a dream Love comes to him and reproaches his changing heart. He answers that her false semblance has killed him and that he means to leave her. Love replies that he who changes his thought for pain never has his will, and promises to reward him. Won over, he puts his body and life in her will and asks her mercy.

L'autre nuit en mon dormant

The-other night in my sleeping

fui en grant dotance

I-was in great doubt

d'un gieu parti en chantant

of-a game divided in singing

et en grant balance,

and in great balance

quant Amors me vint devant,

when Love to-me came before

qui me dist: «Que vas querant?

who to-me said What thou-goest seeking

Trop as corage mouvant;

Too-much thou-hast heart moving

ce te muet d'enfance.»

this to-thee moves from-childishness

Lors tressailli durement;

Then I-started hard

en grant esmaiance

in great dismay

dis li: «Dame, se g'entent

I-said to-her Lady if I-attend

a ma grant pesance,

to my great heaviness

c'est par vostre faus senblant,

this-is by your false semblance

qui m'a mort si cruëment.

whiche me-has killed so cruelly

Partir vueil de vostre gent

To-part I-wish from your folk

par vostre esloignance.

by your estrangement

— Cil n'avra ja son voloir

He not-will-have ever his will

a longue duree

at long duration

qui por mal ne paine avoir

who for ill or pain having

change sa pensee;

changes his thought

oncor t'en puès pou doloir.

yet thyself-thereof thou-canst little grieve

Mult doit avoir le cuer noir

Much ought to-have the heart black

qui por fere son pouoir

who for doing his power

pert sa desirree.

loses his desired-one

— Trop savez bien decevoir,

Too-much you-know well to-deceive

nus n'i a duree.

anyone not-there has duration

Il n'est pas en son pooir,

He not-is at-all in his power

cil qui a vos bee.

he who to you aims

Por ce m'estuet remanoir,

For this me-bebooves to-remain

ne truis en vos fors espoir;

not I-find in you except hope

ne bonté ne puis avoir,

nor goodness not I-can have

s'el n'est conparee.

if-it not-is paid-for

— N'aies si le cuer desvé,

Not-have so the heart crazed

mès en moi te fie!

but in me thyself trust

Qui est en ma poosté

Who is in my power

plus mauvès n'est mie,

more wretched not-is at-all

ainz a cent tanz plus bonté,

rather has hundred times more goodness

plus valor, plus largeté.

more worth more generosity

Tost t'avrai guerredoné;

Soon thee-I-shall-have rewarded

met t'en ma baillie!

put thyself-into my keeping

— Tant m'avez biau sarmoné

So-much me-you-have fairly preached

que ne lerai mie

that not I-shall-leave at-all

que ne face vostre gré.

that — I-may-do your will

Mon cors et ma vie

My body and my life

met en vostre volenté,

I-put in your will

mau gré ceus qui m'ont mellé

ill will (of-)those who me-have embroiled

a vous, qui j'ai creanté

with you to-whom I-have promised

a estre en aïe.

to be in help

Or vos pri merci, pour Dé;

Now you I-pray mercy for God

que cil qui tant a amé

that he who so-much has loved

a vous s'umelie.»

to you himself-humbles

Par Dieu, sire de Champagne et de Brie

XLIX · A PARTING FROM LOVE

Philip asks the lord of Champagne why he no longer sings in summer. Thibaut has left Love, who never advanced him. To Philip all honor comes from Love, and one who served her ill does not shame her name. Thibaut calls her a proven cheat; Philip will serve her loyally, and Thibaut warns a later season will teach him.

Par Dieu, sire de Champagne et de Brie,

By God lord of Champagne and of Brie

je me sui mult d'une riens merveilliez,

I myself am much at-a thing amazed

que je voi bien que vous ne chantez mie,

for I see well that you not sing at-all

ainz estes pou jolis et renvoisiez;

rather you-are little merry and gay

car me dites pour quoi vous le lessiez.

now to-me tell for what you it leave

Estez revient et la sesons florie,

Summer returns and the season flowered

que tous li monz doit estre bauz et liez;

when all the world ought to-be blithe and glad

et bien sachiez que mains en vaudriez,

and well know that less thereby you-would-avail

s'Amors s'estoit si tost de vos partie.

if-Love herself-were so soon from you parted

— Phelipe, n'ai de chançon fere envie,

Philip not-I-have of song to-make desire

que d'Amors sui partiz et esloigniez.

for from-Love I-am parted and removed

Je l'ai lonc tens honoree et servie,

I her-have long time honored and served

n'onques par li ne fui jor avanciez,

nor-ever by her not I-was day advanced

si ne vueil plus de li estre chargiez.

so not I-wish more with her to-be burdened

Par tout la voi et remese et faillie,

Through all her I-see both ceased and failed

mult est ses nons et ses pris abessiez.

much is her name and her worth lowered

Du tout m'en part, et vous si feriez,

Of-the all myself-thence I-part and you so would-do

se ne volez demorer en folie.

if not you-wish to-remain in folly

— Sire, a grant tort m'avez Amors blasmee

Lord with great wrong to-me-you-have Love blamed

et du partir faus conseil me donez.

and of-the parting false counsel to-me you-give

S'Amors avez mal servie et guilee,

If-Love you-have ill served and deceived

pour ce n'est pas ses nons deshonorez,

for this not-is at-all her name dishonored

que d'Amors vient toute honor et bontez.

for from-Love comes all honor and goodness

Qui bien la sert en fez et en pensee

Who well her serves in deeds and in thought

ne puet faillir ne remaigne honorez,

not can fail — he-may-remain honored

que sanz Amors n'est nus a droit loëz,

for without Love not-is anyone at right praised

et cil puet bien po valoir qui n'i bee.

and he can well little avail who not-there aims

— Phelipe, Amors est chose forsenee,

Philip Love is thing mad

ne nus ne doit sieurre ses volentez.

nor anyone not ought to-follow her wills

Tant la conois tricheresse prouee

So-much her I-know cheat proven

que je pris pou li et ses faussetez,

that I prize little her and her falsehoods

ainz me sui si de li servir lassez

rather myself I-am so of her serving wearied

que j'en hé ceus par qui ele est loëe.

that I-thereof hate those by whom she is praised

Pour ce vous pri que jamès n'en chantez,

For this you I-pray that ever not-thereof you-sing

que vous serez touz jorz par li guilez,

for you will-be all days by her deceived

si com je sui, qui ainz n'en oi soudee.

so as I am who ever not-thereof had wage

— Sire, trop est Amors et douce et chiere,

Lord exceedingly is Love both sweet and dear

et trop m'en plect li servirs et li nons.

and exceedingly me-thereof pleases the service and the name

Servirai la, sanz moi retrere arriere,

I-shall-serve her without myself drawing back

d'uevre et de cuer et de fere chançons.

with-work and with heart and with making songs

Quant li plera, s'en avrai guerredons,

When to-her it-will-please so-thereof I-shall-have guerdons

que je la sai loial et droituriere.

for I her know loyal and righteous

S'ele tant est blasmee des felons,

If-she so-much is blamed by-the felons

des desloiaus qui qierent achesons,

by-the disloyal who seek pretexts

et mult m'est bel, quant il la truevent fiere.

and much to-me-is fair when they her find fierce

— Phelipe, Amors est fausse et trop legiere;

Philip Love is false and too light

oncor diroiz que voire est ma resons.

yet you-will-say that true is my argument

Quant vos savroiz conoistre sa maniere,

When you will-know-how to-know her manner

ne tendroiz pas les partiz a bricons.

not you-will-hold at-all the parted-ones for fools

Trop conois bien Amors et ses façons:

Too-much I-know well Love and her fashions

a l'encontrer vos iert de bele chiere,

at the-meeting to-you she-will-be of fair cheer

puis troveroiz guiles et traïsons;

then you-will-find deceits and treasons

et en la fin ne vaut noient li dons:

and in the end not is-worth anything the gift

trop la covient conquerre a grant proiere.

too-much her it-behooves to-conquer with great prayer

— Sire, dehet qui crerra voz sermons!

Lord curse who will-believe your sermons

A fine Amor m'otroi, qui m'a semons,

To true Love myself-I-grant who me-has summoned

et maintendrai ma pensee plenièr.

and I-shall-maintain my thought full

— Phelipe, oncor vendra autre sesons.

Philip yet will-come other season

Ains qu'en aiez conquis nul bon respons,

Before that-thereof you-may-have won any good answer

me diroiz vous qu'Amors n'est pas entiere.

to-me will-say you that-Love not-is at-all whole

Robert, veez de Perron

L · THE DISTANT BARON

Thibaut tells Robert that Peter means to marry his bright-faced daughter to a distant baron; whoever lets her go is worth not a button. Robert agrees she should not go for land or wealth. Thibaut would rather die than lose her, and longs for one night beside her. Now it is done, and he fears he will die.

Robert, veez de Perron

Robert see of Peter

conme il a le cuer felon,

how he has the heart cruel

qu'a un si loigtaing baron

for-to a so distant baron

veut sa fille marier,

wishes his daughter to-marry

qui a si clere façon

who has so bright fashion

que l'en s'i porroit mirer!

that one oneself-there could mirror

Hé, Deus! con ci faut reson!

Ah God how here fails reason

Veez du vis de fuiron!

See of-the face of ferret

Gente de toute façon,

Noble of all fashion

or vos en voi je mener.

now you thence see I led

Robert, ne vaut un bouton

Robert not is-worth a button

qui si l'en lera aler.

who so her-thence will-let go

— Sire, vos doit on blasmer,

Lord you ought one to-blame

s'ensi l'en lessiez mener.

if-thus her-thence you-let be-led

Ce que tant poëz amer

That which so-much you-can love

et ou avez tel pouoir

and where you-have such power

n'en devez lessier aler

not-thence you-ought to-let go

pour terre ne pour avoir.

for land nor for wealth

Mult par avroiz le cuer noir,

Very much you-will-have the heart black

quant vous en savroiz le voir.

when you thereof will-know the truth

N'avroiz force ne pouoir

Not-you-will-have force nor power

de li veoir ne sentir;

of her to-see nor to-feel

et sachiez: si bel avoir

and know so fair wealth

doit on près de lui tenir.

ought one near to oneself to-keep

— Robert, je vueil melz morir,

Robert I wish rather to-die

s'il li venoit a plesir,

if-it to-her came to pleasure

que l'en lessasse partir

than her-thence I-let part

pour trestoute ma conté.

for all my county

Hé, las! qui porroit gesir

Ah alas who could lie

une nuit lez son costé!

one night beside her side

— Sire, Deus vous dont joïr

Lord God to-you may-grant to-enjoy

de ce qu'avez desirré!

of that which-you-have desired

— Robert, je m'en crien morir,

Robert I myself-thereof fear to-die

quant il l'ont fet, mau gré Dé!

since they it-have done ill will (of-)God

PASTOURELLES

J'aloie l'autrier errant

LI · ROBEÇON

Riding alone and composing, he hears a girl of fifteen by a bush. She seizes her staff and tells him to flee, since she has chosen Robeçon. He sits beside her and asks for a kind look; she weeps, then laughs. He sets her before him on his horse, but two shepherds come shouting through the wheat, and he leaves her and flees.

J'aloie l'autrier errant

I-went the-other-day wandering

sanz compaignon

without companion

seur mon palefroi, pensant

upon my palfrey thinking

a fere une chançon,

to make a song

quant j'oï, ne sai comment,

when I-heard not I-know how

lez un buisson

beside a bush

la voiz du plus bel enfant

the voice of-the most fair child

c'onques veïst nus hon;

that-ever saw any man

et n'estoit pas enfes si

and not-she-was at-all child so

n'eüst quinze anz et demi,

not-she-had fifteen years and half

n'onques nule riens ne vi

nor-ever any thing not I-saw

de si gente façon.

of so noble fashion

Vers li m'en vois maintenant,

Toward her myself-thence I-go at-once

mis l'a reson:

put her-I-have speech

«Bele, dites moi comment,

Fair-one tell me how

pour Dieu, vous avez non!»

for God you have name

Et ele saut maintenant

And she leaps at-once

a son baston:

to her staff

«Se vous venez plus avant

If you come more forward

ja avroiz la tençon.

soon you-will-have the dispute

Sire, fuiez vous de ci!

Lord flee yourself from here

N'ai cure de tel ami,

Not-I-have care of such friend

que j'ai mult plus biau choisi,

for I-have much more fair chosen

qu'en claime Robeçon.»

whom-one calls Robeçon

Quant je la vi esfreer

When I her saw be-frightened

si durement

so hard

qu'el ne me daigne esgarder

that-she not me deigns to-look-at

ne fere autre senblant,

nor to-make other semblance

lors commençai a penser

then I-began to think

confaitement

how

ele me porroit amer

she me could love

et changier son talent.

and change her desire

A terre lez li m'assis.

On ground beside her myself-I-sat

Quant plus regart son cler vis,

When more I-regard her bright face

tant est plus mes cuers espris,

so-much is more my heart kindled

qui double mon talent.

which doubles my desire

Lors li pris a demander

Then her I-began to ask

mult belement

very fairly

que me daignast esgarder

that me she-might-deign to-look-at

et fere autre senblant.

and to-make other semblance

Ele commence a plorer

She begins to weep

et dist itant:

and said so-much

«Je ne vos puis escouter;

I not you can listen-to

ne sai qu'alez querant.»

not I-know what-you-go seeking

Vers li me trais, si li dis:

Toward her myself I-drew so to-her I-said

«Ma bele, pour Dieu merci!»

My fair-one for God mercy

Ele rist, si respondi:

She laughed so answered

«Ne faites pour la gent!»

Not do for the folk

Devant moi lors la montai

Before me then her I-mounted

de maintenant

from at-once

et trestout droit m'en alai

and all straight myself-thence I-went

vers un bois verdoiant.

toward a wood greening

Aval les prez regardai,

Down the meadows I-looked

s'oï criant

so-I-beard crying

deus pastors par mi un blé,

two shepherds through mid a wheat-field

qui venoient huiant,

who came booting

et leverent un grant cri.

and raised a great cry

Assez fis plus que ne di:

Much I-did more than — I-say

je la les, si m'en foï,

I her leave so myself-thence I-fled

n'oi cure de tel gent.

not-I-had care of such folk

L'autrier par la matinee

LII · PERRIN

One morning he finds a shepherdess singing of love's ill and offers her rich gifts. She says knights are cheats and she prefers Perrin, her shepherd, to a rich liar. He praises knights; she calls them worse than Ganelon. When he embraces her she cries out to Perrin, shouts rise from the wood, and she mocks him as he rides off.

L'autrier par la matinee

The-other-day by the morning

entre un bois et un vergier

between a wood and an orchard

une pastore ai trouvee

a shepherdess I-have found

chantant por soi envoisier,

singing for herself to-amuse

et disoit un son premier:

and she-said a tune first

«Ci me tient li maus d'amor.»

Here me holds the ill of-love

Tantost cele part m'en tor

At-once that way myself-thence I-turn

que je l'oï desresnier,

that I her-beard declare

si li dis sanz delaier:

so to-her I-said without delaying

«Bele, Deus vos dont bon jor!»

Fair-one God to-you may-grant good day

Mon salu sanz demoree

My greeting without delay

me rendi et sanz targier.

to-me she-rendered and without tarrying

Mult ert fresche et coloree,

Very she-was fresh and colored

si m'i plot a acointier:

so me-there it-pleased to accost

«Bele, vostre amor vous qier,

Fair-one your love of-you I-seek

s'avroiz de moi riche ator.»

so-you-will-have from me rich attire

Ele respont: «Tricheor

She answers Cheats

sont mès trop li chevalier.

are now too-much the knights

Melz aim Perrin, mon bergier,

Better I-love Perrin my shepherd

que riche honme menteor.»

than rich man liar

«Bele, ce ne dites mie;

Fair-one this not say at-all

chevalier sont trop vaillant.

knights are exceedingly valiant

Qui set donc avoir amie

Who knows-how then to-have friend

ne servir a son talent

nor to-serve at her desire

fors chevalier et tel gent?

except knight and such folk

Mès l'amor d'un bergeron

But the-love of-a little-shepherd

certes ne vaut un bouton.

certainly not is-worth a button

Partez vos en a itant

Part yourself thence at so-much

et m'amez; je vous creant:

and me-love I to-you promise

de moi avrez riche don.»

from me you-will-have rich gift

«Sire, par sainte Marie,

Lord by holy Mary

vous en parlez por noient.

you thereof speak for nothing

Mainte dame avront trichie

Many-a lady will-have deceived

cil chevalier soudoiant.

those knights mercenary

Trop sont faus et mal pensant,

Too-much they-are false and ill thinking

pis valent de Guenelon.

worse they-are-worth than Ganelon

Je m'en revois en meson,

I myself-thence go-back into house

que Perrinez, qui m'atent,

for Perrinet who me-awaits

m'aime de cuer loiaument.

me-loves with heart loyally

Abessiez vostre reson!»

