OLD FRENCH SERIES · VOLUME 21

The Romance of the Rose

Jean de Meun

Le Roman de la Rose

The Romance of the Rose

Part Two: Friend, False Seeming, and the Old Woman

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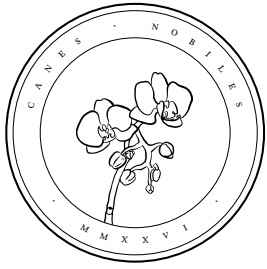
with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



CANES NOBILES · MMXXVI

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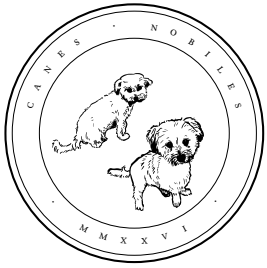

Volume 21 of the Canes Nobiles Old French interlinear texts

The Old French text follows Ernest Langlois' text, Le Roman de la Rose par Guillaume de Lorris et Jean de Meun, Société des anciens textes français, tomes III and IV (Paris, 1921–22), verses 7231–14546

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

Jean de Meun's continuation runs on from verse 7231, after Reason has left the lover, and this second part of the whole Romance ends at 14546, where the Old Woman ends her lesson to Fair Welcome. The spelling is Langlois', and his accentuation is his own rather than the Société's rule: the acute falls on a final é or -és, so esté, verité, and trés, and elsewhere only in meschiét and chiét; the grave only on a final -ès, as in près, emprès, and Herculès; the circumflex nowhere; and the tréma wherever two vowels do not make a diphthong. The letters u and v, i and j, are distinguished. The verse number the margin carries every fifth row is Langlois' own, which he prints every fourth. The 198 verse paragraphs his page indents that do not open a section are indented as he sets them; the parenthesis he opens at 14115 is closed after 14116, and the speech that ends at 14258 is left without its opening mark because the edition leaves it so.

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Friend Comes to the Lover

I

The lover remembers Friend, who arrives and asks for his news. The lover tells how Fair Welcome was imprisoned after the kiss, once Wicked Tongue had stirred up Shame, Fear, and Danger, and the castle was built. Friend comforts him: since the kiss was given, no prison will hold Fair Welcome, but the lover must serve the god of Love loyally and keep all his commands.

Adonc d'Ami me resouvint,
Then of-Friend me it-came-back-to-mind
esvertuer lors me couvint;
to-rouse-myself then me it-behooved
aler i vueil a quelque peine:
to-go there I-wish at some pain
es vous Ami que Deus m'ameine;
behold you Friend whom God me-brings
e quant il me vit en ce point, 7235
and when he me saw in this state
que tel douleur au cueur me point:
that such grief at-the heart me pricks
«Qu'est ce», dist il, «beaus douz Amis?
What-is this said he fair sweet Friend
En tel torment qui vous a mis?
In such torment who you has put
Des que si vous vei decheü,
Since that so you I-see fallen
bien sai qu'il vous est mescheü. 7240
well I-know that-it to-you is mischanced
Mais or me dites queus nouveles.
But now me tell what news

— M'aïst Deus, ne bones ne beles.
Me-help God neither good nor fair
— Contez mei tout.» E je li conte
Tell me all And I to-him tell
si come avez oï ou conte;
so as you-have heard in-the tale
ja plus ne vous iert recordé.
ever more not to-you will-be recounted
— Veiz», dist il, «pour le douz cors Dé!
See said he by the sweet body of-God
Dangier aviez apaisié,
Danger you-had appeased
s'aviez le bouton baisié:
so-you-had the bud kissed
de neient estes entrepris
by nothing you-are dismayed
se Bel Acueil a esté pris.
if Fair Welcome has been taken
Puis que tant s'est abandonez
Since that so-much himself-has given-over
que li baisiers vous fu donez,
that the kiss to-you was given
jamais prison ne le tendra;
ever prison not him will-hold
mais, senz faille, il vous couvendra
but without fail it you will-behoove
plus sagetement maintenir,
more wisely to-conduct-yourself
s'a bon chief en voulez venir.
if-to good end thereof you-wish to-come

Confortez vous, car bien sachiez
Comfort yourself for well know
qu'il iert de la prison sachiez
that-he will-be from the prison drawn
ou il a pour vous esté mis.
where he has for you been put
— O! trop i a forz anemis,
O too-many there are strong enemies
s'il n'i avait fors Male Bouche:
if-it not-there was except Wicked Tongue
c'est cil qui plus au cueur me touche,
this-is he who most at-the heart me touches
cil a les autres esmeüz.
he has the others stirred-up
Ja n'i eüsse esté seüz
Ever not-there I-would-have been discovered
se li glouz ne chalumelast;
if the glutton not had-blabbed
Peeur e Honte me celast
Fear and Shame me would-have-hidden
mout volentiers; neïs Dangier
very willingly even Danger
m'avait laissié a laidengier;
me-had ceased to revile
tuit trei s'ierent tuit quei tenu,
all three themselves-were all quiet held
quant li deable i sont venu
when the devils there are come
que li glouz i fist assembler.
whom the glutton there made assemble

Qui veïst Bel Acueil trembler,
Whoever had-seen Fair Welcome tremble
quant Jalousie l'escria,
when Jealousy at-him-cried-out
car la vieille trop mal cri a,
for the old-woman exceedingly evil cry has
grant pitié li en poïst prendre.
great pity him thereof could take
Je m'en foï senz plus atendre.
I myself-thence fled without more to-wait
Lors fu li chasteaus maçonez
Then was the castle built
ou li douz est emprisonez.
where the sweet-one is imprisoned
Pour c', Amis, a vous me conseil:
For this Friend to you myself I-counsel
morz sui se n'i metez conseil.»
dead I-am if not-there you-put counsel
Lors dist Amis, com bien apris,
Then said Friend as well taught
car d'amours ot assez apris:
for of-love he-had plenty learned
«Compainz, ne vous desconfortez;
Companion not yourself dismay
en bien amer vous deportez;
in well loving yourself delight
le deu d'Amours e nuit e jour
the god of-Love both night and day
servez leiaument senz sejour,
serve loyally without rest

vers lui ne vous desleiautez:
toward him not yourself be-disloyal
trop serait granz desleiautez
exceedingly would-be great disloyalty
s'il vous en trouvait recreü,
if-he you therein found recreant
trop se tendrait a deceü
exceedingly himself would-hold as deceived
de ce qu'a ome vous reçut;
of this that-as man you be-received
qu'onques leiaus cueurs nou deçut.
for-ever loyal heart not-him deceived
Faites quanqu'il vous encharja,
Do whatever-he you charged
touz ses comanz gardez, car ja
all his commands keep for ever
a son propos, combien qu'il tarde,
in his purpose however-much that-he tarry
ne faudra on qui bien les garde,
not will-fail one who well them keeps
s'il ne li meschiet d'autre part,
if-it not to-him mischances from-other part
si con Fortune se depart.
so as Fortune herself parts
Dou deu d'Amours servir pensez,
Of-the god of-Love to-serve think
en lui seit touz vostre pensez,
on him be all your thought
c'est douce pensee e jolie;
this-is sweet thought and pretty

pour ce serait trop grant folie
for this would-be exceedingly great folly
dou laissier, des qu'il ne vous laisse;
of-the leaving since that-he not you leaves
nepourquant il vous tient en laisse,
nevertheless he you holds in leash
si vous couvient vers lui plaissier,
so you it-behooves toward him to-bend
quant vous ne le poez laissier.
since you not him can leave

Feigning Before the Castle and Wicked Tongue

II

Friend tells the lover to keep away from the castle for a while and to look at Fair Welcome only covertly. Wicked Tongue must be greeted and flattered with no sign of anger, since deceiving a deceiver is good work: remove "bou" from "boulierres," trickster, and "lierres," thief, remains. He deserves hanging sooner than a petty thief, for a lost reputation cannot be restored. The old woman and Jealousy must be served the same way, since open assault would fail.

Or vous dirai que vous fereiz:
Now to-you I-will-tell what you will-do
une piece vous tardereiz
a while you will-delay
dou fort chastel aler voeir;
of-the strong castle to-go to-see
n'alez ne joer ne soeir,
not-go neither to-play nor to-sit
n'oïz ne seiez ne veüz,
not-heard nor be nor seen

tant que cist venz seit touz cheüz,
until that this wind be all fallen
au meins tant come vous soulez,
at-the least so-much as you are-wont
ja seit ce que pas ne voulez,
even be it that at-all not you-wish
près des murs ne devant la porte.
near of-the walls nor before the gate
E s'aventure la vous porte,
And if-chance there you carries
faites semblant, coment qu'il aille,
make semblance however that-it go
que de Bel Acueil ne vous chaille;
that of Fair Welcome not to-you it-matter
mais, se de loing le veez estre
but if from afar him you-see to-be
ou a crenel ou a fenestre,
either at battlement or at window
regardez le piteusement;
look-at him piteously
mais trop seit fait couvertement.
but exceedingly be-it done covertly
S'il vous reveit, liez en sera,
If-he you sees-again glad thereof he-will-be
ja pour gardes nou laissera,
ever for guards not-him will-cease
mais n'en fera chiere ne cin,
but not-thereof will-make face nor sign
se n'est, espeir, en larrecin;
if not-it-is perhaps in stealth

ou sa fenestre, espeir, clorra
or his window perhaps will-close
quant aus genz paler vous orra,
when to-the folk to-speak you he-will-hear
s'agaitera par la fendace
himself-will-watch through the crack
tant con vous sereiz en la place,
as-long as you will-be in the place
jusque vous en seiez tournez,
until you thence be turned
se par autre n'est destournez.
if by other not-be-is turned-away
Mais prenez garde touteveie
But take heed nevertheless
que Male Bouche ne vous veie.
that Wicked Tongue not you see
S'il vous veit, si le saluez;
If-he you sees so him greet
mais gardez que ne vous muez,
but take-care that not yourself you-change
ne ne faites chiere nesune
nor not make face any
de haïne ne de rancune.
of hate nor of rancor
E se vous ailleurs l'encontrez,
And if you elsewhere him-meet
nul mautalent ne li montrez:
any ill-will not to-him show
sages on son mautalent cueuvre.
wise man his ill-will covers

Si sachiez que cil font bone euvre
So know that they do good work
qui les deceveeurs deceivent.
who the deceivers deceive
Sachiez qu'ainsinc faire le deivent
Know that-thus do it they-ought
trestuit amant, au meins li sage.
all lovers at-the least the wise
Male Bouche e tout son lignage,
Wicked Tongue and all his lineage
s'il vous devaient acourer,
if-they you ought gut
vous lo servir e enourer.
you I-counsel to-serve and to-honor
Ofrez leur tout par grant feintise,
Offer them all by great feigning
cueur e cors, aveir e servise.
heart and body goods and service
L'en seaut dire, e veirs est, ce cuit:
One is-wont to-say and true it-is this I-think
encontre vezié recuit.
against wily-one twice-wily
De ceus bouler n'est pas pechiez
Of those to-trick not-is at-all sin
qui de boule sont entechiez:
who with trickery are tainted
Male Bouche si est boulierres.
Wicked Tongue so is trickster
Ostez bou, si demourra lierres:
Take-away bou so will-remain thief

lierres est il, sachiez de veir,
thief is he know of truth
bien le poez aperceveir,
well it you-can perceive
n'il ne deit aveir autre non,
nor-he not ought have other name
qu'il emble aus genz leur bon renon,
for-he steals from-the folk their good renown
n'il n'a jamais poeir dou rendre.
nor-he not-has ever power of-the giving-back
L'en le deüst meauz mener pendre
One him ought better lead to-hang
que touz ces autres larronceaus
than all these other petty-thieves
qui deniers emblent a monceaus.
who pence steal in heaps
S'uns larronceaus emble deniers,
If-a petty-thief steals pence
robe a perche ou blez en greniers,
robe on peg or grain in granaries
pour quatre tanz au meins iert quites,
for four times at-the least will-be quit
selonc les leis qui sont escrites,
according-to the laws which are written
e seit pris en present forfait.
and be he-taken in present misdeed
Mais Male Bouche trop forfait
But Wicked Tongue too-much misdoes
par s'orde vil langue despite,
by his-foul vile tongue spiteful

qu'il ne peut, des que il l'a dite
for-he not can since that he it-has said
de sa gueule mal renomee,
from his mouth ill famed
restorer male renomee,
restore ill renown
n'esteindre une parole sengle,
nor-quench a word single
s'il l'a meüe par sa jangle.
if-he it-has stirred by his chatter
Bon fait Male Bouche apaisier,
Good it-is Wicked Tongue to-appease
qu'aucune feiz seaut l'en baisier
for-some time is-wont one to-kiss
tel main qu'en voudrait qu'el fust arse.
such hand that-one would that-it were burned
Car fust ores li glouz en Tarse,
Would-that were now the glutton in Tarsus
si janglast la quanqu'il vousist,
so-that he-might-chatter there whatever-he wished
mais qu'aus amanz riens ne tousist!
provided that-from-the lovers anything not he-took
Bon estouper fait Male Bouche,
Good to-stop it-is Wicked Tongue
qu'il ne die blasme ou reprouche.
that-he not say blame or reproach
Male Bouche e touz ses parenz,
Wicked Tongue and all his kinsmen
a cui ja Deus ne seit garanz!
to whom ever God not be protector

Par barat esteut barater,
By guile one-must beguile
servir, chuer, blandir, flater,
serve coax cajole flatter
par hourt, par adulacion,
by sham by adulation
par fausse simulacion,
by false simulation
e encliner e saluer;
and bow and greet
qu'il fait trop bon le chien chuer
for-it is exceedingly good the dog to-coax
tant qu'en ait la veie passee.
till that-one have the way passed
Bien serait sa jangle cassee
Well would-be his chatter broken
s'il li poait, senz plus, sembler
if-it to-him could without more seem
que n'eüssiez talent d'embler
that not-you-had desire to-steal
le bouton qu'il vous a mis seure:
the bud that-he to-you has put upon
par ce pourreiz estre au deseure.
by this you-could be on-the top
La vieille qui Bel Acueil garde
The old-woman who Fair Welcome guards
servez ausinc, que maus feus l'arde!
serve likewise whom evil fire her-burn
Autel faites de Jalousie,
The-same do with Jealousy

que nostre sires la maudie,
whom our lord her curse
la doulereuse, la sauvage,
the woeful-one the savage-one
qui toujourz d'autrui joie enrage,
who always at-others' joy rages
qui est si crueuse e si gloute
who is so cruel and so greedy
que tel chose veaut aveir toute,
that such thing she-wishes to-have whole
s'ele en laissait a chascun prendre,
if-she thereof let to each take
qu'el ne la trouverait ja mendre!
that-she not it would-find ever less
Mout est fos qui tel chose esperne;
Very is fool who such thing spares
c'est la chandele en la lanterne:
this-is the candle in the lantern
qui mil en i alumerait,
who a-thousand from-it there would-light
ja meins de feu n'i trouverait.
ever less of fire not-there would-find
Chascuns set la similitude
Each knows the likeness
se mout n'a l'entendement rude.
if very not-he-has the-understanding coarse
Se cetes ont de vous mestier,
If these have of you need
servez les de vostre mestier:
serve them with your trade

faire leur devez courteisie,
do to-them you-ought courtesy
c'est une chose mout preisie,
this-is a thing much prized
mais qu'eus ne puissent aperceivre
provided that-they not can perceive
que vous les baez a deceivre.
that you them aim to deceive
Ainsinc vous esteut demener:
Thus you it-behooves to-conduct-yourself
les braz au col deit l'en mener
the arms on-the neck ought one lead
son anemi pendre ou neier,
his enemy to-hang or to-drown
par chuer, par aplaneier,
by coaxing by smoothing
s'autrement n'en peut l'en chevir.
if-otherwise not-thereof can one manage
Mais bien puis jurer e plevir
But well I-can swear and pledge
qu'il n'a ci autre chevissance,
that-it not-has here other remedy
car il sont de tele poissance,
for they are of such power
qui en apert les assaudrait,
who in open them would-assail
a son propos, ce crei, faudrait.
in his purpose this I-believe would-fail