Lower your speech

G'entendi bien la bergiere,

I-understood well the shepherdess

qu'ele me veut eschaper.

that-she me wishes to-escape

Mult li fis longue proiere,

Very to-her I-made long prayer

mès n'i poi riens conquerer.

but not-there I-could anything gain

Lors la pris a acoler,

Then her I-began to embrace

et ele gete un haut cri:

and she casts a loud cry

«Perrinet, traï, traï!»

Perrinet betrayed betrayed

Du bois prenent a huper;

From-the wood they-begin to shout

je la lais sanz demorer,

I her leave without delaying

seur mon cheval m'en parti.

upon my horse myself-thence I-parted

Quant ele m'en vit aler,

When she me-thence saw go

si me dist par ranposner:

so to-me said by mocking

«Chevalier sont trop hardi!»

Knights are too bold

CRUSADE SONGS

Seigneurs, sachiez: qui or ne s'en ira

LIII • THE CALL TO THE CROSS

Whoever will not take the cross and go where God died will hardly reach Paradise. The wicked stay behind fretting over wives and friends; the valiant go to God. At the Judgment, Christ will send those who helped carry his cross to his angels and the rest to Hell. He prays God to rid laggards of the thought and bring all to heaven.

Seigneurs, sachiez: qui or ne s'en ira

Lords know who now not himself-thence will-go

en cele terre ou Deus fu morz et vis

into that land where God was dead and alive

et qui la croiz d'Outremer ne prendra,

and who the cross of-Outremer not will-take

a paines mès ira en Paradis.

with pains more will-go into Paradise

Qui a en soi pitié ne remembrance,

Who has in himself pity or remembrance

au haut Seigneur doit querre sa venjance

for-the high Lord ought to-see his vengeance

et delivrer sa terre et son païs.

and to-deliver his land and his country

Tuit li mauvès demorront par deça,

All the wicked will-remain on this-side

qui n'aiment Dieu, bien ne honor ne pris;

who not-love God good nor honor nor worth

et chascuns dit: «Ma fame, que fera?

and each says My wife what will-she-do

Je ne leroie a nul fuer mes amis.»

I not would-leave at any price my friends

Cil sont cheoit en trop fole atendance,

Those are fallen into too foolish expectation

q'il n'est amis fors que cil, sanz dotance,

for-there not-is friend except that he without doubt

qui pour nos fu en la vraie croiz mis.

who for us was on the true cross put

Or s'en iront cil vaillant bachelier

Now themselves-thence will-go those valiant young-men

qui aiment Dieu et l'eneur de cest mont,

who love God and the-honor of this world

qui sagement vuelent a Dieu aler,

who wisely wish to God to-go

et li morveus, li cendreus demorront;

and the snotty the ash-covered will-remain

avugle sont, de ce ne dout je mie.

blind they-are of this not doubt I at-all

Qui un secors ne fet Dieu en sa vie,

Who one succor not does (to-)God in his life

et por si pou pert la gloire du mont.

and for so little loses the glory of-the world

Deus se lessa por nos en croiz pener
God himself let for us on cross suffer
 et nos dira au jor ou tuit vendront:
and to-us will-say at-the day when all will-come
 «Vous qui ma croiz m'aidastes a porter,
You who my cross me-helped to carry
 vos en iroiz la ou mi angre sont;
you thence will-go there where my angels are
 la me verroiz et ma mere Marie.
there me you-will-see and my mother Mary
 Et vos par qui je n'oi onques aïe
And you by whom I not-bad ever help
 descendroiz tuit en Enfer le parfont.»
will-descend all into Hell the deep

Chascuns cuide demorer touz hetiez
Each thinks to-remain all healthy
 et que jamès ne doie mal avoir;
and that ever not be-ought ill to-have
 ensi les tient Anemis et pechiez
thus them holds the-Enemy and sin
 que il n'ont sens, hardement ne pouvoir.
that they not-have sense boldness nor power
 Biaux sire Deus, ostez leur tel pensee
Fair lord God remove from-them such thought
 et nos metez en la vostre contree
and us put in the your country
 si saintement que vos puissons veoir!
so holily that you we-may see

Douce dame, roïne coronee,

Sweet lady queen crowned

priez pour nos, Virge bone eüree!

pray for us Virgin good fortunate

Et puis après ne nos puet mescheoir.

And then after not to-us can befall-ill

Dame, ensi est q'il m'en couvient aler

LIV · LEAVING FOR OUTREMER

He must leave his lady and the sweet country; the land overseas parts so many lovers. He cannot live without love, yet leaves her for God, who will reward the loss of heart and joy. He is sorrowful to leave his lady and glad to serve God, whose love is the gem that cures sin, and prays the Lady of heaven to aid him.

Dame, ensi est q'il m'en couvient aler

Lady thus it-is that-it me-thence behooves to-go

et departir de la douce contree

and to-depart from the sweet country

ou tant ai maus apri a endurer;

where so-many I-have ills learned to endure

quant je vous lais, droiz est que je m'en hee.

since I you leave right is that I myself-thereof hate

Deus! pour quoi fu la terre d'Outremer,

God for what was the land of-Outremer

qui tanz amanz avra fet desevrer

which so-many lovers will-have made part

dont puis ne fu l'amors reconfortee,

whereof since not was the-love comforted

ne ne porent leur joie remembrer!

nor not they-could their joy remember

Ja sanz amor ne porroie durer,

Ever without love not I-could endure

tant par i truis fermement ma pensee,

so much there I-find firmly my thought

ne mes fins cuers ne m'en let retourner,

nor my true heart not me-thence lets return

ainz sui a li la ou il veut et bee.

rather I-am with her there where it wishes and aims

Trop ai appris durement a amer,

Too-much I-have learned hard to love

pour ce ne voi comment puisse durer

for this not I-see how I-may endure

sanz joie avoir de la plus desirree

without joy to-have from the most desired

c'onques nus hons osast merci crier.

that-ever any man dared mercy to-cry

Je ne voi pas, quant de li sui partiz,

I not see at-all when from her I-am parted

que puisse avoir bien ne solaz ne joie,

that I-may have good nor solace nor joy

car onques riens ne fis si a enviz

for ever anything not I-did so with reluctance

con vous lessier, se je jamès vous voie;

as you to-leave so I ever you may-see

trop par en sui dolenz et esbahiz.

too much thereof I-am sorrowful and dismayed

Par maintes foiz m'en serai repentiz,

By many times myself-thereof I-shall-be repented

quant j'onques voil aler en ceste voie

since I-ever wished to-go on this way

et je recort voz debonaires diz.

and I recall your gracious words

Biaus sire Deus, vers vous me sui guenchiz;

Fair lord God toward you myself I-am turned

tout lais pour vous ce que je tant amoie.

all I-leave for you that which I so-much loved

Li guerredons en doit estre floriz,

The guerdon thereof ought to-be flowered

quant pour vous pert et mon cuer et ma joie.

since for you I-lose both my heart and my joy

De vous servir sui touz prez et garniz;

Of you to-serve I-am all ready and furnished

a vous me rent, biaux Peres Jhesu Criz!

to you myself I-render fair Father Jesus Christ

Si bon seigneur avoir je ne porroie:

So good lord to-have I not could

cil qui vous sert ne puet estre traïz.

he who you serves not can be betrayed

Bien doit mes cuers estre liez et dolanz:

Well ought my heart to-be glad and sorrowful

dolanz de ce que je part de ma dame,

sorrowful of this that I part from my lady

et liez de ce que je sui desiranz

and glad of this that I am desiring

de servir Dieu, qui est mes cors et m'ame.

of serving God who is my body and my-soul

Iceste amor est trop fine et puissanz,

This love is exceedingly true and powerful

par la couvient venir les plus sachanz;

by there it-behooves to-come the most knowing

c'est li rubiz, l'esmeraude et la jame

this-is the ruby the-emerald and the gem

qui touz guerist des vius pechiez puanz.

which all cures of-the vile sins stinking

Dame des cieus, granz roïne puissanz,

Lady of-the heavens great queen powerful

au grant besoing me soiez secorranz!

at-the great need to-me be succoring

De vous amer puisse avoir droite flame!

Of you to-love may-I have right flame

Quant dame pert, dame me soit aidanz!

Since lady I-lose lady to-me be aiding

Au tens plain de felonnie

LV · THE KINGDOM OF SYRIA

In a time of treachery, when we barons worsen the world and the just are put under the ban, Syria cries that unless we amend we should not go, since God aids righteous hearts. Paradise, Philip is told, is won by hardship. Love holds the poet captive, and he will die his lady's loyal lover. Lorent is warned against folly.

Au tens plain de felonnie,

At-the time full of felony

d'envie et de traïson,

of-envy and of treason

de tort et de mesprison,

of wrong and of misdeed

sanz bien et sanz cortoisie,

without good and without courtesy

et que entre nos baron

and when among us barons

fesons tout le siecle empirier,

we-make all the world worsen

que je voi esconmenier

when I see excommunicated

ceus qui plus offrent reson,

those who most offer reason

lors vueil dire une chançon.

then I-wish to-say a song

Li roiaumes de Surie

The kingdom of Syria

nos dit et crie a haut ton,

to-us says and cries at high tone

se nos ne nos amendon,

if we not ourselves amend

pour Dieu! que n'i alons mie:

for God that not-there we-go at-all

n'i ferions se mal non.

not-there we-would-do except ill not

Deus aime fin cuer droiturier,

God loves true heart righteous

de teus genz se veut il aidier;

of such folk himself wishes he to-aid

cil essauceront son non

they will-exalt his name

et conquerront sa meson.

and will-conquer his house

Oncor aim melz toute voie

Yet I-love better all the-same

demorer el saint païs

to-remain in-the holy country

que aler povre, chetis

than to-go poor wretched

la ou ja solaz n'avroie.

there where ever solace not-I-would-have

Phelipe, on doit Paradis

Philip one ought Paradise

conquerre par mesaise avoir,

to-conquer by hardship to-have

que vous n'i trouverez ja, voir,

for you not-there will-find ever truly

bon estre ne geu ne ris,

good being nor game nor laughter

que vous aviez appris.

that you had learned

Amors a coru en proie

Love has run in plunder

et si m'en maine tout pris

and so me-thence leads all taken

en l'ostel, ce m'est a vis,

into the-lodging this to-me-is to seeming

dont ja issir ne querroie,

whence ever to-go-out not I-would-seek

s'il estoit a mon devis.

if-it were at my choice

Dame, de qui Biautez fet hoir,

Lady of whom Beauty makes heir

je vous faz or bien a savoir:

I to-you make now well to know

ja de prison n'istrai vis,

ever from prison not-I-shall-go-out alive

ainz morrai loiaus amis.

rather I-shall-die loyal friend

Dame, moi couvient remaindre,

Lady me it-behooves to-remain

de vous ne me qier partir.

from you not myself I-seek to-part

De vous amer et servir

Of you to-love and to-serve

ne me soi onques jor faindre,

not myself I-knew-how ever day to-sbirk

si me vaut bien un morir

so to-me is-worth well a dying

l'amors qui tant m'asaut souvent.

the-love which so-much me-assails often

Adès vostre merci atent,

Ever your mercy I-await

que biens ne me puet venir,

for good not to-me can come

se n'est par vostre plesir.

if not-it-is by your pleasure

Chançon, va moi dire Lorent

Song go (for-)me to-tell Lorent

qu'il se gart bien outreement

that-be himself may-keep well utterly

de grant folie envair,

from great folly to-undertake

qu'en lui avroit faus mentir!

for-in him there-would-be false lying

Deus est ensi conme li pellicanz

LVI · THE PELICAN

*God is like the pelican that kills itself to revive the fledglings a foul bird has killed,
for Christ redeemed his children with his blood. Now pride and fraud rule, clerks
leave sermons for war, and the barons share the blame. This world must fall unless
God ends the battle. The hypocrites are the foul birds that kill God's children.*

Deus est ensi conme li pellicanz

God is thus like the pelican

qui fet son nif el plus haut arbre sus,

which makes its nest in-the most high tree up

et li mauvès oisiaus, qui vient de jus,

and the evil bird which comes from below

ses oisellons ocit: tant est puanz;

its fledglings kills so-much it-is stinking

li peres vient destroiz et angoisseus,

the father comes distressed and anguished

du bec s'ocit, de son sanc dolereus

with-the beak itself-kills with its blood grievous

vivre refet tantost ses oisellons.

live makes-again at-once its fledglings

Deus fist autel, quant fu sa passions:

God did such when was his passion

de son douz sanc racheta ses enfanz

with his sweet blood he-redeemed his children

du Deable, qui trop estoit poissanz.

from-the Devil who too-much was powerful

Li guerredons en est mauvès et lenz,

The guerdon thereof is bad and slow

que bien ne droit ne pitié n'a mès nus,

for good nor right nor pity not-has more anyone

ainz est orguels et baraz au desus,

rather is pride and fraud at-the top

felonie, traïsons et bobanz.

felony treason and arrogance

Mult par est or nostre estaz perilleus;

Very much is now our state perilous

et se ne fust li essamples de ceus

and if not were the example of those

qui tant aiment et noises et tençons

who so-much love both quarrels and disputes

— ce est des clers qui ont lessié sarmons

this is of-the clerks who have left sermons

por guerroier et pour tuër les genz —,

for to-war and for to-kill the folk

jamès en Dieu ne fust nus hons creanz.

ever in God not would-be any man believing

Nostre chiés fet touz noz membres doloir,

Our head makes all our members ache

por c'est bien droiz qu'a Dieu nos en plaignons;

for this-is well right that-to God ourselves thereof we-complain

et granz corpes ra mult seur les barons,

and great blame is-in-turn much upon the barons

qui il poise quant aucuns veut valoir;

whom it grieves when someone wishes to-avail

et entre gent en font mult a blasmer

and among folk thereof are much to blame

qui tant sevent et mentir et guiler;

who so-much know-how both to-lie and to-deceive

le mal en font deseur aus revenir;

the ill thereof they-make upon them come-back

et qui mal qiert, maus ne li doit faillir.

and who ill seeks ill not to-him ought to-fail

Qui petit mal porchace a son pouoir,

Who little ill pursues at his power

li granz ne doit en son cuer remanoir.

the great not ought in his heart to-remain

Bien devrions en l'estoire voir

Well we-ought in the-story to-see

la bataille qui fu des deus dragons,

the battle which was of-the two dragons

si com l'en trueve el livre des Bretons,

so as one finds in-the book of-the Bretons

dont il couvint les chastiaus jus cheoir:

whereby it behooved the castles down to-fall

c'est cist siecles, qui il couvient verser,

this-is this world which it behooves to-overturn

se Deus ne fet la bataille finer.

if God not makes the battle end

Le sens Mellin en couvint fors issir

The sense (of-)Merlin thereof it-behooved out to-go

por deviner qu'estoit a avenir.

for to-divine what-was to happen

Mès Antecriz vient, ce poëz savoir,

But Antichrist comes this you-can know

as maçues qu'Anemis fet mouvoir.

with-the maces that-the-Enemy makes move

Savez qui sont li vil oisel punais

Know-you who are the vile birds stinking

qui tuënt Dieu et ses enfançonèz?

who kill God and his little-children

Li papelart, dont li nons n'est pas nèz.

The hypocrites whereof the name not-is at-all clean

Cil sont bien ort et puant et mauvès;

They are well filthy and stinking and wicked

il ocïent toute la simple gent

they kill all the simple folk

par leur faus moz, qui sont li Dieu enfant.

by their false words who are the (of-)God children

Papelart font le siecle chanceler;

Hypocrites make the world totter

par saint Pere, mal les fet rencontrer:

by saint Peter ill them it-is to-meet

il ont tolu joie et solaz et pès.

they have taken-away joy and solace and peace

Cil porteront en Enfer le grant fès.