Gifts, Promises, and Tears

III

To win the other porters the lover should give them small gifts, or, if he has none, promise freely and swear. He should weep on his knees before them, rubbing his eyes with onion juice or saliva if tears will not come, as many tricksters have done. Messages may go by a fitting messenger or by letters with the names disguised, "he" written as "she," but never by children, who chatter.

Après ainsinc vous contendreiz
After thus you will-conduct-yourself
quant aus autres portiers vendreiz,
when to-the other porters you-will-come
se vous ja venir i poez:
if you ever come there can
teus dons con ci dire m'oez:
such gifts as here to-say me-you-hear
chapeaus de fleurs en esclicetes, 7435
garlands of flowers on little-strips
aumosnieres ou crespinetes,
purses or hair-nets
ou autres joelez petiz,
or other little-jewels small
gentis e beaus e bien faitiz,
noble and fair and well made
se vous en avez l'aisement,
if you thereof have the-means
senz vous metre a destruiement, 7440
without yourself to-put to ruin
pour apaisier leur presentez.
for to-appease to-them present

Des maus après vous dementez
Of-the ills after yourself lament
e dou travail e de la peine
and of-the toil and of the pain
qu'Amours vous fait, qui la vous meine.
that-Love to-you does who there you leads
E se vous ne poez doner,
And if you not can give
par promesse esteut sarmoner:
by promise one-must preach
prometez fort senz delaier,
promise hard without delaying
coment qu'il aille dou paier;
however that-it go of-the paying
jurez fort e la fei bailliez,
swear hard and the faith give
ainz que conclus vous en ailliez;
before that concluded you thence go
si leur priez qu'il vous secueurent.
so them beg that-they you succor
E se vostre ueil devant aus pleurent,
And if your eyes before them weep
ce vous iert mout granz avantages.
this to-you will-be very great advantage
Plourez, si fereiz trop que sages.
Weep so you-will-do exceedingly as wise
Devant aus vous agenoilliez,
Before them yourself kneel

jointes mains, e voz eauz moilliez
joined hands and your eyes wet
de chaudes lermes en la place,
with hot tears in the place
qui vous coulent aval la face
which to-you flow down the face
si qu'il les veient bien choeir;
so that-they them see well fall
c'est mout granz pitiez a voeir.
this-is very great pity to see
Lermes ne sont pas despiteuses,
Tears not are at-all despicable
meïsmement a genz piteuses.
especially to folk piteous
E se vous ne poez plourer,
And if you not can weep
couvertement, senz demourer,
covertly without delaying
de vostre salive preigniez,
of your saliva take
ou jus d'oignons, e l'espreigniez,
or juice of-onions and it-squeeze
ou d'auz ou d'autres liqueurs maintes,
or of-garlic or of-other liquors many
don voz paupieres seient teintes:
with-which your eyelids be dyed
s'ainsinc le faites, si plourreiz
if-thus it you-do so you-will-weep
toutes les feiz que vous vourreiz.
all the times that you will-wish

Ainsinc l'ont fait maint bouleeur
Thus it-have done many-a trickster
qui puis furent fin ameeur,
who afterward were true lovers
que les dames laissaient pendre
whom the ladies let hang
au laz qu'il leur voulaient tendre,
in-the snare that-they for-them wished to-stretch
tant que par leur misericorde
until that by their mercy
leur ostassent dou col la corde.
from-them they-removed from-the neck the rope
E maint par tel barat plourerent
And many by such guile wept
qui onques par amour n'amerent;
who ever by love not-loved
ainz decevaient les puceles
but deceived the maidens
par teus pleurs e par teus faveles.
by such tears and by such tales
Lermes les cueurs de teus genz sachent,
Tears the hearts of such folk draw
mais que senz plus barat n'i sachent.
provided that without more guile not-there they-know
Mais se vostre barat savaient,
But if your guile they-knew
jamais de vous merci n'avraient;
ever on you mercy not-they-would-have
crier merci serait neienz,
to-cry mercy would-be nothing

jamais n'enterriez laienz.
ever not-you-would-enter within
E s'a aus ne poez aler,
And if-to them not you-can go
faites i par aucun paler
have there by someone speak
qui seit messagiers couvenables,
who be messenger fitting
par voiz, par letres ou par tables;
by voice by letters or by tablets
mais ja n'i metez propre non,
but ever not-there put proper name
ja cil n'i seit se cele non,
ever he not-there be except she not
cele reseit cil apelee:
she in-turn-be he called
la chose en iert trop meauz celee.
the thing thereof will-be exceedingly better hidden
Cil seit dame, cele seit sires:
He be lady she be lord
ainsinc escrivez voz matires,
thus write your matters
car mainz amanz ont deceü
for many lovers have deceived
maint larron par l'escrit leü.
many-a thief by the-writing read
Li amant en sont encusé,
The lovers thereby are accused
e li deduit d'amours rusé.
and the delights of-love foiled

Mais ja d'enfanz ne vous fiez,
But ever in-children not yourself trust
car vous seriez conchiez;
for you would-be befouled
il ne sont pas bon messagier:
they not are at-all good messengers
toujourz veulent enfant ragier,
always wish children to-romp
jangler ou montrer ce qu'il portent
to-chatter or to-show this that-they carry
aus traïteurs qui les enortent;
to-the traitors who them urge
ou font nicement leur message,
or do foolishly their message
pour ce qu'il ne sont mie sage.
for this that-they not are at-all wise
Tout serait tantost publié,
All would-be at-once published
se mout n'estaient vezié.
if very not-they-were wily

The Porters Won by Service

IV

The porters are piteous by nature and are won by gifts as a sparrowhawk is trained by the lure. If they are proud, the lover should leave them, for churlish hearts grow humble when they are left, and like a mariner he must change his sail with the weather. Entreating them costs nothing, since the refused lose only their time and the porters are flattered, but he should not tell them at first that he wants the rose.

Cist portier, c'est chose seüre,
These porters this-is thing sure
sont de si piteuse nature
are of so piteous nature
que, se voz dons deignent receivre,
that if your gifts they-deign to-receive
il ne vous veulent pas deceivre.
they not you wish at-all to-deceive
Sachiez que receüz sereiz
Know that received you-will-be
emprès les dons que vous fereiz:
after the gifts that you will-make
puis qu'il prennent, c'est chose faite,
since that-they take this-is thing done
car, si con li loirres afaite
for so as the lure trains
pour venir a seir e a main
for to-come at evening and at morning
le gentill espervier a main;
the noble sparrowhawk to hand

ainsinc sont afaitié par dons
thus are trained by gifts
a doner graces e pardons
to give graces and pardons
li portier aus fins amoureus.
the porters to-the true lovers
Tuit se rendent vaincu pour eus.
All themselves yield vanquished for them
E s'il avient que les truissiez
And if-it happens that them you-find
si orguilleus que nes puissiez
so proud that not-them you-can
flechir par dons ne par prieres,
bend by gifts nor by prayers
par pleurs ne par autres manieres,
by tears nor by other manners
ainz vous regietent tuit arrieres
but you they-throw all back
par durs faiz, par paroles fieres,
by hard deeds by words fierce
e vous laidengent durement,
and you revile harshly
partez vous d'aus courteisement,
part yourself from-them courteously
e les laissiez en ce saïn:
and them leave in this fat
onques fromages de gaïn
ever cheese of autumn
meauz ne se cuist qu'il se cuiront;
better not itself cooks than-they themselves will-cook

par vostre fuite se duiront
by your flight themselves they-will-train
maintes feiz a vous enchaucier;
many times to you to-pursue
ce vous pourra mout essaucier.
this you will-be-able much exalt
Vilain cueur sont de tel fierté:
Churlish hearts are of such fierceness
ceus qui plus les ont en chierté,
those who more them have in dearness
plus les prient e meins les prisent,
more them beg and less them prize
plus les servent, plus les despisent;
more them serve more them despise
mais quant il sont des genz laissié,
but when they are by-the folk left
tost ont leur orgueil abaissié:
soon have their pride lowered
cil qu'il despisaient leur plaisent;
those whom-they despised them please
lors se dontent, lors se rapaisent,
then themselves they-tame then themselves they-appease-again
qu'il ne leur est pas bel, mais lait
for-it not to-them is at-all fair but ugly
mout durement quant en les lait.
very hard when one them leaves
Li mariniers qui par mer nage,
The mariner who over sea sails
cerchant mainte terre sauvage,
seeking many-a land wild

tout regart il a une esteile,
though look he at one star
ne cueurt il pas toujourz d'un veile,
not runs he at-all always under-one sail
ainz le treschange mout souvent,
but it shifts very often
pour eschever tempeste ou vent;
for to-escape tempest or wind
ausinc cueurs qui d'amer ne cesse
likewise heart which of-loving not ceases
ne cueurt pas toujourz d'une laisse:
not runs at-all always on-one leash
or deit chacier, or deit foïr
now ought chase now ought flee
qui veaut de bone amour joïr.
who wishes of good love to-enjoy
D'autre part, c'est bien plaine chose,
On-other part this-is very plain thing
je ne vous i metrai ja glose,
I not to-you there will-put ever gloss
ou texte vous poez fier,
in-the text you can trust
bon fait ces treis portiers prier;
good it-is these three porters to-beg
car nule rien cil n'i peut perdre
for any thing he not-there can lose
qui se veaut au prier aerdre,
who himself wishes to-the begging to-cling
combien qu'il seient bobancier,
however-much that-they be boastful

e si s'i peut bien avancier.
and so himself-there can well advance
Prier les peut seürement,
Beg them he-can surely
car il sera certainement
for he will-be certainly
ou refusez ou receüz:
either refused or received
ne peut guiere estre deceüz;
not can much be deceived
rien n'i perdent li refusé,
anything not-there lose the refused
fors tant come il i ont musé;
except so-much as they there have wasted-time
ne ja cil mal gré ne savront
nor ever they ill will not will-bear
a ceus qui priez les avront;
to those who begged them will-have
ainz leur savront bon gré naïs,
but to-them will-bear good will natural
quant les avront boutez laïs,
when them they-will-have pushed in-there
qu'il n'est nus tant fel qui les oie
for-it not-is anyone so cruel who them hear
qui n'en ait en son cueur grant joie;
who not-thereof have in his heart great joy
e se pensent trestuit taisant
and themselves think all being-silent
qu'or sont il preu, bel e plaisant,
that-now are they worthy fair and pleasing

e qu'il ont toutes teches bones,
and that-they have all qualities good
quant amé sont de teus persones,
since loved they-are by such persons
coment qu'il aille dou neier
however that-it go of-the denying
ou d'escuser ou d'otreier.
or of-excusing or of-granting
S'il sont receü, bien le seient,
If-they are received well it they-know
donques ont il ce qu'il queraient;
then have they this that-they sought
e se tant leur meschiet qu'il faillent,
and if so-much to-them mischances that-they fail
tuit franc e tuit quite s'en aillent.
all free and all quit themselves-thence they-go
S'est li faillirs enviz possibles,
So-is the failing hardly possible
tant est nouveaus deliz plaisibles.
so-much is new delight pleasing
Mais ne seient pas coustumier
But not let-them-be at-all accustomed
de dire aus portiers au prumier
to say to-the porters at-the first
qu'il se veulent d'aus acoster
that-they themselves wish to-them to-approach
pour la fleur dou rosier oster;
for the flower of-the rosebush to-remove
mais par amour leial e fine,
but by love loyal and true

de nete pensee enterine.
of clean thought entire
Sachiez qu'il sont trestuit dontable,
Know that-they are all tameable
ce n'est pas parole doutable;
this not-is at-all word doubtful
pour qu'il seit qui bien les requiere,
provided that-there be who well them entreat
ja n'en sera boutez arriere; 7600
ever not-thereof will-be pushed back
nus n'i deit estre refusez.
any not-there ought be refused
Mais se de mon conseil usez,
But if of my counsel you-use
ja d'aus prier ne vous penez
ever of-them to-beg not yourself trouble
se la chose a fin ne menez,
if the thing to end not you-lead
car, espeir, se vaincu n'estaient, 7605
for perhaps if vanquished not-they-were
d'estre requis se vanteraient;
of-being entreated themselves they-would-boast
mais ja puis ne s'en vanteront
but ever afterward not themselves-thereof they-will-boast
que dou fait parçonier seront.
since of-the deed partners they-will-be

The Rose Taken by Force

v

The porters would offer themselves unasked if the hasty preachers and lavish givers did not make them proud, but the lover must ask them at once, since no man should wait for a woman to beg him. If he has them in private and Fair Welcome is free, he should pluck the rose by force even if Danger, Shame, and Fear protest, for many want to give by force what they dare not grant. If they resist in earnest, he must yield and wait until Fair Welcome is left alone.

E si sont tuit de tel maniere,
And so are all of such manner
combien qu'il facent fiere chiere,
however-much that-they make fierce face
que, se requis avant n'estaient,
that if entreated before not-they-were
certainement il requerraient;
certainly they would-entreat
e se donraient pour neient,
and themselves would-give for nothing
qui si nes irait aspreiant.
if-one so not-them would-go pressing
Mais li hastif sarmoneeur
But the hasty preachers
e li fol large doneeur
and the foolish lavish givers
si forment les enorguillissent
so greatly them make-proud
que leur roses leur enchierissent;
that their roses for-them they-make-dear

si se cuident faire avantage,
so themselves they-think to-make advantage
mais il font leur cruel domage,
but they do their cruel harm
car trestout pour neient eüssent
for all for nothing they-would-have-had
se ja requeste n'en meüssent,
if ever request not-thereof they-had-moved
pour quei chascuns autel feïst
provided that each the-same did
que nus avant nes requeïst.
that any before not-them entreated
E s'il se vousissent loier,
And if-they themselves wished to-hire-out
mout en eüssent bon loier,
much thereof they-would-have good wage
se trestuit a ce se meïssent
if all to this themselves set
que teus couvenances feïssent
that such covenants they-made
que jamais nus nes sarmonast,
that ever anyone not-them preached
ne pour neient ne se donast,
nor for nothing not himself gave
ainz laissast pour aus meauz mestir
but let for them better to-serve
aus portiers leur roses flestir.
for-the porters their roses wither