They will-carry in Hell the great burden

Or nos dont Deus lui servir et amer

Now to-us may-grant God him to-serve and to-love

et la Dame, qu'on n'i doit oblir,

and the Lady whom-one not-there ought to-forget

et nos vueille garder a touz jorz mès

and us may-be-wish to-guard for all days more

des maus oisiaus, qui ont venin es bès!

from-the evil birds which have venom in-the beaks

SONGS TO THE VIRGIN

Du tres douz non a la Virge Marie

LVII · THE FIVE LETTERS OF MARIA

He expounds the five letters of the Virgin's name. M, since through her God came to free souls from torment; A, first of the alphabet as the Ave comes first; R, seen daily in the host the priest holds; I, straight and noble as her body was; and A, the cry of lament to the Lady who seeks only the sinner's amendment.

Du tres douz non a la Virge Marie

Of-the very sweet name of the Virgin Mary

vous espondrai cinq letres plainement.

to-you I-shall-expound five letters plainly

La premiere est M, qui senefie

The first is M which signifies

que les ames en sont fors de torment;

that the souls thereby are out of torment

car par li vint ça jus entre sa gent

for through her came here down among his folk

et nos geta de la noire prison

and us cast from the black prison

Deus, qui pour nos en sousfri passion.

God who for us thereof suffered passion

Iceste M est et sa mere et s'amie.

This M is both his mother and his-friend

A vient après. Droiz est que je vous die
A comes after Right is that I to-you may-tell

qu'en l'abecé est tout premierement;
that-in the-alphabet it-is all first

et tout premiers, qui n'est plains de folie,
and all first who not-is full of folly

doit on dire le salu doucement
ought one to-say the salutation sweetly

a la Dame qui en son biau cors gent
to the Lady who in her fair body noble

porta le Roi qui merci atendon.
carried the King whose mercy we-await

Premiers fu A et premiers devint hom
First was A and first became man

que nostre loi fust fete n'establie.
before our law were made or-established

Puis vient R, ce n'est pas controuvaille,
Then comes R this not-is at-all invention

qu'erre savons que mult fet a prisier,
for-R we-know that much is to prize

et sel voions chascun jor tout sanz faille,
and so-it we-see each day all without fail

quant li prestres le tient en son moustier;
when the priest it holds in his church

c'est li cors Dieu, qui touz nos doit jugier,
this-is the body (of-)God who all us ought to-judge

que la Dame dedenz son cors porta.
which the Lady within her body carried

Or li prions, quant la mort nous vendra,

Now her let-us-pray when the death to-us will-come

que sa pitiez plus que droiz nous i vaille.

that her pity more than right us there may-avail

I est touz droiz, genz et de bele taille.

I is all straight noble and of fair shape

Tels fu li cors, ou il n'ot qu'enseignier,

Such was the body where there not-was what-to-teach

de la Dame qui pour nos se travaille,

of the Lady who for us herself labors

biaus, droiz et genz sanz teche et sanz pechier.

fair straight and noble without blemish and without sinning

Pour son douz cuer et pour Enfer bruiser

For her sweet heart and for Hell to-break

vint Deus en li, quant ele l'enfanta.

came God in her when she him-bore

Biaus fu et genz, et biau s'en delivra;

Fair be-was and noble and fairly herself-thereof delivered

bien fist senblant Deus que de nos li chaille.

well made semblance God that of us to-him it-matters

A est de plaint: bien savez sanz dotance,

A is of lament well you-know without doubt

quant on dit a, qu'on se plaint durement;

when one says ab that-one oneself laments grievously

et nous devons plaindre sanz demorance

and we ought to-lament without delay

a la Dame qui ne va el querant

to the Lady who not goes else seeking

que pechierres viengne a amendement.

than sinner may-come to amendment

Tant a douz cuer, gentil et esmeré,

So-much she-has sweet heart noble and refined

qui l'apele de cuer sanz fausseté,

who her-calls with heart without falsehood

ja ne faudra a avoir repentance.

ever not will-fail to have repentance

Or li prions merci pour sa bonté

Now her let-us-pray mercy for her goodness

au douz salu qui se commence Ave

with-the sweet salutation which itself begins Hail

Maria! Deus nous gart de mescheance!

Mary God us may-keep from mischance

Mauvès arbres ne puet florir

LVIII · THE FRUIT OF NATURE

A bad tree cannot flower, and a man without love bears no fruit. The lover bears Nature's fruit, God's gift; whoever loves God gathers it ripe. The green fruit is Adam's sin, his own orchard full of it since he saw his lady. He prays the Mother of God for the good fruit and bids Philip leave his error and sing.

Mauvès arbres ne puet florir,

Bad tree not can flower

ainz seche touz et va crollant;

rather dries all and goes shaking

et hons qui n'aime, sanz mentir,

and man who not-loves without lying

ne porte fruit, ainz va morant.

not bears fruit rather goes dying

Flor et fruit de cointe senblant

Flower and fruit of elegant semblance

porte cil en qui nest amors.

bears he in whom is-born love

En ce fruit a tant de valors

In this fruit there-is so-much of worth

que nus nel porroit elligier,

that anyone not-it could purchase

que de touz maus puet alegier.

for from all ills it-can relieve

Fruit de Nature l'auele on;

Fruit of Nature it-calls one

or vos ai devisé son non.

now to-you I-have told its name

De ce fruit ne puet nus sentir,

Of this fruit not can anyone taste

se Deus ne le fet proprement.

if God not it makes properly

Qui a Dieu amer et servir

Who to God love and serve

done cuer et cors et talent,

gives heart and body and desire

cil queut du fruit trestout avant,

he gathers of-the fruit all first

et Deus l'en fet riche secors.

and God to-him-thereof makes rich succor

Par le fruit fu li premiers plors,

By the fruit was the first weeping

quant Eve fist Adam pechier;

when Eve made Adam sin

mès qui du bon fruit veut mengier

but who of-the good fruit wisbes to-eat

Dieu aint et sa Mere et son non,

God may-be-love and his Mother and his name

si queudra le fruit de seson.

so will-gather the fruit of season

Seigneur, de l'arbre dit vos ai

Lords of the-tree told you I-have

de Nature, de qu'amors vient;

of Nature from which-love comes

du fruit meür conté vous ai
of-the fruit ripe told you I-have
 que cil quieut qui a Dieu se tient;
which he gathers who to God himself holds
 mès dou fruit vert me resouvient
but of-the fruit green to-me it-remembers-in-turn
 qui ja en moi ne meürra:
which ever in me not will-ripen
 c'est li fruiz en qu'Adans pecha.
this-is the fruit in which-Adam sinned
 De ce fruit est plains mes vergiers:
Of this fruit is full my orchard
 dès que ma dame vi premiers,
since that my lady I-saw first
 oi de s'amor plain cuer et cors,
I-had of her-love full heart and body
 ne ja nul jor n'en istra fors.
nor ever any day not-thence will-go out

Bien cuit dou fruit ne gousterai
Well I-think of-the fruit not I-shall-taste
 que je cueilli, ançois m'avient
which I gathered rather to-me-it-happens
 si conme a l'enfant, bien le sai,
so as to the-child well it I-know

qui a la branche se soustient

who to the branch himself holds-up

et entor l'arbre va et vient

and around the-tree goes and comes

ne ja amont ne montera;

nor ever up not will-climb

ensi mes cuers foloiant va.

thus my heart acting-foolishly goes

Tant par est granz mes desirriers

So much is great my longing

que je en tieng mes granz maus chiers,

that I thereof hold my great ills dear

si sui afinez con li ors

so I-am refined as the gold

vers li, qui est touz mes tresors.

toward her who is all my treasure

Deus! se je pouoie cueillir

God if I could gather

du fruit meür de vous amer,

of-the fruit ripe of you to-love

si com vous m'avez fet sentir

so as you me-have made feel

l'amor d'aval et conparer,

the-love from-below and pay-for

lors me porroie saouler

then myself I-could sate

et venir a repentement.

and come to repentance

Par vostre douz conmandement

By your sweet commandment

me donez amer la meillor:

to-me grant to-love the best

ce est la precieuse flor

this is the precious flower

par qui vos venistes ça jus,

by whom you came here down

dont li Deables est confus.

whereby the Devil is confounded

Mere Dieu, par vostre douçor

Mother (of-)God by your sweetness

du bon fruit me donez savor,

of-the good fruit to-me give savor

que de l'autre ai je senti plus

for of the-other have I felt more

c'onques, ce croi, ne senti nus!

than-ever this I-believe — felt anyone

Phelipe, lessiez vostre error!

Philip leave your error

Je vos vi ja bon chanteor.

I you saw once good singer

Chantez, et nos dirons desus

Sing and we shall-say above

le chant Te Deum laudamus.

the chant Thee God we-praise

De chanter ne me puis tenir

LIX · THE SPIRITUAL LADY

He cannot keep from singing of the Virgin, since no one who serves her comes to shame and the King of heaven came into her. Whoever is faithful to her will come before her brighter than the morning star. Through her, of David's line, God came to suffer death and free us. He asks her to defend him from damnation.

De chanter ne me puis tenir

From singing not myself I-can hold

de la tres bele esperitaus,

of the very fair spiritual-one

que riens du mont ne puet servir

for anything of-the world not can serve

qui ja viengne honte ne maus;

to-whom ever may-come shame nor ill

que li Rois celestiaus,

for the King celestial

qui en li daigna venir,

who in her deigned to-come

ne porroit mie sousfrir

not could at-all allow

qui la sert q'il ne fust saus.

who her serves that-he not were saved

Quant Deus tant la vout obeïr,

Since God so-much her wished to-obey

qui n'estoit muables ne faus,

who not-was changeable nor false

bien nos i devons dont tenir,

well ourselves there we-ought then to-hold

Dame roïne naturaus!

Lady queen natural

Cil qui vous sera fëaus,

He who to-you will-be faithful

vous li savroiz bien merir;

you him will-know-how well to-reward

devant vos porra venir

before you he-will-be-able to-come

plus clers qu'estoile jornaus.

more bright than-star of-day

Vostre biauté, qui si resplent,

Your beauty which so shines

fet tout le monde resclarcir.

makes all the world brighten

Par vous vint Deus entre la gent

By you came God among the folk

en terre pour la mort sousfrir

on earth for the death to-suffer

et a l'Anemi tolir

and from the-Enemy to-take

nos et geter de torment.

us and to-cast from torment

Par vous avons vengeance

By you we-have vengeance

et par vous devons garir.

and by you we-ought to-be-saved

David le sout premierement

David it knew first

que de lui deviez oissir,

that from him you-were to-issue

quant il parla si hautement

when he spoke so highly

par la bouche du Saint Espir.

by the mouth of-the Holy Spirit

Vous n'estes mie a florir,

You not-are at-all to flower

ainz avez flor si poissant:

rather you-have flower so powerful

c'est Deus, qui onques ne ment

this-is God who ever not lies

et par tout fet son plesir.

and through all does his pleasure

Dame, plaine de granz bontez,

Lady full of great goodness

de cortoisie et de pitié,

of courtesy and of pity

par vous est touz renluminez

by you is all illumined-anew

li mondes, nès li renoié;

the world even the renegades

quant il seront ravoïé

when they will-be put-back-on-the-way

et crerront que Deus soit nez,

and will-believe that God be born

seront sauf, bien le savez.

will-be saved well it you-know

Dame, aiez de nos pitié!

Lady have of us pity

Douce Dame, or vos pri gié

Sweet Lady now you pray I

merci, que me desfendez

mercy that me you-defend

que je ne soie dampnez

that I not be damned

ne perduz par mon pechié!

nor lost by my sin

De grant travail et de petit esloit

LX · THE DEVIL'S HOOKS

The world labors for little and serves the Devil, thrusting God aside; only the Lady's prayers stay God's blow. A mouse provides against winter; we seek only Hell. The Devil fishes with four hooks: covetousness, pride, lechery, and felony. Worthy men are scarce; men now are like false pence. The song goes to the Lady.

De grant travail et de petit esloit

With great labor and with little profit

voi le siecle chargé et enconbré,

I-see the world laden and encumbered

que tant sonmes plain de maleürté

for so-much we-are full of misfortune

que nus ne pense a fere ce q'il doit;

that anyone not thinks to do that which-be ought

ainz avons si le Deable troussé

rather we-have so the Devil taken-up

qu'a lui servir chascuns paine et essaie;

that-to him to-serve each toils and tries

et Dieu, qui ot pour nos la cruël plaie,

and God who had for us the cruel wound

avons mès tuit arriere dos bouté:

we-have now all behind back thrust

mult est hardiz qui pour mort ne s'esmaie.

very is bold who for death not himself-dismays

Deus, qui tout set et tout puet et tout voit,

God who all knows and all can and all sees

nos avroit tost un entredeus geté,

us would-have soon a blow-between cast

se la Dame, plaine de grant bonté,

if the Lady full of great goodness

qui est lez lui, pour nous ne li prioit.

who is beside him for us not to-him prayed

Si tres douz mot plesant et savoré

Her very sweet words pleasing and savory

le grant coroz du grant Seigneur rapaie.

the great wrath of-the great Lord appease

Mult par est fous qui autre amor essaie,

Very much is foolish who other love tries

qu'en cesti n'a barat ne fausseté,

for-in this not-is fraud nor falsehood

ne es autres ne merci ne manaie.

nor in-the others neither mercy nor pardon

La soriz qiert, por son cors garantir

The mouse seeks for its body to-protect

contre l'iver, la noiz et le forment,

against the-winter the nut and the wheat

et nous, chetif! n'alons mès riens querant,

and we wretched not-go more anything seeking

quant nos morrons, ou nos puissons guerir;

when we shall-die where we may be-saved

nous ne cerchons fors qu'Enfer le puant.

we not seek except that-Hell the stinking

Ore esgardez q'une beste sauvage

Now behold that-a beast wild

porvoit de loing encontre son damage,

provides from far against its harm

et nous n'avons ne sens ne escient;

and we not-have neither sense nor knowledge

il m'est a vis que plain sonmes de rage.

it to-me-is to seeming that full we-are of madness

Deables a geté pour nous sesir

Devil has cast for us to-seize

quatre aimeçons aoschiez de torment:

four books notched with torment

Couvoitise lance premierement

Covetousness he-casts first

et puis Orgueil pour sa grant roiz enplir;

and then Pride for his great net to-fill

Luxure va le batel traînant,

Lecbery goes the boat dragging

Felonie les gouverne et les nage.

Felony them steers and them rows

Ensi peschant s'en viennent au rivage,

Thus fishing themselves-thence come to-the shore

dont Deus nos gart par son conmandement,

whence God us may-keep by his commandment

en qui sainz fonz nous feïsmes honmage!

in whose holy font we did homage

Les preudonmes doit on tenir mult chiers

The worthy-men ought one to-hold very dear

la ou il sont et servir et amer,

there where they are both to-serve and to-love

mès a paines en puet on nus trouver,

but with pains thereof can one any find

car il sont mès si com li faus deniers

for they are now so as the false pence

que on ne puet en trebuchet verser,

which one not can in scale to-pour

ainz le gete on sanz coing et sanz balance;

rather it casts one without die and without balance

torz et pechiez en eus fine et commence.

wrong and sin in them ends and begins

Faus tricheor, bien vous devroit menbrer

False cheats well to-you ought to-remember

que Deus prendra de vos cruël venjance!

that God will-take of you cruel vengeance

A la Dame qui touz les biens avance

To the Lady who all the goods advances

t'en va, chançon! S'el te veut escouter,

thyself-thence go song If-she thee wishes to-hear

onques ne fu nus de meillor cheance.

ever not was anyone of better chance

A RELIGIOUS LAY

Commencerai

LXI · A LAY TO THE VIRGIN

He begins a lay of the best of ladies, fearing that if the Virgin delays her prayers the Devil will take him to the black prison. He begs God to forget justice and unbend his bow so that mercy may come, since without it all will fare ill. He asks the Lady to pray for all, since none will be rescued except through her.

Commencerai

I-shall-begin

a fere un lai

to make a lay

de la meillour.

of the best

Forment m'esmay,

Greatly myself-I-dismay

que trop par ai

for too much I-have

fet de dolour,

made of grief

dont mi chant torront a plour.

whence my songs will-turn to weeping

Mere Virge savouree,

Mother Virgin savory

se vous fetes demouree

if you make delay

de prier le haut Seignour,

of praying the high Lord

bien doi avoir grant paour

well I-ought to-have great fear

du Deable, du Felon,

of-the Devil of-the Felon

qui en la noire prison,

who into the black prison

nous veut mener,

us wishes to-lead

dont nus ne puet eschaper;

whence anyone not can escape

et j'ai forfeit, douce Dame,

and I-have forfeited sweet Lady

a perdre le cors et l'ame,

to lose the body and the-soul

se ne m'aidiez.

if not me-you-aid

Douz Dieus, aiez

Sweet God have

merci de mes vils pechiez!

mercy of my vile sins

Ou sera merci trouvee,

Where will-be mercy found

s'ele est de vous refusee,

if-it is by you refused

qui tant valez?

who so-much are-worth

Sire, droiture oubliez

Lord justice forget

et destendez vostre corde,

and unbend your cord

si vaigne misericorde

so may-come mercy

pour nous aidier!

for us to-aid

Nous n'avons de droit mestier;

We not-have of justice need

quant seur touz estes puissanz,

since above all you-are powerful

bien devez de voz serganz

well you-ought of your servants

avoir merci.

to-have mercy

Biaus, douz Sire, je vous pri

Fair sweet Lord I you pray

ne me metez en oubli!

not me put in oblivion

Se pitié ne vaint vengeance,

If pity not vanquishes vengeance

dont serons nous sanz doutance

then shall-be we without doubt

trop mal mené.

too ill led

Dame, plaine de bonté,

Lady full of goodness

vostre douz mot savouré

your sweet words savory

ne soient pas oublié!

not be at-all forgotten

Prïez pour nous!

Pray for us

Jamès ne serons rescous,

Ever not we-shall-be rescued

se ne le sonmes par vous,

if not it we-are by you

de voir le sai.

of truth it I-know

Ci lesserai;

Here I-shall-leave

et Dieus nous doint sanz delai

and God to-us may-grant without delay

avoir son secours verai!

to-have his succor true

CONON DE BÉTHUNE

Les Chansons de Conon de Béthune

The Songs of Conon de Béthune

Chançon legiere a entendre

I • A SONG TO LEARN

He will make a song easy to learn and sing, since no other messenger will show his grief to the best lady born. He has hidden his martyrdom from everyone and ought to tell it to her alone; if she forgets him, he will not forget her. Her beauty makes his ills so pleasing that he dies joyful. The envoy is to Noblet.

Chançon legiere a entendre

Song light to understand

ferai, car bien m'est mestiers

I-shall-make for well to-me-is need

ke chascuns le puist aprendre

that each it may learn

et c'on le chant volentiers;

and that-one it may-sing willingly

ne par autres messaigiers

nor by other messengers

n'iert ja ma dolors mostree

not-will-be ever my grief shown

a la millor ki soit nee.

to the best who may-be born

Tant est sa valors doblee

So-much is her worth doubled

c'orgeus et hardemens fiers

that-pride and boldness proud

seroit, se je ma pensee

it-would-be if I my thought

li descovroie premiers;

to-her uncovered first

mais besoins et desiriers

but need and longing

et çou c'on ne puet attendre

and that which-one not can wait

fait maint hardement entreprendre.

makes many-a boldness be-undertaken

Tant ai celé mon martire

So-much I-have concealed my martyrdom

tos jors a tote la gent

all days from all the folk

ke bien le devroie dire

that well it I-ought to-say

a ma Dame solement,

to my Lady only

k'Amors ne li dit noient;

for-Love not to-her says anything

ne por quant, s'ele m'oblie,

not for all-that if-she me-forgets

ne l'oublierai je mie.

not her-shall-forget I at-all

Por quant, se je n'ai aïe

For all-that if I not-have help

de li et retenement,

from her and retaining

bien fera et cortoisie

well she-will-do and courtesy

s'aucune pitiés l'em prent.

if-some pity her-thereof takes

Au descovrir mon talent

At-the uncovering my desire

se gart bien de l'escondire,

herself may-she-guard well from the-refusing

s'ele ne me velt ochirre.

if-she not me wishes to-kill

Fols sui ki ne li ai dite

Fool I-am who not to-her have told

ma dolor, ki est si grans.

my grief which is so great

Bien deüst estre petite

Well it-ought to-be little

par droit, tant sui fins amans;

by right so-much I-am true lover

mais je sui si meschaans

but I am so unlucky

ke quanques drois m'i avance

that whatever right me-there advances

me retaut ma mescheance.

from-me takes-back my mischance

Tous i morrai en soffrance,
Wholly there I-shall-die in sufferance
 mais sa beautés m'est garans,
but her beauty to-me-is protector
 de ma Dame, et la samblance
of my Lady and the semblance
 ki tos mes maus fait plaisans,
which all my ills makes pleasing
 si ke je muir tous joians;
so that I die all joyful
 ke tant desir sa merite
for so-much I-desire her reward
 ke ceste mors me delite.
that this death me delights

Noblet, je sui fins amans,
Noblet I am true lover
 si aim la millor eslite
so I-love the best chosen
 dont onques cançons fust dite.
whereof ever song was said

Si voiremant con cele don je chant

II · THE CHESS PLAYER

His lady is worth more than all others, and he desires her love as the sick desire health. Once he could counsel others; now, like a man who sees clearly at another's chess but is mated in his own game, he cannot play. He dares not tell her his pain, like a champion who learns to fence and forgets it on the field.

Si voiremant con cele don je chant

As truly as she of-whom I sing

valt melz que totes les bones qui sont,

is-worth better than all the good-ones who are

et je l'aim plus que rien qui soit el mont,

and I her-love more than anything which may-be in-the world

si me doint Deus s'amor senz decevoir;

so to-me may-grant God her-love without deceiving

que tel desir en ai et tel vouloir,

for such desire thereof I-have and such will

ou tant ou plus, Deus en seit la verté,

either as-much or more God thereof knows the truth

si con malades desirre santé,

so as sick-man desires health

desir je li et s'amor a avoir.

desire I her and her-love to have

Or sai je bien que riens ne puet valoir

Now know I well that anything not can avail

tant con celi de cui j'ai tant chanté,

so-much as her of whom I-have so-much sung

c'or ai veü et li et sa bealté

for-now I-have seen both her and her beauty

et si sai bien que tant a de valor

and so I-know well that so-much she-has of worth

que je doi faire et outrage et folor

that I ought to-do both outrage and folly

d'amer plus halt que ne m'avroit mestier;

of-loving more high than — to-me-would-have need

et non por cant maint povre chevalier

and not for all-that many-a poor knight

fait riches cuers venir a halte honor.

makes (a-)rich heart come to high honor

Ainz que fusse sospris de ceste amor,

Before that I-was seized by this love

savoie je autre jent conseilier,

knew I other folk to-counsel

et or sai bien d'altrui geu enseignier

and now I-know well of-other game to-teach

et si ne sai mie lo mien juër;

and so not I-know at-all the mine to-play

si sui con cil qui as eschas voit cler

so I-am as he who at-the chess sees clear

et qui tres bien ensengne as autres gens,

and who very well teaches to-the other folk

et kant il jue, si pert si son sens

and when he plays so loses so his sense

qu'il ne se seit escore de mater.

that-he not himself knows-how to-rescue from being-mated

Hé! las, dolanz, je ne sai tant chanter

Ab alas sorrowful I not know-how so-much to-sing

que ma Dame parçoive mes tormenz,

that my Lady may-perceive my torments

n'encor n'est pas si granz mes hardemanz

nor-yet not-is at-all so great my boldness

ke je li os dire les mals que trai,

that I to-her dare to-tell the ills that I-bear

ne devant li n'en os parler ne sai;

nor before her not-thereof I-dare speak nor know-how

et kant je sui aillors devant autrui,

and when I am elsewhere before another

lors i parol, mais si pou m'i dedui

then there I-speak but so little myself-there I-delight

k'un anui valt li deduiz que j'en ai.

that-a trouble is-worth the delight that I-thereof have

Encor devis comment je li dirai

Yét I-devise how I to-her shall-tell

la grant dolor que j'en trais senz anui,

the great grief that I-thereof bear without trouble

ke tant l'ador et desir, kant g'i sui,

for so-much her-I-adore and desire when I-there am

que ne li os descovrir ma raison;

that not to-her I-dare to-uncover my thought

si va de moi con fait del champion

so it-goes with me as does with-the champion

qui de lon tens aprent a escremir,

who for long time learns to fence

et kant il vient ou champ as cous ferir,

and when he comes into-the field at-the blows to-strike

si ne seit rien d'escu ne de baston.

so not knows anything of-shield nor of staff

Mout me semont Amors ke je m'envoise

III • THE WORDS OF ARTOIS

Love bids him sing when he should be silent, for the French blamed his speech before the Champenois and the Countess, and the Queen and the King her son reproved him. His words are not French of France but are understood in French, and those who scorned his words of Artois are ill bred. He will ask his lady's love.

Mout me semont Amors ke je m'envoise,

Much me summons Love that I myself-gladden

quant je plus doi de chanter estre cois;

when I more ought of singing to-be quiet

mais j'ai plus grant talent ke je me coise,

but I-have more great desire that I myself may-quiet

por çou s'ai mis mon chanter en defois;

for this so-I-have put my singing in ban

ke mon langaige ont blasmé li François

for my language have blamed the French

et mes cançons, oiant les Champenois

and my songs in-bearing the Champenois

et la Contesse encoir, dont plus me poise.

and the Countess also whereof more me it-grieves

La Roïne n'a pas fait ke cortoise,

The Queen not-has at-all done as courteous-one

ki me reprist, ele et ses fieus, li Rois.

who me reproved she and her son the King

Encoir ne soit ma parole franchoise,

Although not be my speech French

si la puet on bien entendre en franchois;

so it can one well understand in French

ne chil ne sont bien apris ne cortois,

nor they not are well taught nor courteous

s'il m'ont repris se j'ai dit mos d'Artois,

if-they me-have reproved if I-have said words of-Artois

car je ne fui pas norris a Pontoise.

for I not was at-all nourished at Pontoise

Dieus! ke ferai? Dirai li mon coraige?

God what I-shall-do I-shall-tell her my heart

Li irai je dont s'amor demander?

Her shall-go I then her-love to-ask

Oïl, par Dieu! car tel sont li usaige

Yés by God for such are the customs

c'on n'i puet mais sans demant riens trover;

that-one not-there can more without asking anything find

et se jo sui outraigeus del trover,

and if I am outrageous of-the composing

se n'en doit pas ma Dame a moi irer,

so not-thereof ought at-all my Lady with me to-anger

mais vers Amors, ki me font dire outraige.

but toward Love who me make say outrage

Ahi! Amors, com dure departie

IV · THE HARD PARTING

Ah Love, how hard to part from the best lady: his body goes to God in Syria, his heart stays with her. Whoever fails God now will be failed in greater need. Shame on the fit who stay; clergy, old men, and chaste ladies share the pilgrimage. Death there is sweet, and the lost holy place must be avenged.

Ahi! Amors, com dure departie

Ah Love how hard parting

me convenra faire de la millor

me will-behoove to-make from the best

ki onques fust amee ne servie!

who ever was loved or served

Dieus me ramaint a li par sa douçour,

God me may-lead-back to her by his sweetness

si voirement con j'en part a dolor!

as truly as I-thence part with grief

Las! k'ai je dit? Ja ne m'en part je mie!

Alas what-have I said Ever not myself-thence part I at-all

Se li cors va servir Nostre Signor,

If the body goes to-serve Our Lord

mes cuers remaint del tot en sa baillie.

my heart remains of-the all in her keeping

Por li m'en vois sospirant en Surie,

For her myself-thence I-go sighing into Syria

car je ne doi faillir mon Creator.

for I not ought to-fail my Creator

Ki li faura a cest besoig d'aïe,

Who him will-fail at this need of-help

saiciés ke il li faura a grignor;

know that he him will-fail at greater

et saient bien li grant et li menor

and may-know well the great and the lesser

ke la doit on faire chevalerie

that there ought one to-do knighthood

ou on conquiert Paradis et honor

where one conquers Paradise and honor

et pris et los et l'amor de s'amie.

and worth and praise and the-love of one's-friend

Dieus est assis en son saint iretaige;

God is besieged in his holy heritage

ore i parra con cil le secorront

now there it-will-appear how those him will-succor

cui il jeta de la prison ombraje,

whom he cast from the prison shadowy

quant il fu mis ens la crois ke Turc ont.

when he was put on the cross which Turks have

Honi soient tot chil ki remanront,

Shamed be all those who will-remain

s'il n'ont poverte ou vielcece ou malaige!

if-they not-have poverty or old-age or sickness

Et cil ki sain et jone et riche sont

And those who healthy and young and rich are

ne poevent pas demorer sans hontaige.

not can at-all remain without shame

Tot li clergié et li home d'eaige

All the clergy and the men of-age

qui ens ausmogne et ens biens fais manront

who in alms and in good deeds will-abide

partiront tot a cest pelerinaige,

will-share all in this pilgrimage

et les dames ki chastement vivront

and the ladies who chastely will-live

et loiauté feront ceaus ki iroint;

and loyalty will-do (to-)those who will-go

et s'eles font par mal conseil folaige,

and if-they do by ill counsel folly

a lasques gens mauvaises le feront,

with slack folk wicked it they-will-do

car tot li boin iroint en cest voiaige.

for all the good will-go on this voyage

Ki chi ne velt avoir vie anuieuse

Who here not wishes to-have life troublesome

si voist por Dieu morir liés et joieus,

so may-be-go for God to-die glad and joyful

car cele mors est douce et savereuse

for that death is sweet and savory

dont on conquiert le resne presieus,

whereby one conquers the kingdom precious

ne ja de mort n'en i morra uns sels,

nor ever of death not-thereof there will-die one alone

ains naistront tot en vie glorieuse;

rather will-be-born all in life glorious

et saiciés bien, ki ne fust amereus,
and know well who not were amorous
 mout fust la voie et boine et deliteuse.
very would-be the way both good and delightful

Dieus! tant avons esté preus par huiseuse,
God so-much we-have been valiant by idleness
 or i parra ki a certes iert preus;
now there it-will-appear who in earnest will-be valiant
 s'irons vengier la honte dolereuse
so-we-shall-go to-avenge the shame grievous
 dont chascuns doit estre iriés et honteus;
whereof each ought to-be angered and ashamed
 car a no tans est perdus li sains lieux
for in our time is lost the holy place
 ou Dieus soffri por nos mort angoisseuse.
where God suffered for us death anguished
 S'or i laissons nos anemis morteus,
If-now there we-leave our enemies mortal
 a tos jors mais iert no vie honteuse.
for all days more will-be our life shameful

Bien me deüsse targier

V · THE TITHERS

He does more for God than any lover, glad in soul though grieving in body. Those who tithe the crusaders would be God's enemies to spend it so, and he will not stay with tyrants crossed for pay. The Count is avenged on base barons who foul their own nest. Any he offends may take it up with his master of Oissi.