Mais pour riens on ne me plairait
But for anything a-man not to-me would-please
qui de son cors marchié ferait,
who of his body bargain would-make
n'il ne me devrait mie plaire,
nor-he not to-me ought at-all please
au meins pour tel besoigne faire.
at-the least for such business to-do
Mais onques pour ce n'atendez:
But ever for this not-wait
requerez les e leur tendez
entreat them and to-them stretch
les laz, pour vostre preie prendre,
the snares for your prey to-take
car vous pourriez tant atendre
for you could so-long wait
que tost s'i pourraient embatre
that soon themselves-there could thrust
ou uns ou dui ou trei ou quatre,
either one or two or three or four
veire cinquante e deus dozaines
indeed fifty and two dozens
dedenz cinquante e deus semaines.
within fifty and two weeks
Tost seraient ailleurs tourné,
Soon would-be elsewhere turned
se trop aviez sejourné;
if too-long you-had tarried
enviz a tens i vendriez,
hardly in time there you-would-come

pour ce que trop atendriez.
for this that too-long you-would-wait
Ne lo que nus on tant atende
Not I-counsel that any man so-long wait
que fame s'amour li demande,
that woman her-love to-him ask
car trop en sa beauté se fie
for too-much in his beauty himself trusts
qui atent que fame le prie.
who waits that woman him beg
E quiconques veaut comencier,
And whoever wishes to-begin
pour tost sa besoigne avancier,
for soon his business to-advance
n'ait ja peeur qu'ele le fiere,
not-have ever fear that-she him strike
tant seit orguilleuse ne fiere,
however be-she proud or fierce
e que sa nef a port ne viegne,
and that his ship to port not come
pour quei sagement se contiegne.
provided that wisely himself he-conduct
Ainsinc, compainz, espleitereiz
Thus companion you-will-succeed
quant aus portiers venuz sereiz;
when to-the porters come you-will-be
mais quant courrouciez les verreiz,
but when angry them you-will-see
ja de ce ne les requerreiz.
ever of this not them you-will-entreat

Espiez les en leur leece,
Spy-on them in their gladness
ja nes requerez en tristece,
ever not-them entreat in sorrow
se la tristece n'estait nee
if the sorrow not-were born
de Jalousie la desvee,
of Jealousy the mad-one
qui pour vous les eüst batuz,
who for you them had beaten
don courrouz s'i fust embatuz.
whence anger itself-there were thrust
E se poez a ce venir
And if you-can to this come
qu'en privé les puissiez tenir,
that-in private them you-can hold
que li leus seit si couvenanz
that the place be so fitting
que n'i doutez nus seurvenanz,
that not-there you-fear any comer-upon
e Bel Acueil seit eschapez,
and Fair Welcome be escaped
qui pour vous est ore atrapez,
who for you is now trapped
quant Bel Acueil fait vous avra
when Fair Welcome made to-you will-have
si beau semblant come il savra,
as fair semblance as he will-know
car mout set bel genz acuillir,
for much he-knows fair folk to-welcome

lors devez la rose cuillir,
then you-ought the rose pluck
tout veiez vous neïs Dangier
though see you even Danger
qui vos acueille a laidengier,
who you welcomes to revile
ou que Honte e Peeur en groucent;
or that Shame and Fear thereof grumble
mais que feintement s'en courroucent,
provided that feignedly themselves-thereof they-anger
e que laschement se defendent,
and that slackly themselves they-defend
qu'en defendant vaincu se rendent,
that-in defending vanquished themselves they-yield
si con lors vous pourra sembler.
so as then to-you it-will-be-able seem
Tout veiez vous Peeur trembler,
Though see you Fear tremble
Honte rougir, Dangier fremir,
Shame blush Danger shudder
ou trestouz treis plaindre e gemir,
or all three complain and groan
ne prisiez trestout une escorce:
not prize all-of-it a bark
cuilliez la rose tout a force,
pluck the rose all by force
e montrez que vous estes on,
and show that you are a-man
quant leus iert e tens e saison,
when place will-be and time and season

car riens ne leur pourrait tant plaire
for anything not to-them could so-much please
con tel force, qui la set faire;
as such force who it knows to-do
car maintes genz sont coustumieres
for many folk are accustomed
d'avoir si diverses manieres
to-have so diverse manners
qu'il veulent par force doner
that-they wish by force to-give
ce qu'il n'osent abandoner,
this that-they not-dare to-give-over
e feignent qu'il leur seit tolu
and feign that-it from-them be taken
ce qu'il ont sofert e volu.
this that-they have suffered and wished
Si sachiez que dolent seraient
So know that sorrowful they-would-be
se par tel defense eschapaient,
if by such defense they-escaped
quelque leece qu'il feinsissent;
whatever gladness that-they feigned
si dout qu'il ne vous en haïssent,
so I-fear that-they not you thereof would-hate
tant en seraient courroucié,
so-much thereof they-would-be angered
combien qu'il eüssent groucié.
however-much that-they had grumbled

Mais se par paroles apertes
But if by words open
les sentez courrouciez a certes
them you-feel angered in earnest
e viguereusement defendre,
and vigorously to-defend
vous n'i devez ja la main tendre;
you not-there ought ever the hand stretch
mais touteveis pris vous rendez,
but nevertheless taken yourself yield
merci criant, e atendez
mercy crying and wait
jusque cil trei portier s'en aillent
until these three porters themselves-thence go
qui si vous grievent e travaillent,
who so you grieve and torment
e Bel Acueil touz seus remaigne,
and Fair Welcome all alone remain
qui tout abandoner vous deigne.
who all to-give-over to-you deigns
Ainsinc vers aus vous contenez,
Thus toward them yourself conduct
com preuz e vaillanz e senez.
as worthy and valiant and wise

Fair Welcome, and Dissembling

VI

The lover should mirror Fair Welcome's moods, lose to him at games, praise him, and fetch his cushion. A worthy lady will not love a wild boy, and a wise man courting a foolish girl must seem foolish too. The lover protests that this is hypocrisy and would rather defy Wicked Tongue or take him to a judge. Friend answers that a complaint would only spread the shame and a defiance might get Fair Welcome burned or drowned, so the slanderer must be tricked. The lover agrees and asks for an easier way.

De Bel Acueil reprenez garde
Of Fair Welcome take-again heed
par quel semblant il vous regarde;
by what semblance he you regards
coment qu'il seit ne de quel chiere,
however that-be be and of what face
confourmez vous a sa maniere;
conform yourself to his manner
s'ele est anciene e meüre,
if-it is ancient and mature
vous metreiz toute vostre cure
you will-put all your care
en vous tenir meürement;
in yourself to-hold maturely
e s'il se contient nicement,
and if-he himself conducts foolishly
nicetement vous contenez.
foolishly yourself conduct
De lui ensivre vous penez:
Of him to-follow yourself trouble

s'il est liez, faites chiere liee;
if-he is glad make face glad
s'il est courrouciez, courrouciee;
if-he is angered angered
s'il rit, riez; plourez s'il pleure;
if-he laughs laugh weep if-he weeps
ainsinc vous tenez chascune eure;
thus yourself hold each hour
ce qu'il amera, si amez;
this that-he will-love so love
ce qu'il voudra blasmer, blasmez,
this that-he will-wish to-blame blame
e loez quanqu'il loera:
and praise whatever-he will-praise
mout plus en vous s'en fiera.
very more in you himself-thereof he-will-trust
Cuidiez que dame a cueur vaillant
Think-you that lady of heart valiant
aint un garçon fol e saillant,
love a boy foolish and leaping
qui s'en ira par nuit resver,
who himself-thence will-go by night to-rave
ausinc con s'il deüst desver,
just as if-he were-to go-mad
e chantera des mie nuit,
and will-sing from-the mid night
cui qu'il seit bel ou qu'il enuit?
to-whom that-it be fair or that-it annoy