Bien me deüsse targier

Well myself I-ought to-hold-back

de chançon faire et de mos et de chans,

from song making and from words and from tunes

quant me convient eslongier

since me it-bebooves to-go-far

de la millor de totes les vaillans,

from the best of all the worthy-ones

si em puis bien faire voire vantance,

so thereof I-can well make true boast

ke je fas plus por Dieu ke nus amans,

that I do more for God than any lover

si en sui mout endroit l'ame joians,

so thereof I-am very as-to the-soul joyful

mais del cors ai et pitié et pesance.

but of-the body I-have both pity and heaviness

On se doit bien efforchier

One oneself ought well to-strive

de Dieu servir, ja n'i soit li talans,

of God to-serve even not-there be the desire

et la char vaintre et plaissier,

and the flesh to-vanquish and to-bend

ki tos jors est de pechier desirans;

which all days is of sinning desirous

adont voit Dieus la doble penitance.

then sees God the double penance

Hé! las, se nus se doit sauver dolans,

Ab alas if anyone himself ought to-save sorrowful

dont doit par droit ma merite estre grans,

then ought by right my merit to-be great

car plus dolans ne se part nus de France.

for more sorrowful not himself parts anyone from France

Vous ki dismés les croisiés,

You who tithe the crusaders

ne despendés mie l'avoir ensi;

not spend at-all the-wealth thus

anemi Dieu en séries.

enemies (of-)God thereof you-would-be

Dieus! ke porront faire si anemi,

God what will-be-able to-do his enemies

quant tot li saint trambleront de dotance

when all the saints will-tremble with fear

devant Celui ki onques ne menti!

before Him who ever not lied

Adont seront pecheor mal bailli,

Then will-be sinners ill treated

se sa pitiés ne cuevre sa poissance.

if his pity not covers his power

Ne ja por nul desirier

Nor ever for any longing

ne remanrai chi avoc ces tirans,

not I-shall-remain here with these tyrants

ki sont croisiet a loier

who are crossed for hire

por dismer clers et borgois et serjans;

for to-tithe clerks and burghers and sergeants

plus en croisa covoiitiés ke creance.

more thereof crossed covetousness than faith

Et quant la crois n'en puet estre garans,

And since the cross not-thereof can be protector

a teus croisiés sera Dieus mout soffrans,

to such crusaders will-be God very patient

se ne s'en venge a peu de demorance.

if not himself-thereof he-avenges with little of delay

Li Quens s'en est ja vangiés,

The Count himself-thereof is already avenged

des haus barons, qui or li sont faillit.

on-the high barons who now to-him are failed

C'or les eüst anpiriés,

Would-that-now them be-bad harmed

qui sont plus vil que onques mais ne vi!

who are more vile than ever before — I-saw

Dehait li bers qui est de tel sanblance

Curse the baron who is of such semblance

con li oixel qui conchiët son nit!

as the bird which fouls its nest

Po en i a n'ait son renne honi,

Few thereof there are (who-)not-has his realm shamed

por tant qu'il ait sor ses homes possance.

for so-much that-be may-have over his men power

Qui ces barons empiriés

Who these barons worsened

sert sans eür, ja n'ara tant servi

serves without fortune ever not-will-have so-much served

k'il lor em prenge pitiés;

that-it to-them thereof may-take pity

pour çou fait boin Dieu servir, ke je di

for this it-makes good God to-serve as I say

qu'en lui n'afiert ne eür ne kaance;

for-in him not-belongs neither fortune nor chance

mais ki mieus sert, et mieus li est meri.

but who better serves and better to-him is rewarded

Pleüst a Dieu k'Amors fesist ausi

Might-it-please to God that-Love did likewise

ensvers tos ceaus qui ens li ont fiance.

toward all those who in her have trust

Or vos ai dit des barons ma sanblance;

Now to-you I-have told of-the barons my opinion

si lor an poise de ceu que je di,

if to-them thereof it-grieves of that that I say

si s'an praingnent a mon mastre d'Oissi,

so themselves-thereof may-they-take to my master of-Oissi

qui m'at appris a chanter tres m'anfance.

who me-has taught to sing from my-childhood

Se raige et derverie

VI · THE SHE-WOLF

If madness and love's distress have made him speak folly, no one should blame him, since Love has betrayed him. His lady is fairer than an image but, like the she-wolf who chooses the worst of the wolves, has a vile heart. He renders her homage back and leaves her: the ground where he set his care is dry and bears no fruit.

Se raige et derverie

If madness and frenzy

et destrece d'amer

and distress of-loving

m'a fait dire folie

me-has made say folly

et d'amors mesparler,

and of-love misspeak

nus ne m'en doit blasmer.

anyone not me-thereof ought to-blame

S'ele a tort m'i fausnie,

If-she at wrong me-there betrays

Amors, qui j'ai servie,

Love whom I-have served

ne me sai ou fier.

not myself I-know where to-trust

Amors, de felonie

Love of felony

vous vaurai esprover;

you I-shall-wish to-prove

tolu m'avés la vie

taken from-me-you-have the life

et mort sans deffier.

and killed without defying

La m'avés fait penser

There me-you-have made think

ou ma joie est perie;

where my joy is perished

cele qui jou em prie

she whom I thereof pray

me fait d'autre esperer.

me makes of-other hope

Plus est belle k'imaige

More she-is fair than-image

cele ke je vos di,

she that I to-you tell

mais tant a vil coraige,

but so-much she-has vile heart

anuieus et failli,

vexing and base

k'ele fait tot ausi

that-she does all just-so

com la leuve sauvaige

as the she-wolf wild

ki des leus d'un boskaige

which of-the wolves of-a wood

trait le pieur a li.

draws the worst to her

N'a pas grant vasselaige

Not-has at-all great prowess

fait, s'ele m'a traï;

done if-she me-has betrayed

nus ne l'en tient por saige

anyone not her-thereof holds for wise

ki son estre ait oï;

who her being may-have heard

mais puis k'il est ensi

but since that-it is thus

k'ele a tort m'i desgaige,

that-she at wrong me-there releases

je li renc son homaige

I to-her render her homage

et si me part de li.

and so myself I-part from her

Mout est la terre dure,

Very is the land hard

sans eve et sans humor

without water and without moisture

ou j'ai mise ma cure,

where I-have put my care

mais n'i keudrai nul jor

but not-there I-shall-gather any day

fruit ne foille ne flor,

fruit nor leaf nor flower

s'est bien tans et mesure

so-is well time and measure

et raisons et droiture

both reason and right

ke li rende s'amor.

that to-ber I-render her-love

Belle doce Dame chiere

VII · THE ABBEY OF THE NEEDY

His lady's beauty so took him that he would have come back from Paradise for her love, though he never wronged her. In anger he tells some of his ills: curse on the covetous, false heart that sent him to Syria. He will weep no more for her, since she is the Abbey of the Needy, and he will not love her.

Belle doce Dame chiere,

Fair sweet Lady dear

vostre grans beautés entiere

your great beauty entire

m'a si pris

me-has so taken

ke, se iere em Paradis,

that if I-were in Paradise

si revenroie je arriere,

so would-come-back I back

por convent ke ma proiere

for covenant that my prayer

m'eüst mis

me-bad put

la ou fuisse vostre amis

there where I-might-be your friend

ne vers moi ne fuissiés fiere,

nor toward me not you-were fierce

car ainc ens nule maniere

for ever in any manner

ne forfis

not I-transgressed

par coi fuissies ma guerriere.

by which you-might-be my enemy

Ne lairai ke je ne die

Not I-shall-leave that I — may-say

de mes maus une partie

of my ills a part

come irous.

as angry-one

Dehaiz ait cuers covoitous,

Curse may-have heart covetous

fausse, plus vaire ke pie,

false more speckled than magpie

ki m'envoia en Surie!

which me-sent into Syria

Ja por vous

Ever for you

n'avrai mais les ieus plorours.

not-I-shall-have more the eyes weeping

Fous est ki en vous se fie,

Fool is who in you himself trusts

ke vos estes l'Abeïe

for you are the-Abbey

as Soffraitous,

of-the Needy

si ne vous amerai mie.

so not you I-shall-love at-all

Tant ai amé c'or me convient haïr

VIII · THE RING

He has loved so much he must now hate, yet hopes to regain a loyal love. A lady must not love him to betray him, lest she hear ill like the false Chapelaine. Those who say he erred over a willow covering and a ring he dragged are perjured: he did right, since the ring sealed the bond that betrayed him.

Tant ai amé c'or me convient haïr

So-much I-have loved that-now me it-behooves to-hate

et si ne quier mais amer,

and so not I-seek more to-love

s'en tel lieu n'est c'on ne saice traïr

if-in such place not-it-is that-one not knows-how to-betray

ne dechevoir ne fausser.

nor to-deceive nor to-falsify

Trop longement m'a duré ceste paine

Too long to-me-has lasted this pain

k'Amors m'a fait endurer;

that-Love me-has made endure

et non por quant loial amor certaine

and not for all-that loyal love certain

vaurai encoir recouvrer.

I-shall-wish yet to-recover

Ki or vauroit loial amor trover

Who now would-wish loyal love to-find

si viegne a moi por coisir!

so may-be-come to me for to-choose

Mais bien se doit belle dame garder

But well herself ought fair lady to-guard

k'ele ne m'aint pour traïr,

that-she not me-may-love for to-betray

k'ele feroit ke fole et ke vilaine,

for-she would-do as foolish-one and as churlish-one

s'em porroit tost mal oïr,

so-thereof she-could soon ill hear

ausi com fist la fause Chapelaine,

just as did the false Chapelaine

cui tos li mons doit haïr.

whom all the world ought to-hate

Assés i a de celes et de ceaus

Plenty there are of those-women and of those-men

ki dient ke j'ai mespris

who say that I-have erred

de çou ke fis covreture de saus,

of this that I-made covering of willow

mais mout a boin droit le fis,

but very with good right it I-did

et de l'anel ki fu mis en traïne,

and of the-ring which was put in dragging

mais a boin droit i fu mis,

but with good right there it-was put

car par l'anel fu faite la saisine

for by the-ring was made the seizin

dont je sui mors et traïs.

whereby I am dead and betrayed

A moult boen droit en fix ceu ke j'en fix,

With very good right thereof I-did that which I-thereof did

se Deus me doinst boens chevals!

so God me may-grant good horses

Et cil ki dient ke i ai mespris

And those who say that there I-have erred

sont perjuré et tuit fauls.

are perjured and all false

Por ceu dechiet bone amor et descline

For this declines good love and decays

que on lor souffre les mals,

that one to-them allows the ills

et cil ki cellent lor faulse covine

and those who conceal their false dealing

font les pluxors deloiauls.

make the most-folk disloyal

L'autrier un jor après la Saint Denise

IX · AT BÉTHUNE

At Béthune after Saint Denis's day he recalls those who falsely say he sang basely of ladies; he sang of only one, who deserved it. Punishing a thief should not offend the loyal. He has served his old lady long enough: another love fills his heart, the best in France, yet he fears that her worth will scorn him.

L'autrier un jor après la Saint Denise

The-other-day one day after the Saint Denise

fui a Betune, ou j'ai esté sovent.

I-was at Béthune where I-have been often

La me sosvint de gent de male guise

There to-me it-remembered of folk of evil fashion

ki m'ont mis sus mençoigne a entient:

who me-have put upon lie with intent

ke j'ai chanté des dames laidement;

that I-have sung of-the ladies basely

mais il n'ont pas ma chançon bien aprise:

but they not-have at-all my song well learned

je n'en chantai fors d'une solement,

I not-thereof sang except of-one only

qui bien forfist ke vengeance en fu prise.

who well transgressed that vengeance thereof was taken

Si n'est pas drois ke on me desconfise,

So not-is at-all right that one me may-discomfit

et vous dirai bien par raison coment:

and to-you I-shall-tell well by reason how

car se on fait d'un fort larron justise,

for if one does of-a strong thief justice

doit il despleire as loiaus de noient?

ought it to-displease to-the loyal of anything

Nenil, par Diu! qui raison i entent;

No by God who reason there understands

mais la raisons est si arriere mise

but the reason is so behind put

ke çou c'on doit loer blasment la gent

that that which-one ought to-praise blame the folk

et loent çou que nus autres ne prise.

and praise that which any other not prizes

Dame, lonc tans ai fait vostre servise,

Lady long time I-have done your service

la merci Deu! c'or n'en ai mais talant,

the mercy (of-)God that-now not-thereof I-have more desire

que m'est ou cuer une autre amor assise

for to-me-is in-the heart an other love set

que me requiert et alume et esprant

which me asks and lights and kindles

et me semont d'amer si hatement,

and me summons to-love so highly

c'an li n'en a ne orgoil ne faintise;

that-in her not-thereof there-is neither pride nor pretense

et jel ferai, ne puet estre autrement,

and I-it shall-do not it-can be otherwise

si me metrai dou tout an sa franchise.

so myself I-shall-put of-the all in her nobleness

A la millor del roiaume de France,

To the best of-the kingdom of France

voire del mont, ai mon cuer atorné,

truly of-the world I-have my heart turned

et non por quant pavor ai et dotance

and not for all-that fear I-have and doubt

ke sa valors ne me tiegne en vilté,

that her worth — me may-hold in baseness

car tant redoc orgelleuse beauté;

for so-much I-dread proud beauty

et Dieus m'en doinst trover bone esperance,

and God me-thereof may-grant to-find good hope

k'en tot le mont n'a orgoill ne fierté

for-in all the world not-is pride nor fierceness

k'Amors ne puist plaissier par sa poissance.

that-Love not can bend by her power

L'autrier avint en cel autre païs

X · TROY IN RUINS

*A lady who refused a knight her love in her prime offers it now, pale and faded,
and he answers that she thought of it too late. She says she was mocking him; he
replies that her worth, like Troy, is now only ruins. She boasts of her rank and her
suitsors, but he says a lady is loved for beauty, courtesy, and wisdom, not lineage.*

L'autrier avint en cel autre païs

The-other-day it-happened in that other country

c'uns chevaliers eut une dame amee.

that-a knight had a lady loved

Tant com la dame fu en son bon pris,

So-long as the lady was in her good worth

li a s'amor escondite et vee.

to-him she-has her-love refused and denied

Puis fu un jors k'ele li dist: «Amis,

Then was a day that-she to-him said Friend

mené vous ai par parole mains dis;

led you I-have by word many days

ore est l'amors coneüe et provee.

now is the-love known and proved

Des or mais sui tot a vostre devis.»

From now on I-am all at your choice

Li chevalliers le regarda el vis,

The knight her regarded in-the face

si la vit mout pale et descoulouree.

so her saw very pale and discolored

«Dame», fait il, «certes mal sui baillis

Lady says he certainly ill I-am treated

ke n'eüstes piech'a ceste pensee.

that not-you-had long-since this thought

Vostres cler vis, ki sambloit flors de lis,

Your bright face which seemed flower of lily

est si alés, dame, de mal em pis

is so gone lady from bad into worse

k'il m'est a vis ke me soiés emblee.

that-it to-me-is to seeming that from-me you-are stolen

A tart avés, dame, cest consell pris.»

Too late you-have lady this counsel taken

Quant la dame s'oï si ramprosner,

When the lady herself-heard so mocked

grant honte en ot, si dist par sa folie:

great shame thereof she-had so said by her folly

«Par Dieu, vassal, jel dis por vos gaber.

By God vassal I-it said for you to-mock

Quidiés vos dont k'a chertes le vos die?

Think you then that-in earnest it to-you I-may-say

Onques nul jor ne me vint em penser.

Ever any day not to-me came in thought

Sariés vos dont dame de pris amer?

Would-know you then lady of worth to-love

Nenil, par Dieu! ains vos prendroit envie

No by God rather you would-take desire

d'un bel vallet baisier et acoler.»

of-a fair youth to-kiss and to-embrace

— «Dame», fait il, «j'ai bien oï parler

Lady says he I-have well heard speak

de vostre pris, mais ce n'est ore mie;

of your worth but this not-is now at-all

et de Troie rai jou oï conter

and of Troy have-in-turn I heard tell

k'ele fu ja de mout grant signorie;

that-it was once of very great lordship

or n'i puet on fors les plaices trover.

now not-there can one except the sites find

Et si vous lo ensi a escuser

And so you I-advise thus to excuse

ke cil soient reté de l'iresie

that those be charged with the-heresy

qui des or mais ne vous vauront amer.»

who from now on not you will-wish to-love

— «Par Dieu, vassal, mout avés fol pensé,

By God vassal very you-have foolish thought

quant vous m'avés reprové mon eaige.

when you me-have reproached my age

Se j'avoie tot mon jovent usé,

If I-bad all my youth used

si sui jou riche et de si haut paraige

so am I rich and of so high lineage

c'om m'ameroit a petit de beauté.

that-one me-would-love with little of beauty

Encoir n'a pas un mois entir passé

Yet not-has at-all a month entire passed

ke li Marchis m'envoia son messaige,

that the Marquis me-sent bis message

et li Barrois a por m'amor josté.»

and the Barrois has for my-love jousted

— «Par Dieu, dame, ce vos a mout grevé

By God lady this you has much grieved

ke vos fiés tos jors ens signoraige;

that you trust all days in lordship

mais tel set ont ja por vos sospiré,

but such seven have already for you sighed

se vos estiés fille au Roi de Cartaige,

if you were daughter to-the King of Carthage

ki ja mais jor n'en aront volenté.

who ever more day not-thereof will-have will

On n'aime pas dame por parenté,

One not-loves at-all lady for kinship

mais quant ele est belle et cortoise et saige.

but when she is fair and courteous and wise

Vos en savrés par tans la verité.»