Ele en craindrait estre blasmee
She thereof would-fear to-be blamed
e vil tenue e diffamee.
and vile held and defamed
Teus amours sont tantost seües,
Such loves are at-once known
qu'il les fleütent par les rues;
for-they them pipe through the streets
ne leur chaut guieres qui les sache.
not to-them matters much who them know
Fole est qui son cueur i atache.
Foolish is who her heart there attaches
E s'uns sages d'amours parole
And if-a wise-man of-love speaks
a une dameisele fole,
to a damsel foolish
s'il li fait semblant d'estre sages,
if-he to-her makes semblance of-being wise
ja la ne tourra ses courages;
ever there not will-turn her heart
ne pensez ja qu'il i aviegne,
not think ever that-he there arrive
pour quei sagement se contiegne.
provided that wisely himself he-conduct
Face ses meurs aus siens oniz,
Let-him-make his ways to-the hers even
ou autrement il iert honiz,
or otherwise he will-be shamed
qu'el cuide qu'il seit uns lobierres,
for-she thinks that-he be a trickster

uns renarz, uns enfantosmierres.
a fox an enchanter
Tantost la chaitive le laisse
At-once the wretched-one him leaves
e prent un autre ou mout s'abaisse;
and takes an other where much herself-she-lowers
le vaillant ome arriere boute
the valiant man back pushes
e prent le pire de la route;
and takes the worst of the troop
la nourrist ses amours e couve
there feeds her loves and broods
tout autresinc come la louve,
all likewise as the she-wolf
cui sa folie tant empire
whom her folly so-much worsens
qu'el prent adès des lous le pire.
that-she takes always of-the wolves the worst
Se bel Acueil poez troer,
If fair Welcome you-can find
que vous puissiez a lui joer
that you can with him play
aus eschès, aus dez ou aus tables,
at-the chess at-the dice or at-the tables
ou a autres jeus delitables,
or at other games delightful
des jeus adès le pis aiez,
of-the games always the worst have
toujourz au desouz en seiez;
always at-the bottom thereof be

au jeu don vous entremetreiz
at-the game in-which you will-engage
perdez quanque vous i metreiz;
lose whatever you there will-put
preigne des jeus la seignourie,
let-him-take of-the games the lordship
de voz pertes se gabe e rie.
of your losses himself let-him-mock and laugh
Loez toutes ses contenances
Praise all his bearings
e ses atourz e ses semblances,
and his attire and his semblances
e servez de vostre poeir.
and serve with your power
Neïs, quant se devra soeir,
Even when himself he-shall sit
aportez li carrel ou sele:
bring to-him cushion or seat
meauz en vaudra vostre querele.
better thereof will-fare your suit
Se poutie poez voeir
If dust you-can see
seur li de quelque part choeir,
on him from some part to-fall
ostez li tantost la poutie,
remove from-him at-once the dust
neïs s'ele n'i estait mie;
even if-it not-there were at-all
ou se sa robe trop s'empoudre,
or if his robe too-much itself-bedusts

soulevez la li de la poudre.
lift it for-him from the dust
Briement faites en quelque place
Briefly do in whatever place
quanque vous pensez qui li place.
whatever you think that to-him please
S'ainsinc le faites, n'en doutez,
If-thus it you-do not-thereof doubt
ja n'i sereiz arriers boutez,
ever not-there you-will-be back pushed
ainz vendreiz a vostre propos
but you-will-come to your purpose
tout ainsinc con je le propos.
all just as I it propose
— Douz amis, qu'est ce que vous dites?
Sweet friend what-is this that you say
Nus on, s'il n'iert faus ypocrites,
Any man if-he not-were false hypocrite
ne ferait cete deablie;
not would-do this devilry
n'onc ne fu graigneur establie.
nor-ever not was greater established
Vous voulez que j'eneur e serve
You wish that I-honor and serve
cete gent qui est fausse e serve?
this folk which is false and servile
Serf sont il e faus veirement,
Serfs are they and false truly
fors Bel Acueil tant seulement.
except Fair Welcome so only

Vostre consauz est il or teus?
Your counsel is it now such
Traïtres seraie morteus
Traitor I-would-be mortal
se servaie pour deceveir,
if I-served for to-deceive
car bien puis dire de ce veir:
for well I-can say of this truth
quant je vueil les genz espier,
when I wish the folk to-spy-on
je les sueil avant deffier.
I them am-wont before to-defy
Sofrez au meins que je deffie
Allow at-the least that I defy
Male Bouche, qui si m'espie,
Wicked Tongue who so me-spies
ainz qu'ainsinc l'aille decevant;
before that-thus him-I-go deceiving
ou li prie que de ce vent
or him I-beg that of this wind
qu'il m'a levé que il l'abate,
which-he me-has raised that he it-lay
ou il couvient que je le bate;
or it behooves that I him beat
ou, s'il li plaist, qu'il le m'amende,
or if-it to-him please that-he it to-me-amend
ou j'en prendrai par mei l'amende;
or I-thereof will-take by myself the-amends

ou, seveaus non, que je m'en plaigne
or otherwise not that I myself-thereof complain
au juige qui venchance en preigne.
to-the judge who vengeance thereof take
— Compainz, compainz, ce deivent querre
Companion companion this ought seek
cil qui sont en aperte guerre;
those who are in open war
mais Male Bouche est trop couverz,
but Wicked Tongue is exceedingly covert
il n'est pas anemis ouverz,
he not-is at-all enemy open
car, quant il het ou ome ou fame,
for when he hates either man or woman
par darriers le blasme e diffame.
from behind him blames and defames
Traïtres est, Deus le honisse!
Traitor he-is God him shame
Si rest dreiz que l'en le traïsse.
So in-turn-it-is right that one him betray
D'ome traïteur j'en di fi;
Of-man traitor I-thereof say fie
puis qu'il n'a fei point ne m'i fi.
since that-he not-has faith at-all not myself-there I-trust
Il het les genz ou cueur dedenz,
He hates the folk in-the heart within
e leur rit de bouche e de denz.
and at-them laughs with mouth and with teeth
Onques teus on ne m'abeli:
Ever such man not me-pleased

de mei se gart e je de li.
from me himself let-him-guard and I from him
Dreiz est qui a traïr s'amort
Right it-is who to betray himself-bites
qu'il rait par traïson sa mort,
that-he in-turn-have by treason his death
se l'en ne s'en peut autrement
if one not himself-thereof can otherwise
venchier plus enourablement.
avenge more honorably
E se de lui vous voulez plaindre,
And if of him you wish to-complain
li cuidiez vous la jangle esteindre?
from-him think you the chatter to-quench
Ne nou pourreiz, espeir, prouver,
Neither not-it you-could perhaps prove
ne soufisanz tesmoinz trouver.
nor sufficient witnesses find
E se preuves aviez ores,
And if proofs you-had now
ne se tairait il pas encores.
not himself would-be-silent he at-all still
Se plus prouvez, plus janglera,
If more you-prove more he-will-chatter
plus i perdreiz qu'il ne fera;
more there you-will-lose than-he — will-do
si riert la chose plus seüe,
so in-turn-would-be the thing more known
e vostre honte plus creüe,
and your shame more increased