You thereof will-know in time the truth

COLIN MUSET

Les Chansons de Colin Muset

The Songs of Colin Muset

Volez oïr la muse Muset

I • THE GARLAND

One May morning in an orchard he made a garland, and a laughing damsel called him to fiddle. He sang to her in the meadow; her blond hair and fair body made his heart leap, and she repaid him with a kiss and more. Now Colin Muset has piped for her, shared good morsels and strong wine, and still courts.

Volez oïr la muse Muset?

Wish-you to-hear the piping (of-)Muset

En mai fu fete, un matinet,

In May it-was made one early-morning

en un vergier flori, verdet,

in an orchard flowered green

au point du jour,

at-the point of-the day

ou chantoient cil oiselet

where sang those little-birds

par grant baudor,

with great mirth

et j'alai fere un chapelet

and I-went to-make a garland

en la verdor.

in the greenery

Je le fis bel et cointe et net

I it made fair and elegant and neat

et plain de flor.

and full of flower

Une dancele

A damsel

avenant et mult bele,

comely and very fair

gente pucele,

noble maiden

bouchete riant,

little-mouth laughing

qui me rapele:

who me calls-back

«Vien ça, si viele

Come here so fiddle

* * *

(lacuna)

ta muse en chantant

thy piping in singing

tant mignotement.»

so daintily

J'alai a li el praelet

I-went to her in-the little-meadow

atout la viele et l'archet,

with the fiddle and the-bow

si li ai chanté le muset

so to-her I-have sung the little-piping

par grant amour:

with great love

«J'ai mis mon cuer en si bon cuer

I-have put my heart in so good heart

espris d'amors...»,

kindled with-love

et quant je vi son chief blondet

and when I saw her head blond

et sa color

and her color

et son gent cors amoreuset

and her noble body lovely

et si d'ator,

and so of-array

mon cuer sautele

my heart leaps

pour la damoisele;

for the damsel

mult renouele

much renews

ma joie souvent.

my joy often

Ele ot gounele

She had gown

de drap de Castele

of cloth of Castile

qui restencele.

which sparkles

Douz Deus, je l'aim tant

Sweet God I her-love so-much

de cuer loiaument!

with heart loyally

Quant j'oi devant li vïelé

When I-had before her fiddled

pour avoir s'amour et son gré,

for to-have her-love and her favor

elle m'a bien guerredoné,

she me-has well rewarded

soe merci,

her mercy

d'un besier a ma volenté,

with-a kiss at my will

Deus! que j'aim si!

God how I-love so

Et autre chose m'a donné

And other thing me-she-has given

com son ami,

as her friend

que j'avoie tant desirré:

which I-had so-much desired

or m'est meri!

now to-me-it-is rewarded

Plus sui en joie

More I-am in joy

que je ne soloie,

than I — was-wont

quant cele est moie

since she is mine

que je tant desir;

whom I so-much desire

je n'en prendroie

I not-for-her would-take

n'avoir ne mounoie;

nor-wealth nor money

pour riens que voie

for anything that I-may-see

ne m'en qier partir;

not myself-thence I-seek to-part

ançois vueil morir.

rather I-wish to-die

Or a Colin Muset musé

Now has Colin Muset piped

et s'a a devise chanté

and so-has at wish sung

pour la bele au vis coloré,

for the fair-one with-the face colored

de cuer joli.

with heart merry

Maint bon morsel li a doné

Many-a good morsel to-her he-has given

et departi

and shared

et de bon vin fort a son gré,

and of good wine strong at her liking

gel vous affi.

I-it to-you affirm

Ensi a son siecle mené

Thus he-has his life led

jusques ici.

up-to here

Oncor dognoie,

Yet he-courts

en chantant maine joie,

in singing he-leads joy

mult se cointoie,

much himself he-adorns

qu'Amors veut servir,

for-Love he-wishes to-serve

si a grant joie

so he-has great joy

el vergier ou dognoie,

in-the orchard where he-courts

bien se conroie,

well himself he-arrays

bon vin fet venir

good wine he-makes come

trestout a loisir.

all at leisure

Moult m'anuie d'iver ke tant a duré

II · A MERRIER SUMMER

He is weary of the long winter, and now that the season is renewed he must be merrier than ever, since his fair, blond lady has bidden it and restored his despairing heart. Slanderers have made the world discourteous, but a loyal lover can have great joy. Her gray eyes and sweet smile keep him gay.

Moult m'anuie d'iver ke tant a duré,
Much me-vexes of-winter that so-long has lasted
ke je ne voi rossignol en bruel ramé,
that I not see nightingale in thicket branched
et des ke je voi le tens renouvelé,
and since that I see the season renewed
si me covient ke je soie en cest esté
so me it-bebooves that I be in this summer
plus mignoz et envoisiez ke n'aie esté.
more dainty and merry than I-may-have been

Bone dame belle et blonde l'a loué,
Good lady fair and blond it-has counseled
s'est bien droiz ke j'en face sa volenté,
so-is well right that I-thereof may-do her will
ke j'avoie tout le cuer desesperé.
for I-had all the heart despaired
Par son doulz comandement l'ai recovré;
By her sweet command it-I-have recovered
or a mis en moult grant joie mon pensé.
now she-has put in very great joy my thought

Ja de joie faire ne serai eschis,
Ever of joy making not I-shall-be shy
 puis ke ma dame le veult, au simple vis,
since that my lady it wishes with-the simple face
 et g'i ai si por s'amor mon pensé mis
and I-there have so for her-love my thought put
 ke ne poroie trover, ce m'est avis,
that not I-could find this to-me-is opinion
 dame de si grant valor ne de tel pris.
lady of so great worth nor of such renown

Mesdisant ont tout le mont en mal point mis,
Slanderers have all the world in bad state put
 ke li siecles n'est mais cortois ne jolis,
for the world not-is more courteous nor merry
 et nonporcant ki seroit loials amis,
and nevertheless who would-be loyal friend
 k'il ne fust fols ne vilains ne mal apris,
that-he not were fool nor churl nor ill taught
 cil poroit avoir grant joie a son devis.
he could have great joy at his wish

Sa beauté et si vair uel et ses doulz ris

Her beauty and her gray eyes and her sweet laugh

me tiennent mignot et gai; plus sui jolis

me keep dainty and gay more I-am merry

ke je n'avoie ainz esté, ce vos plevis.

than I had ever been this to-you I-pledge

C'est por la meillor ki soit jusc'a Paris.

This-is for the best who may-be up-to Paris

Sospris sui d'une amorette

III · THE PRINCESS OF TUDELA

He is taken with the daughter of the king of Tudela, fair and blond, in a robe of cloth of gold, a golden garland with sapphires and emeralds, and a jeweled silk girdle. He saw her one morning beside a rosebush, shining like the morning star, and forgot himself until she was gone. He will go to her country to ask for her love.

Sospris sui d'une amorette

Seized I-am by-a little-love

d'une jone pucelette:

by-a young little-maiden

bele est et blonde et blanchette

fair she-is and blond and white

plus que n'est une erminette,

more than is a little-ermine

s'a la color vermeillette

so-has the color rosy

ensi com une rosette.

just as a little-rose

Itels estoit la pucele,

Such was the maiden

la fille au roi de Tudele;

the daughter to-the king of Tudela

d'un drap d'or qui refflambele

of-a cloth of-gold which gleams

ot robe fresche et novele,

she-had robe fresh and new

mantel, sorcot et gonele:

mantle surcoat and gown

mout sist bien a la donzele.

very sat well to the damsel

En son chief ot chapel d'or

On her head she-had garland of-gold

ki reluist et estancele;

whiche shines and sparkles

saphirs, rubiz ot encor

sapphires rubies she-had also

et mainte esmeraude bele.

and many-an emerald fair

Biaus Deus, et c'or fusse j'or

Fair God and would-that-now were I-now

amis a tel damoisele!

friend to such damsel

Sa ceinture fu de soie,

Her girdle was of silk

d'or et de pieres ovree;

with-gold and with stones worked

toz li cors li refluamboie,

all the body to-her gleams

ensi fut enluminee.

thus she-was illumined

Or me doinst Deus de li joie,

Now to-me may-grant God of her joy

k'ailors nen ai ma panseie!

for-elsewhere not I-have my thought

G'esgardai son cors gai

I-regarded her body gay

qui tant me plaist et agree.

which so-much me pleases and suits

Je morrai, bien lo sai,

I shall-die well it I-know

tant l'ai de cuer enameie!

so-much her-I-have with heart loved

Se Deu plaist, non ferai,

If (to-)God it-pleases not I-shall-do

ainçois m'iert s'amors donee!

rather to-me-will-be her-love given

En un trop bel vergier

In an exceedingly fair orchard

la vi cele matinee

her I-saw that morning

juer et solacier;

to-play and to-disport

ja par moi n'iert obliee,

ever by me not-she-will-be forgotten

car bien sai, senz cuidier,

for well I-know without supposing

ja si bele n'iert trovee.

ever so fair not-will-be found

Lez un rosier s'est assise

Beside a rosebush herself-is seated

la tres bele et la sennee;

the very fair and the wise

ele resplant a devise

she shines at wish

com estoile a l'anjornee;

as star at the-daybreak

s'amors m'esprent et atise

her-love me-kindles and stirs

qui enz el cuer m'est entree.

which within in-the heart to-me-is entered

El regarder m'obliai

In-the looking myself-I-forgot

tant qu'ele s'en fu alee.

until that-she herself-thence was gone

Deus! tant mar la resgardai,

God so-much in-an-ill-hour her I-looked-at

quant si tost m'est eschapee,

since so soon from-me-she-is escaped

que ja mais joie n'avrai

for ever more joy not-I-shall-have

se par li ne m'est donee!

if by her not to-me-is given

Tantost com l'oi regardee,

As-soon as her-I-had regarded

bien cuidai qu'ele fust fee.

well I-thought that-she were fairy

Ne lairoie por riens nee

Not I-would-leave for anything born

qu'encor n'aille en sa contree,

that-yet I-may-go into her country

tant que j'aie demandee

until that I-may-have asked

s'amor ou mes fins cuers bee.

her-love where my true heart aims

Et s'ele devient m'amie,

And if-she becomes my-friend

ma granz joie iert acomplie,

my great joy will-be fulfilled

ne je n'en prendroie mie

nor I not-for-it would-take at-all

lo roialme de Surie,

the kingdom of Syria

car trop meine bone vie

for exceedingly leads good life

qui aime en tel seignorie.

who loves in such lordship

Deu pri qu'il me face aïe,

(To-)God I-pray that-he me may-make help

que d'autre nen ai envie.

for of-other not I-have desire

En mai, quant li rossignolet

IV · THE FLAGEOLET

In May he makes a willow flageolet that only a man who spends freely and loves truly can play, and gives his garland to Garnier, who does both. His blonde keeps him so gay he forgets his debts. He is Colin Muset, who eats capons and cakes, lodges by her where a host gives credit, and will not trot after a bad lord.

En mai, quant li rossignolet

In May when the little-ningtongales

chantent cler ou vert boissonet,

sing clear in-the green little-bush

lors m'estuet faire un flajolet,

then me-bebooves to-make a flageolet

si le ferai d'un saucelet,

so it I-shall-make of-a little-willow

qu'il m'estuet d'amors flajoler

for-it me-bebooves of-love to-pipe

et chapelet de flor porter

and garland of flower to-wear

por moi deduire et deporter,

for myself to-delight and to-disport

qu'adès ne doit on pas muser.

for-ever not ought one at-all to-dally

L'autrier en mai, un matinet,

The-other-day in May one early-morning

m'esveillerent li oiselet,

me-woke the little-birds

s'alai cuillir un saucelet,

so-I-went to-gather a little-willow

si en ai fait un flajolet;

so thereof I-have made a flageolet

mais nuns hons n'en peut flajoler

but any man not-thereon can pipe

s'il ne fait par tout a loer

if-he not is through all to praise

en bel despendre et en amer

in fair spending and in loving

tot sanz faintise et sanz guiler.

all without pretense and without cheating

Garnier, cui je vi joliet,

Garnier whom I saw merry

celui donrai mon chapelet.

to-him I-shall-give my garland

De bel despendre s'entremet,

Of fair spending himself-be-busies

en lui nen a point de regret,

in him not there-is a-whit of regret

et por ce li vuil je doner

and for this to-him wish I to-give

qu'il aime bruit et hutiner

for-he loves noise and to-revel

et aime de cuer sanz fauser;

and loves with heart without falsehood

ensi le covient il ovrer.

thus him behooves it to-work

La damoisele au chief blondet

The damsel with-the head blond

me tient tot gai et cointelet;

me keeps all gay and spruce

en tel joie le cuer me met

in such joy the heart to-me she-puts

qu'il ne me sovient de mon det:

that-it not to-me remembers of my debt

honiz soit qui por endeter

shamed be who for getting-in-debt

laira bone vie a mener!

will-leave good life to lead

Adès les voit on eschaper,

Ever them sees one escape

a quel chief qu'il doie torner.

at what end that-it may turn

L'en m'apele Colin Muset,

One me-calls Colin Muset

s'ai mangié maint bon chaponet,

so-I-have eaten many-a good little-capon

mainte haste, maint gastelet

many-a roast many-a little-cake

en vergier et en praelet,

in orchard and in little-meadow

et quant je puis l'oste trover

and when I can the-host find

qui veut acroire et bien prester,

who wishes to-give-credit and well to-lend

adonc me preng a sejourner

then myself I-take to sojourn

selon la blondete au vis cler.

beside the little-blonde with-the face bright

N'ai cure de roncin lasser

Not-I-have care of nag to-tire

après mauvais seignor troter:

after bad lord to-trot

s'il heent bien mon demander,

if-they hate well my asking

et je, cent tanz, lor refuser.

and I hundred times their refusing

Or veul chanter et soulacier

V • A LOYAL CRAFT

He wants to sing and make merry, since he knows no craft so loyal. If his sweet friend helps him he will prosper, though envious folk keep him away, and one should shun their company. He is wholly his lady's and will lead a good life whatever the chattering say. To last in the world, be worthy, give freely, and love loyally.

Or veul chanter et soulacier

Now I-wish to-sing and to-solace

et faire joie et renvoisier,

and to-make joy and to-make-merry

ke ne sai si loial mestier;

for not I-know so loyal craft

por ce ne le veul je laissier.

for this not it wish I to-leave

Se ma douce amie

If my sweet friend

cui je ne hé mie

whom I not hate at-all

me veult faire aïe,

me wishes to-make help

bien puis exploitier.

well I-can succeed

Sa grant cortoisie

Her great courtesy

m'a randu la vie,

me-has rendered the life

mais gent plain d'envie

but folk full of-envy

m'en font esloignier.

me-thence make go-far

Adès se painent d'encuser

Ever themselves they-strive to-accuse

ceuls ki bien aiment sens fausser,

those who well love without falsehood

si s'en doit on moult bien garder

so oneself-thence ought one very well to-guard

et lor compaignie eschuer.

and their company to-eschew

Je veul bien ma dame noncier

I wish well (to-)my lady to-announce

ke je sui tous siens sens trichier,

that I am wholly hers without cheating

ne ja de li partir ne quier;

nor ever from her to-part not I-seek

adès veul estre en son dongier.

ever I-wish to-be in her power

Trestoute ma vie

All my life

menrai bone vie;

I-shall-lead good life

fine Amor m'en prie,

true Love me-thereof prays

ki m'i puet aidier.

who me-there can aid

Je nel lairai mie

I not-it shall-leave at-all

por la gent haïe;

for the folk hated

lor grant vilenie

their great baseness

ne prise un denier;

not I-prize a penny

ne servent fors ke de jangler,

not they-serve except that of chattering

ne nuls hons nes doit escouter;

nor any man not-them ought to-heed

ja por eus ne lairai l'amer,

ever for them not I-shall-leave the-loving

ne ma grant joie a demener.

nor my great joy to lead

Ki est mauvais bien est chetis;

Who is wicked well is wretched

il valt assez mieus morz que vis.

he is-worth much better dead than alive

Proudons n'en iert ja entrepris:

Worthy-man not-thereof will-be ever hampered

adès croist et hausse ses priz.

ever grows and rises his worth

Prouesce est loee,

Prowess is praised

mauvestiés blamee,

wickedness blamed

gent desesperee

folk despairing

font adès le pis.

do ever the worst

Ma dame honoree,

My lady honored

ki a honor bee,

who to honor aims

sa joie est doublee

her joy is doubled

nes en paradis.

even in paradise

Ki bien veult au siecle durer

Who well wishes in-the world to-last

si soit prous et sache doner

so let-him-be valiant and know-how to-give

et loiaument aint senz fausser:

and loyally let-him-love without falsehood

ensi puet sa joie finer.

thus can his joy fulfill

Une novele amorette que j'ai

VI • MERCY

A new love makes him sing, not for rose or lily but for the blonde he will die for unless mercy helps. He asks, begs, wishes, and desires mercy of her alone and will love her loyally though slanderers keep him waiting. He heard her sing in an orchard at the start of May, and he will wait for her at leisure, since good service cannot perish.

Une novele amorette que j'ai

A new little-love that I-have

me fait chanter et renvoisier;

me makes sing and make-merry

lo cuer en ai amoroset et gai,

the heart thereof I-have loving and gay

ne ja de ceu partir ne quier.

nor ever from that to-part not I-seek

Rose ne lis ne florette de glai

Rose nor lily nor little-flower of iris

ne lo me fait recomencier,

not it to-me makes begin-again

fors la blondette por cui je morrai,

except the little-blonde for whom I shall-die

se merci ne m'i puet aidier.

if mercy not me-there can aid

Merci demanz, merci requier,

Mercy I-ask mercy I-request

merci vuel et merci desir.

mercy I-wish and mercy I-desire

A la blonde lo vuel proier,

To the blonde it I-wish to-pray

k'autre ne m'en porroit garir,

for-other not me-thereof could cure

n'autre ne m'en porroit aidier,

nor-other not me-thereof could aid

n'autre n'est tant a mon plaisir.

nor-other not-is so-much to my pleasure

Je la servirai senz dangier,

I her shall-serve without resistance

se tout ne lo me vuet merir.

if all not it to-me she-wishes to-reward

Bele et blondette, je vos amerai

Fair and blond-one I you shall-love

de boen cuer leal et entier,

with good heart loyal and entire

ne ja de vos ne me departirai;

nor ever from you not myself I-shall-depart

miez me lairoie depecier.

rather myself I-would-let cut-to-pieces

En ceste bone pensee serai,

In this good thought I-shall-be

ne nuns ne m'en poroit getier;

nor anyone not me-thence could cast

mais trop me tiennent en malvais delai

but too-much me hold in bad delay

felon mesdisant losengier.

cruel slandering flatterers

Je redout tant lor encombrier,

I dread so-much their hindrance

que trop se peinent de traïr

for too-much themselves they-strive to betray

cels qui bien aiment senz dangier,

those who well love without resistance

ne ja ne les en voi joïr.

nor ever not them thereof I-see enjoy

Bien se doit la blonde gaitier,

Well herself ought the blonde to-watch

k'adès vuelent d'anui servir,

for-ever they-wish with-trouble to-serve

ne moi ne li nen ont mestier

neither me nor her not they-have use

por nostre joie departir.

for our joy to-divide

L'autrier un jor a l'entree de mai,

The-other-day one day at the-entry of May

l'oï chanter en un vergier,

her-I-heard sing in an orchard

mais onques mais si bele n'esgardai,

but ever before so fair not-I-looked-at

ceu vos porroie fiancier.

this to-you I-could pledge

Deus, tres douz Deus, et quele amorette ai,
God very sweet God and what little-love I-have

s'ele la me vuet outroier,

if-she it to-me wishes to-grant

ne ja mais jor senz joie ne serai,

nor ever more day without joy not I-shall-be

se de s'amor puis exploitier.

if of her-love I-can succeed

Je desir tant li embracier

I desire so-much her to-embrace

et li veoir et li oïr,

and her to-see and her to-hear

se de li ai un douz baisier

if from her I-have a sweet kiss

nus mals ne me poroit venir;

any ill not to-me could come

ne m'en porroient forjugier

not me-thereof could dispossess

malvaise gent par lor mentir.

evil folk by their lying

Con que me doie delaier,

How ever me she-may delay

je l'atendrai tot a loisir,

I her-shall-await all at leisure

ke fine amors me fait cuidier

for true love me makes think

boens services ne puet perir.

good service not can perish

Trop volentiers chanteroie

VII · THE WORLD GONE WRONG

He would sing if the world were worth it, and sings anyway because Love forbids him a sorrowful heart. Were he God he would remake the world with better people, since the rich grow meaner the more they have and die like the poor. He praises the lord of Waignonrut, steadfast as a diamond, and the count of Widemont.

Trop volentiers chanteroie

Exceedingly willingly I-would-sing

se je savoie coment,

if I knew how

et bone vie menroie

and good life I-would-lead

se li siecles valoit tant

if the world were-worth so-much

qui me tormente forment,

which me torments greatly

et nomporgant tote voie

and nevertheless all the-same

chanterai joieusement,

I-shall-sing joyfully

que bone Amors lo m'aprent.

for good Love it me-teaches

Puis k'Amors vuet que je soie

Since that-Love wishes that I be

liez et renvoisiez sovent,

glad and merry often

et mes fins cuers s'i outroie

and my true heart itself-there grants

si tres debonairement,

so very graciously

se li siecles se repent,

if the world itself repents

nule riens je n'i donroie,

any thing I not-there would-give

ke bone Amors me deffent

for good Love me forbids

que ja n'aie cuer dolant.

that ever I-may-have heart sorrowful

Amors m'aprent et chastoie

Love me-teaches and chastens

d'un trop bel chastement,

with-a exceedingly fair chastening

k'en compaignie ne voise

that-in company not I-may-go

de nule malvaie gent,

of any evil folk

car de lor acointement

for from their acquaintance

a nul jor mielz ne valdroie.

on any day better not I-would-be-worth

Il sont de fol escient;

They are of foolish mind

au diable les comant.

to-the devil them I-commend

Se g'iere Deus, je feroie

If I-were God I would-make

lo siecle tot autrement,

the world all otherwise

et meillor gent i metroie,

and better folk there I-would-put

car cist n'i valent neient.

for these not-there avail anything

Kant plus ont or et argent,

When more they-have gold and silver

vair et gris et dras de soie,

vair and gray and cloths of silk

tant sont moins large metant;

so-much they-are less generous spending

plus que jeus usure prent.

more than Jew usury takes

Cist siecles faut et desvoie

This world fails and strays

chascun jor trop malement,

each day too badly

et kant plus vos en diroie,

and how-much more to-you thereof I-would-say

je n'i voi home joiant,

I not-there see man joyful

et si muerent alsiment

and so they-die likewise

a tot mil mars en monoie

with all thousand marks in money

come cil qui n'a neient;

as he who not-has anything

trop se mainent folement.

too-much themselves they-conduct foolishly

Mon boen seignor prieroie

My good lord I-would-pray

de Waignonrut, lo vaillant,

of Waignonrut the valiant

que por Deu ne se recroie:

that for God not himself he-may-desist

il fu nez en boen croissant.

he was born in good waxing

Molt a mis son pris avant,

Much he-has put his worth forward

qu'il ne false ne ne ploie,

for-he not falters nor not bends

ne nule foiz ne desment,

nor any time not gives-way

ne que piere d'äyman.

no-more than stone of-diamond

De Waignonrut la menroie

From Waignonrut it I-would-lead

a Widemont maintenant.

to Widemont at-once

Lo boen conte prieroie,

The good count I-would-pray

k'adès a lo cuer joiant;

who-always has the heart joyful

molt en dient bien la gent;

much thereof say well the folk

au siecle a bien fait sa voie,

in-the world he-has well made his way

que nus hom ne li deffant

that any man not to-him forbids

tant con lo savront vivant.

so-long as him they-will-know living

Quant voi lo douz tens repairier

VIII • A DESCORT FOR THE DUCHESS

When the sweet season returns his grief should ease, but love's delays kill him. He is Love's liege man and asks his lady's pity, though he dares not pray to her; whoever would enjoy love must endure. He asks her for a smile and will serve her all his life, and brings his descort to the good duchess, who loves pleasure and giving.

Quant voi lo douz tens repairier,

When I-see the sweet season return

que li rosignols chante en mai,

when the nightingale sings in May

et je cuiz que doie alegier

and I think that ought to-lighten

li mals et la dolors que j'ai,

the ill and the grief that I-have

adonc m'ocient li delai

then me-kill the delays

d'amors, qui les font engregnier.

of-love which them make worsen

Las! mar vi onques son cor gai,

Alas in-an-ill-hour I-saw ever her body gay

s'a ma vie ne lo conquer!

if-in my life not it I-conquer

Amors de moi ne cuide avoir pechiez

Love of me not thinks to-have sin

por ceu que sui ses hom liges sosgiez.

for this that I-am her man liege subject

Douce dame, pregne vos en pitiez!

Sweet lady may-take you thereof pity

Qui plus s'abaisse, plus est essauciez.

Who more himself-lowers more is exalted

Et qant si grant chose empris ai

And since so great thing undertaken I-have

con de vostre amor chalengier,

as of your love to-claim

toz tens en pardons servirai,

all times in gift I-shall-serve

se tost n'en ai altre loieir.

if soon not-thereof I-have other reward

Ma tres douce dame honoree,

My very sweet lady honored

je ne vos os nes proier;

I not you dare even to-pray

cil est mout fols qui si haut bee

he is very foolish who so high aims

ou il nen ose aprochier.

where he not dares to-approach

Mais tote voie

But all the-same

tres bien revoudroie

very well I-would-wish-in-turn

vostre amors fust moie

your love were mine

por moi ensengnier,

for me to-teach

car a grant joie

for with great joy

vit et s'esbanoie

lives and himself-disports

cui Amors maistroie;

whom Love masters

meuz s'en doit proisier.

better himself-thereof ought to-prize

Qui bien vuet d'amors joïr

Who well wishes of-love to-enjoy

si doit soffrir

so ought to-suffer

et endurer

and to-endure

qan k'ele li vuet merir;

whatever that-she him wishes to-reward

au repentir

at-the repenting

ne doit panser,

not ought to-think

c'om puet bien, tot a loisir,

for-one can well all at leisure

son boen desir

bis good desire

a point mener.

to point to-lead

Endroit de moi criem morir

In-respect of me I-fear to-die

meuz que garir

rather than to-recover

par bien amer.

by well loving

Se je n'ai la joie grant

If I not-have the joy great

que mes fins cuers va chacent,

which my true heart goes hunting

deffenir m'estuet briement.

to-end me-behooves briefly

Douce riens por cui je chant,

Sweet thing for whom I sing

en mon descort vos demant

in my descort of-you I-ask

un ris debonairemant,

a laugh graciously

s'en vivrai plus longemant;

so-thereby I-shall-live more long

moins en avrai de torment.

less thereof I-shall-have of torment

Bele, j'ai si grant envie

Fair-one I-have so great desire

d'embracier vostre cors gent,

of-embracing your body noble

s'Amors ne m'en fait aïe,

if-Love not me-thereof makes help

j'en morrai coiteusement.

I-thereof shall-die hastily

Amors ne m'en faudrat mie,

Love not me-thereof will-fail at-all

car je l'ai trop bien servie

for I her-have exceedingly well served

et ferai tote ma vie

and shall-do all my life

senz nule fause pansee.

without any false thought

Preuz de tote gent loee

Worthy by all folk praised

plus que nule qui soit nee,

more than any who may-be born

se vostre amors m'est donee,

if your love to-me-is given

bien iert ma joie doublee.

well will-be my joy doubled

Mon descort ma dame aport
My descort (to-)my lady I-bring
 la bone duchesse, por chanter;
the good duchess for to-sing
 de toz biens a li m'acort,
of all good-things to her myself-I-accord
 k'ele aime deport, rire et juer.
for-she loves pleasure laughing and playing

Dame, or vos voil bien mostrer
Lady now to-you I-wish well to-show
 que je ne sai vostre per
that I not know your peer
 de bone vie mener
of good life leading
 et de leialment amer.
and of loyally loving
 Adès vos voi enmender
Ever you I-see improve
 en vaillance et en doner.
in valor and in giving
 Nel lassiez ja por jangler,
Not-it leave ever for chattering
 que ceu ne vos puet grever.
for this not you can grieve

Ancontre le tens novel

IX · TRIBOUDEL

In spring his heart is gay and he makes a triboudel, loving noise, feasting, and mirth; God confound whoever does not love joy. Flutes, drums, and garlands please him more than a castle. A knight who jousts well deserves a lady's ring, a miser goes to the Devil, and he will spend his mantle on geese, beef, fish, and wine.

Ancontre le tens novel

Against the season new

ai le cuer gai et inel

I-have the heart gay and nimble

au termine de pascor;

at-the term of spring

lors veul faire un triboudel,

then I-wish to-make a triboudel

car j'ain moult tribu martel,

for I-love much hubbub hammering

bruit et barnage et baudor,

noise and lordly-show and mirth

et quant je sui en chastel

and when I am in castle

plain de joie et de revel,

full of joy and of revel

la veul estre et nuit et jor.

there I-wish to-be both night and day

Triboudaine et triboudel!

Triboudaine and triboudel

Deus confonde le musel

God may-confound the snout

ki n'aime joie et baudor!

who not-loves joy and mirth

De toute joie m'est bel,

Of all joy to-me-it-is fair

et quant j'oi le flaütel

and when I-hear the little-flute

soner avuec le tabor,

sound with the drum

damoiselles et donzel

damsels and squires

chantent et font grand revel,

sing and make great revel

chascuns a chapel de flour,

each has garland of flower

la verdure et li brondelz

the greenery and the branches

et li douls chans des oisels

and the sweet song of-the birds

me remet en grant baudour.

me puts-back in great mirth

Triboudainne, triboudel!

Triboudaine triboudel

Plus sui liés, par saint Marcel!

More I-am glad by saint Marcel

ke tels a chastel ou tour.

than such has castle or tower

Ki bien broche le poutrel

Who well spurs the colt

et tient l'escu en chantel

and holds the-shield in slant

au comencier de l'estor

at-the beginning of the-battle

et met la lance en estel,

and puts the lance in splinters

por mielz vaincre le cembel

for better to-win the tourney

vait assembler a meilleur,

goes to-join with better

cil doit bien avoir joel

he ought well to-have jewel

de belle dame et anel

from fair lady and ring

par druerie et amor.

by love-dealing and love

Triboudainne, triboudel

Triboudaine triboudel

por la belle au chief blondel

for the fair-one with-the head blond

ki a fresche la color!

who has fresh the color

Tels amasse en un moncel

Such heaps in a pile

mil mars et fait grant fardel

thousand marks and makes great bundle

ki vit a grant deshonor:

who lives in great dishonor

ja n'en avra bon morcel

ever not-thereof he-will-have good morsel

et diable en ont la pel,

and devils thereof have the skin

cors et ame sens retor.

body and soul without return

Por ceu veul jeu mon mantel

For this wish I my mantle

despandre tost et inel

to-spend soon and nimbly

en bone ville a sejour.

in good town at sojourn

Triboudainne, triboudel!

Triboudaine triboudel

Ke valt avois en fardel,

What is-worth wealth in bundle

s'on nel despent a honor?

if-one not-it spends with honor

Quant je la tieng ou prael

When I her hold in-the little-meadow

tout entor clos d'arbrissels

all around closed with-sbrubs

en esté a la verdour

in summer at the greenery

et j'ai oies et gastel,

and I-have geese and cake

poissons, tartes et porcel,

fish tarts and piglet

buef a la verde savor,

beef with the green sauce

et j'ai le vin en tonel,

and I-have the wine in cask

froit et fort et friandel

cold and strong and dainty

por boivre a la grant cholor,

for to-drink in the great heat

miels m'i aim k'en un batel

better myself-there I-love than-in a boat

en la mer en grant poour.

on the sea in great fear

Triboudainne, triboudel!