car teus cuide abaissier sa honte
for such-one thinks to-lower his shame
ou venchier qui l'acreist e monte.
or avenge who it-increases and mounts
De prier que seit abatuz
Of begging that be laid
cil blasmes ou qu'il seit batuz,
that blame or that-he be beaten
ja veir pour ce ne l'abatrait,
ever truly for this not it-he-would-lay
non, par Deu, pas, qui le batrait;
no by God at-all who him would-beat
d'atendre qu'il le vous ament
of-waiting that-he it to-you amend
neienz serait, si Deus m'ament.
nothing would-be so God me-mend
Ja veir amende n'en prendraie,
Ever truly amends not-thereof I-would-take
bien l'ofrist, ainz li pardonraie,
well it-he-offered rather to-him I-would-pardon
e s'il i a deffiement,
and if-it there has defiance
seur sainz vous jur que vraiement
on saints to-you I-swear that truly
Bel Acueil iert mis es aneaus,
Fair Welcome will-be put in-the rings
ars en feus ou neiez en eaus;
burned in fires or drowned in waters

ou sera si fort enserrez
or will-be so strongly shut-in
qu'espeir jamais ne le verrez;
that-perhaps ever not him you-will-see
lors avreiz le cueur plus dolent
then you-will-have the heart more sorrowful
qu'onques n'ot Chales pour Rolant,
than-ever had Charles for Roland
quant en Roncevaus mort reçut
when in Roncevaux death he-received
par Ganelon, qui le deçut.
by Ganelon who him deceived
— O! ce ne vois je pas querant;
O this not go I at-all seeking
or aut, au deable le rent.
now let-him-go to-the devil him I-give-back
Je le voudraie aveir pendu,
I him would-wish to-have hanged
qui si m'a mon peivre espandu.
who so me-has my pepper spilled
— Compainz, ne vous chaille dou pendre;
Companion not to-you matter of-the hanging
autre venchance en couvient prendre:
other vengeance thereof it-behooves to-take
ne vous afiert pas cist offices;
not to-you belongs at-all this office
bien en couviegne a ces joustices.
well thereof it-let-behoove to these justices
Mais par traïson le boulez,
But by treason him trick

se mon conseil creire voulez.
if my counsel to-believe you-wish
— Compainz, a ce conseil m'acort,
Companion to this counsel myself-I-accord
ja n'istrai mais de cet acort.
ever not-I-will-go-out more from this accord
Nepourquant, se vous seüssiez
Nevertheless if you knew
aucune art don veie eüssiez 7880
some art whence way you-had
a trouver aucune maniere
to find some manner
dou chastel prendre plus legiere,
of-the castle to-take more easy
je la voudraie bien entendre,
I it would-wish well to-hear
se la me vouliez aprendre.
if it to-me you-wished to-teach
— Oïl, un chemin bel e gent; 7885
Yes a road fair and gentle
mais il n'est preuz a povre gent.
but it not-is profitable to poor folk

The Road of Too-Much Giving

VII

Friend tells of a shorter road, Too-Much Giving, founded by Foolish Largesse, by which the castle falls at once; but no poor man enters it, and Friend himself was turned off it by Poverty. Wealth leads lovers in but not out. Foolish Largesse lives within it, spending without measure, and Poverty, full of shame, at its other end. Nothing grieves a man like poverty, Friend says, as he knows from his own life.

Compainz, au chastel desconfire
Companion for-the castle to-overthrow
peut l'en bien plus brief veie eslire,
can one well more short way choose
senz mon art e senz ma doctrine,
without my art and without my teaching
e rompre jusqu'en la racine
and break down-into the root
la forterece de venue;
the fortress of arrival
ja n'i avrait porte tenue,
ever not-there would-have gate held
trestuit se laisseraient prendre,
all themselves would-let take
n'est riens qui le peüst defendre;
not-is anything that it could defend
nus n'i oserait mot soner.
any not-there would-dare word to-sound
Li chemins a non Trop Doner;
The road has name Too-Much Giving
Fole Largece le fonda,
Foolish Largesse it founded

qui mainz amanz i afonda.
who many lovers there sank
Je quenois trop bien le sentier,
I know exceedingly well the path
car je m'en issi avant ier,
for I myself-thence came-out day-before yesterday
e pelerins i ai esté
and pilgrim there I-have been
plus d'un iver e d'un esté.
more than-one winter and than-one summer
Largece laissereiz a destre,
Largesse you-will-leave on right
e vous tourreiz a main senestre;
and you will-turn to hand left
vous n'avreiz ja plus d'une archiee
you not-will-have ever more than-one bowshot
la sente batue marchiee,
the path beaten trodden
senz point user vostre soler,
without at-all to-wear-out your shoe
que vous verreiz les murs croler
that you will-see the walls shake
e chanceler tours e tourneles,
and totter towers and turrets
ja tant ne seront forz ne beles,
ever so not they-will-be strong nor fair
e tout par eus ouvrir les portes,
and all by themselves open the gates
pour neient fussent les genz mortes.
for nothing were the folk dead

De cele part est li chasteaus
On that side is the castle
si feibles qu'uns ratiz gasteaus
so feeble that-a grated cake
est plus forz a partir en quatre
is more strong to divide in four
que ne sont li mur a abatre.
than — are the walls to fell
Par la serait il pris tantost;
By there would-be it taken at-once
il n'i couvendrait pas tant ost
it not-there would-need at-all so-great host
come il ferait a Chalemaine
as it would-do for Charlemagne
s'il voulait conquerre le Maine.
if-he wished to-conquer the Maine
En ce chemin, mien escientre,
On this road to-my knowledge
povres on nule feiz n'i entre;
poor man any time not-there enters
nus n'i peut povre ome mener,
any not-there can poor man lead
n'il par sei n'i peut assener.
nor-he by himself not-there can reach
Mais, qui dedenz mené l'avrait,
But who within led him-would-have
maintenant le chemin savrait
at-once the road would-know
autresinc bien con je savraie,
just-so well as I would-know

ja si bien apris ne l'avraie.
ever so well taught not it-I-would-have
E, s'il vous plaist, vous le savreiz,
And if-it to-you please you it will-know
car assez tost apris l'avreiz
for quite soon taught it-you-will-have
se, senz plus, poez grant aveir
if without more you-can great wealth
pour despens outrageus aveir;
for expenses outrageous to-have
mais je ne vous i menrai pas:
but I not you there will-lead at-all
Povreté m'a veé le pas;
Poverty me-has forbidden the passage
a l'issir le me defendi.
at-the coming-out it to-me forbade
Quanque j'avaie i despendi,
Whatever I-had there I-spent
e quanque de l'autrui reçui;
and whatever of the-others' I-received
touz mes creanciers en deçui
all my creditors thereby I-deceived
si que je n'en puis nul paier,
so that I not-thereof can any pay
s'en me devait pendre ou neier.
if-one me ought hang or drown
«N'i venez», dist ele, «jamais,
Not-there come said she ever
puis qu'a despendre n'i a mais.»
since that-to spend not-there has more