Triboudaine triboudel

Plus aim le jeu de prael

More I-love the game of little-meadow

ke faire malvais sejour.

than to-make bad sojourn

En ceste note dirai

X · ROAST GOOSE

He sings of a new love for whom he will be merry and wear garlands. Since he first saw her he cannot sleep, and he will die of loving unless she keeps him, and he is wholly hers. He asks a kiss of his fair, blond friend. She will be served roast goose and wine, and Colin Muset begs her not to forget solace and love.

En ceste note dirai

In this tune I-shall-say

d'une amorete que j'ai,

of-a little-love that I-have

et pour li m'envoierai

and for her myself-I-shall-gladden

et bauz et joianz serai:

and blithe and joyful I-shall-be

l'en doit bien pour li chanter

one ought well for her to-sing

et renvoisier et jouer

and to-make-merry and to-play

et son cors tenir plus gai

and one's body to-keep more gay

et de robes acesmer

and with robes to-adorn

et chapiau de flors porter

and garland of flowers to-wear

ausi comme el mois de mai.

just as in-the month of May

Tres l'eure que l'esgardai

From the-hour that her-I-regarded

onc puis ne l'entroubliai,

ever since not her-I-forgot

ainz i pens et penseraï;

rather there I-think and shall-think

quant la vois ne puis durer,

when her I-see not I-can endure

ne dormir, ne reposer.

nor sleep nor rest

Biau tres douz Deus, que ferai?

Fair very sweet God what I-shall-do

La paine que pour li trai

The pain that for her I-bear

ne sai comment li dirai.

not I-know how to-her I-shall-tell

De ce sui en grant esmai

Of this I-am in great dismay

oncore a dire li ai.

yet to say to-her I-have

Quant merci n'i puis trouver

Since mercy not-there I-can find

et je muir por bien amer,

and I die for well loving

amoreusement morrai.

lovingly I-shall-die

Je ne cuit pas ensi morir,

I not think at-all thus to-die

s'ele mi voloit retenir

if-she me wished to-retain

en bien amer, en biau servir;

in well loving in fair serving

et du tout sui a son plesir,

and of-the all I-am at her pleasure

ne je ne m'en qier departir,

nor I not myself-thence seek to-depart

mes toz jorz serai ses amis.

but all days I-shall-be her friend

Hé! bele et blonde et avenant,

Ab fair and blond and comely

cortoise et sage et bien parlant,

courteous and wise and well speaking

a vous me doig, a vous me rent,

to you myself I-give to you myself I-render

et tout sui vostres sanz faillir.

and wholly I-am yours without failing

Hé! bele, un besier vous demant,

Ab fair-one a kiss of-you I-ask

et se je l'ai, je vous creant

and if I it-have I to-you promise

nul mal ne m'en porroit venir.

any ill not to-me-thereof could come

Ma bele douce amie,

My fair sweet friend

la rose est espanie:

the rose is blossomed

desouz l'ente florie

beneath the-graft flowered

la vostre compaignie

the your company

m'i fet mult grant aië.

me-there does very great help

Vos serez bien servie

You will-be well served

de crasse oe rostie

with fat goose roasted

et bevrans vin sus lie,

and we-shall-drink wine on lees

si merrons bone vie.

so we-shall-lead good life

Bele tres douce amie,

Fair very sweet friend

Colin Muset vos prie

Colin Muset you prays

por Deu n'obliez mie

for God not-forget at-all

solaz ne compaignie,

solace nor company

amors ne druerie,

love nor love-dealing

si ferez cortoisie!

so you-will-do courtesy

Ceste note est fenie.

This tune is ended

Colins Musès, je me plaing d'une amor

XI · COLIN AND JAMES

James of Amiens complains to Colin of a love he served loyally without pity, whose sweet looks are traitors. Colin bids him leave the folly, since a burgher's wife loves only a full purse. James leaves the false one for the fairest and best. Colin turns to capons in garlic sauce, good wine, and a warm fire, but James cannot forgo love.

«Colins Musès, je me plaing d'une amor

Colin Muset I myself complain of-a love

ke longuement ai servie

which long I-have served

de loial cuer, n'ains pitié * * *

with loyal heart nor-ever pity (lacuna)

n'i poi trover nen aïe,

not-there I-could find nor help

s'i truis je moult semblanz de grant douçor,

so-there find I many semblances of great sweetness

mais ce m'est vis ke il sont traïtor,

but this to-me-is seeming that they are traitors

ke bouche et cuers ne s'i acordent mie.

for mouth and heart not themselves-there accord at-all

«Jakes d'Amiens, laissiés ceste folor!

James of-Amiens leave this folly

Fuiés fausse druerie,

Flee false love-dealing

n'en biau semblant ne vos fiés nul jor:

nor-in fair semblance not yourself trust any day

cil est musars ki s'i fie!

he is fool who himself-there trusts

Puis ke trovés son cuer a menteor,

Since that you-find her heart for liar

se plus l'amés, sovant duel et irour

if more her-you-love often grief and wrath

en averés et pis ke je ne die.

thereof you-will-have and worse than I — may-say

«Colin Muset, ne m'iert pas deshonor,

Colin Muset not to-me-will-be at-all dishonor

se de li fais departie.

if from her I-make parting

Puis c'ai trouvé son samblant tricheor,

Since that-I-have found her semblance cheating

porchacerei moi d'amie,

I-shall-procure for-me of-friend

car je li ai veü faire tel tour

for I her have seen make such turn

et tel samblant et tel ensaigne ailleurs,

and such semblance and such sign elsewhere

par coi je haz li et sa compaignie.

by which I hate her and her company

«Jakes d'Amiens, il n'est duels ne irour

James of-Amiens there not-is grief nor wrath

fors ki vient de jalousie.

except which comes from jealousy

Povres amans souffre mainte dolor

Poor lover suffers many-a grief

ki bee a grant signorie,

who aims at great lordship

et un usage a borjoise tous jors:

and one custom has burgher's-wife all days

ja n'amera, tant soit de grant richour,

ever not-she-will-love so-much be-he of great riches

home, s'il n'a la borse bien garnie.

man if-he not-has the purse well furnished

«Colins Musès, gentils dame ait honor

Colin Muset noble lady may-have honor

ki a ceu ne bee mie,

who to that not aims at-all

mais la ou voit sen, prouesce et valour,

but there where she-sees sense prowess and worth

joliveté, cortoisie!

gaiety courtesy

La fausse lais por ceu, si m'en retour

The false-one I-leave for this so myself-thence I-turn

a la belle, la blonde et la meillor

to the fair-one the blond-one and the best

ki onkes fust d'amors nul jor proë.

who ever was of-love any day prayed

«Jakes d'Amiens, et j'errant m'en retour

James of-Amiens and I-at-once myself-thence turn

as chapons en jance aillie

to-the capons in sauce garlicked

et as gastiaus ki sont blanc come flor

and to-the cakes which are white as flower

et au tres bon vin sor lie.

and to-the very good wine on lees

As bons morsels ai donee m'amor

To-the good morsels I-have given my-love

et as grans feus parmi ceste froidour:

and to-the great fires amid this cold

faites ensi, si menrés bone vie.

do thus so you-will-lead good life

«Colin Muset, kier t'aise et ton sejour,

Colin Muset seek thy-ease and thy sojourn

et je querrai d'amors joie et baudor,

and I shall-seek of-love joy and mirth

car consirer d'amors ne me puis mie.»

for to-forgo of-love not myself I-can at-all

Sire cuens, j'ai viélé

XII · LORD COUNT

He has fiddled before the count and been paid nothing, and his purse is empty. When he comes home with nothing his wife mocks him as Lord Frozen with a bag stuffed with wind; when he comes home with a full sack and a gray robe, she drops her distaff and hugs him, the servants kill two capons, and he is lord of his house.

Sire cuens, j'ai viélé

Lord count I-have fiddled

devant vous en vostre ostel,

before you in your lodging

si ne m'avez riens doné

so not me-you-have anything given

ne mes gages aquité:

nor my wages paid

c'est vilanie!

this-is baseness

Foi que doi sainte Marie,

Faith that I-owe holy Mary

ensi ne vous sieurré mie.

thus not you I-shall-follow at-all

M'aumosniere est mal garnie

My-purse is ill furnished

et ma boursse mal farsie.

and my purse ill stuffed

Sire cuens, car conmandez

Lord count now command

de moi vostre volenté.

of me your will

Sire, s'il vous vient a gré,

Lord if-it to-you comes to liking

un biau don car me donez

a fair gift now to-me give

par courtoisie!

by courtesy

Talent ai, n'en doutez mie,

Desire I-have not-thereof doubt at-all

de raler a ma mesnie:

of going-back to my household

quant g'i vois boursse esgarnie,

when I-there go purse unfurnished

ma fame ne me rit mie,

my wife not at-me laughs at-all

ainz me dit: «Sire Engelé,

rather to-me says Lord Frozen

en quel terre avez esté,

in what land you-have been

qui n'avez riens conquesté?

who not-have anything gained

(lacuna)

aval la ville.

down the town

Vez com vostre male plie!

See how your bag bends

Ele est bien de vent farsie!

It is well with wind stuffed

Honiz soit qui a envie

Shamed be who has desire

d'estre en vostre compaignie!»

of-being in your company

Quant je vieng a mon ostel

When I come to my lodging

et ma fame a regardé

and my wife has regarded

derrier moi le sac enflé,

behind me the sack swollen

et je qui sui bien paré

and I who am well dressed

de robe grise,

in robe gray

sachiez qu'ele a tost jus mise

know that-she has soon down put

la conoille sanz faintise;

the distaff without pretense

ele me rit par franchise,

she at-me laughs by nobleness

ses deus braz au col me plie.

her two arms at-the neck to-me she-bends

Ma fame va destrousser

My wife goes to-unpack

ma male sanz demorer;

my bag without delaying

mon garçon va abuvrer

my boy goes to-water

mon cheval et conreer;

my horse and to-groom

ma pucele va tuer

my maid goes to-kill

deus chapons pour deporter

two capons for to-enjoy

a la jansse alie;

with the sauce garlicked

ma fille m'apporte un pigne

my daughter me-brings a comb

en sa main par cortoisie.

in her hand by courtesy

Lors sui de mon ostel sire

Then I-am of my lodging lord

a mult grant joie sanz ire

with very great joy without anger

plus que nuls ne porroit dire.

more than anyone — could say

Devers Chastelvilain

XIII • CASTLES AND LORDS

A robe comes to him from Chastelvilain, whose lord is the best castellan from here to Navarre and fears neither king. Choiseul is not worth two eggs to him now, its wealth put into cows and oxen. He goes to Soilli, whose lord has often given him robes. He has lost two castles, whose two lords have given up arms and tourneys.

Devers Chastelvilain

From-toward Chastelvilain

me vient la robe au main

to-me comes the robe at-the morning

com uns oitours norrois.

as a goshawk Norse

Bon jor doint Deus demain

Good day may-grant God tomorrow

le seignor que tant ain!

the lord whom so-much I-love

Proudons est et cortois;

Worthy-man he-is and courteous

de ci qu'en Navarrois

from here up-to Navarre

n'a si bon chastelain;

not-is so good castellan

de son chastel a plain

of his castle in full

ne doute il les deus rois.

not fears he the two kings

Or vos di que Choises

Now to-you I-say that Choiseul

ne me vaut mais deus oes,

not to-me is-worth more two eggs

qui me soloit valoir.

which to-me was-wont to-avail

Tot mainjuent vermues

Wholly eat purple-cloths

vermin et escurues:

vermin and squirrel-furs

n'en puis mais point avoir;

not-thereof I-can more a-whit have

et s'ont mis lor avoir

and so-they-have put their wealth

en vaiches et en bues,

into cows and into oxen

et s'ont fait uns murs nues,

and so-they-have made some walls bare

que Deus gart de cheoir!

which God may-keep from falling

Or m'en vois a Soilli:

Now myself-thence I-go to Soilli

pieç'ai que n'assenai

long-since-I-have that not-I-arrived

a si bone maison.

at so good house

Le seigneur demandai;

The lord I-asked-for

maintes foiz m'a donné

many times me-he-has given

robes et maint bel don.

robes and many-a fair gift

Ce n'est pas en pardon

This not-is at-all in vain

se j'en sui retornez:

if I-thither am returned

s'il n'est empeorez,

if-he not-is worsened

j'en avrai guierredon.

I-thereof shall-have guerdon

Perdu ai deus chastelx,

Lost I-have two castles

dont je sui mult engres,

whereof I am very vexed

et bien m'en doit chaloir;

and well to-me-thereof ought to-matter

c'est Vignoriz, Rignez.

this-is Vignoriz Rignez

Deus seignors i a belx,

Two lords there are fair

qui ne doignent valoir,

who not deign to-avail

s'ont mis a nonchaloir

so-they-have put to neglect

armes et les cembelx.

arms and the tourneys

Il n'ont part ou mantel,

They not-have part in-the mantle

foi que doi saint Eloi!

faith that I-owe saint Eloi

Deus! com m'ont mort norrices et enfant

XIV · NURSES AND CHILDREN

Nurses, children, and domineering ladies have ruined him: they have spoiled many a good house for minstrels, and the husbands dare not grumble. Since they obey so well, he bids each keep his house, raise his children, and shun others' houses, and so grow rich, careless of blame. He takes his jewel to Choiseul and Soilli.

Deus! com m'ont mort norrices et enfant

God how me-have killed nurses and children

et les dames, qui trop sunt a cheval!

and the ladies who too-much are on high-horse

Maint bon hostel nos ont chaciez a mal

Many-a good lodging us have chased to ill

et les mariz voincuz outretement,

and the husbands vanquished utterly

cil qui n'osent un tot soul mot grondir.

those who not-dare a all single word to-grumble

A lor hosteus les poïssiés veïr:

At their lodgings them you-could see

assez pueent faire comandement,

plenty they-can make command

mais c'est a gas, c'on n'en fera neant.

but this-is in jest for-one not-thereof will-do anything

Puisqu'il sunt si dou tout obediand,

Since-they are so of-the all obedient

or lor ferai un mout bon assenal:

now to-them I-shall-make a very good warning

desormais gart uns chascuns son ostal!

henceforth may-keep one each his lodging

Ensi porront estre riche et menant;

Thus they-will-be-able to-be rich and wealthy

et si pansent de lor enfanz norrir

and so let-them-think of their children to-nourish

et bien pansent des hosteus eschuir!

and well let-them-think of-the lodgings to-shun

Ansi porront estre riche et poissant,

Thus they-will-be-able to-be rich and powerful

et pou lor chaut dou blasme de la gent.

and little to-them matters of-the blame of the folk

Droit a Choisuel vuil mon chemin tenir

Straight to Choiseul I-wish my road to-hold

et a Soilli par Clermont ressortir,

and to Soilli by Clermont to-go-back

si lor ferai de mon joel present,

so to-them I-shall-make of my jewel present

que trop m'est bel de lor amendement.

for exceedingly to-me-is fair of their amendment

Quant je voi yver retorner

XV · A WINTER HOST

When winter comes he would like to settle with a generous host who does not count the cost, with pork, beef, mutton, mallards, pheasants, venison, capons, and cheeses, a wife as courteous as her husband, and a host who is not jealous; then he would not ride muddy after a stingy prince.

Quant je voi yver retorner,

When I see winter return

lors me voudroie sejorner.

then myself I-would-wish to-sojourn

Se je pooie oste trover

If I could host find

large, qui ne vousist conter,

generous who not would-wish to-count

qu'eüst porc et buef et monton,

who-had pork and beef and mutton

maslarz, faisanz et venoison,

mallards pheasants and venison

grasses gelines et chapons

fat hens and capons

et bons fromages en glaon,

and good cheeses in wicker

et la dame fust autresi

and the lady were likewise

cortoise come li mariz,

courteous as the husband

et touz jors feïst mon plesir
and all days did my pleasure
 nuit et jor jusqu'au mien partir,
night and day until-the my parting
 et li hostes n'en fust jalous,
and the host not-thereof were jealous
 ainz nos laissast sovent touz sous,
rather us left often all alone
 ne seroie pas envious
not I-would-be at-all eager
 de chevauchier toz boous
of riding all muddy
 apres mauvais prince angoissoux.
after bad prince grasping