Vous i enterreiz mout a peine
You there will-enter very with pain
se Richece ne vous i meine;
if Wealth not you there leads
mais a touz ceus qu'ele i conduit
but to all those whom-she there leads
au retour refuse conduit.
at-the return she-refuses escort
A l'aler o vous se tenra,
At-the going with you herself she-will-hold
mais ja ne vous en ramenra;
but ever not you thence will-bring-back
e de tant seiez asseür:
and of so-much be assured
s'ous i entrez par nul eür,
if-you there enter by any chance
ja n'en istreiz n'a seir n'a main,
ever not-thence you-will-go-out nor-at evening nor-at morning
se Povreté n'i met la main,
if Poverty not-there puts the hand
par cui sont en destrece maint.
by whom are in distress many
Dedenz Fole Largece maint,
Within Foolish Largesse dwells
qui ne pense a riens fors a jeus,
who not thinks of anything except of games
e a despens faire outrageus;
and of expenses to-make outrageous

qu'el despent ausinc ses deniers
for-she spends just-so her pence
con s'el les puisast en greniers,
as if-she them drew in granaries
senz conter e senz mesurer,
without counting and without measuring
combien que ce deie durer.
however-much that this ought last
Povreté maint a l'autre chief,
Poverty dwells at the-other end
pleine de honte e de meschief,
full of shame and of mischief
qui trop seufre au cueur granz molestes,
who exceedingly suffers at-the heart great troubles
tant fait de honteuses requestes,
so-many she-makes of shameful requests
e tant ot de durs escondiz.
and so-many hears of hard refusals
El n'a ne bons faiz ne bons diz,
She not-has neither good deeds nor good sayings
ne delitables ne plaisanz.
nor delightful nor pleasing
Ja si ne sera bien faisanz
Ever so not she-will-be well doing
que chascuns ses euvres ne blasme.
that each her works not blame
Chascuns la vilteie e mesasme.
Each her vilifies and slights
Mais de Povreté ne vous chaille,
But of Poverty not to-you matter

fors de penser, coment qu'il aille,
except to think however that-it go
coment la pourreiz eschever.
how her you-could escape
Riens ne peut tant ome grever
Anything not can so-much man grieve
come choeir en povreté:
as to-fall in poverty
ce sevent bien li endeté,
this know well the indebted
qui tout le leur ont despendu;
who all the theirs have spent
maint ont esté par li pendu.
many have been by her hanged
Bien le resevent cil e dient
Well it in-turn-know those and say
qui contre leur vouleir mendient;
who against their will beg
mout leur couvient sofrir douleur
much them it-behooves to-suffer grief
ainz que genz leur doignent dou leur.
before that folk to-them give of-the theirs
Ausinc le deivent cil saveir
Likewise it ought those know
qui d'amours veulent joie aveir,
who of-love wish joy to-have
car povres n'a don s'amour paisse,
for poor-man not-has with-which his-love he-feed
si come Ovides le confesse.
so as Ovid it confesses

Povreté fait ome despire
Poverty makes man despised
e haïr e vivre a martire,
and hated and live in martyrdom
e tost aus genz neïs lou sen.
and takes-away from-the folk even the sense
Pour Deu, compainz, gardez vous en,
For God companion guard yourself thereof
e vous efforciez bien de creire
and yourself strive well to believe
ma parole esprouvee e veire,
my word proved and true
car j'ai, ce sachiez, esprouvé,
for I-have this know proved
e par esperiment trouvé,
and by experiment found
neïs en ma propre persone,
even in my own person
trestout quanque je vous sarmone.
all whatever I to-you preach
Si sai meauz que povreté monte
So I-know better what poverty amounts
par ma mesaise e par ma honte,
by my distress and by my shame
beaus compainz, que vous ne savez,
fair companion than you — know
qui tant soferte ne l'avez.
who so-much suffered not it-have
Si vous devez en mei fier,
So you ought in me trust

car jou di pour vous chastier.
for I-it say for you to-correct
Mout a beneüree vie
Very has blessed life
on qui par autrui se chastie.
man who by others himself corrects

Friend's Poverty and the False Friends

VIII

Friend was once rich and loved, but Foolish Largesse left him poor and Fortune took away his friends, all but one, who offered him all he had and made him take it. Poverty showed him who his true friend was; such a friend lives on in memory, as Pirithous did for Theseus. Poverty is worse than Death, tormenting body and soul as long as they are joined, and Solomon tells his son to keep from it.

Vaillanz on sueil estre clamez,
Valiant man I-was-wont to-be called
e de touz compaignons amez,
and by all companions loved
e despendaie lieement
and I-spent gladly
en touz leus plus que largement
in all places more than lavishly
tant con fui riches on tenuz;
as-long as I-was rich man held
or sui si povres devenuz,
now I-am so poor become
par les despens Fole Largece,
by the expenses of-Foolish Largesse

qui m'a mis en cete destrece,
who me-has put in this distress
que je n'ai, fors a grant dangier,
that I not-have except with great difficulty
ne que beivre, ne que mangier,
neither what to-drink nor what to-eat
ne que chaucier, ne que vestir,
nor what to-shoe nor what to-clothe
tant me fait donter e mestir
so-much me makes tame and serve
Povreté qui tout ami tost.
Poverty who every friend takes-away
Si sachiez, compainz, que, si tost
So know companion that as soon
come Fortune m'ot ça mis,
as Fortune me-had here put
je perdi trestouz mes amis,
I lost all my friends
fors un, ce crei je veirement,
except one this believe I truly
qui m'est remés tant seulement.
who to-me-is remained so only
Fortune ainsinc les me toli
Fortune thus them from-me took
par Povreté qui vint o li.
by Poverty who came with her
Toli! Par fei, non pas, je ment,
Took By faith no at-all I lie
ainz prist ses choses proprement,
rather she-took her things properly

car pour veir sai que, se mien fussent,
for for truth I-know that if mine they-were
ja pour li laissié ne m'eüssent.
ever for her left not me-they-would-have
De riens donc vers mei ne mesprist
In anything then toward me not she-misdid
quant ses amis meïsmes prist.
when her friends own she-took
Siens, veire, mais riens n'en savaie,
Hers indeed but anything not-thereof I-knew
car tant achetez les avaie
for so-much bought them I-had
de cueur e de cors e d'aveir,
with heart and with body and with-wealth
qui les cuidaie touz aveir,
that them I-thought all to-have
que, quant ce vint au darrenier,
that when this came to-the last
je n'oi pas vaillant un denier;
I not-had at-all worth a penny
e quant en ce point me sentirent,
and when in this state me they-felt
tuit cil ami si s'en foïrent;
all those friends so themselves-thence fled
e me firent trestuit la moe
and to-me made all the pout
quant il me virent souz la roe
when they me saw under the wheel
de Fortune. envers abatu,
of Fortune upturned struck-down

tant m'a par Povreté batu.
so-much me-has by Poverty beaten
Si ne m'en dei je mie plaindre,
So not myself-thereof ought I at-all complain
qu'el m'a fait courteisie graindre
for-she me-has done courtesy greater
qu'onques n'oi vers li deservi; 8045
than-ever not-I-had toward her deserved
car entour mei si trés cler vi,
for around me so very clear I-saw
tant m'oinst les eauz d'un fin colire,
so-much me-she-anointed the eyes with-a fine salve
qu'el m'ot fait bastir e confire
which-she me-had made prepare and concoct
si tost come Povreté vint,
as soon as Poverty came
qui d'amis m'osta plus de vint, 8050
who of-friends me-took more than twenty
veire certes, que je ne mente,
indeed certainly that I not lie
plus de quatre cenz e cinquante,
more than four hundred and fifty
que lins, se ses eauz i meïst,
that lynx if his eyes there put
ce que je vi pas ne veïst;
what that I saw at-all not would-see

car Fortune tantost en place
for Fortune at-once on-the spot
la bone amour a pleine face
the good love in full face
de mon bon ami me montra,
of my good friend to-me showed
par Povreté qui m'encontra,
by Poverty who me-met
qu'onques n'eüsse queneü
which-ever not-I-would-have known
s'il n'eüst mon besoing veü.
if-he not-had my need seen
Mais quant le sot il acourut,
But when it he-knew he ran-up
e quanqu'il pot me secourut,
and whatever-he could me helped
e tout m'ofri quanqu'il avait,
and all to-me-offered whatever-he had
pour ce que mon besoing savait:
for this that my need he-knew
«Amis», dist il, «faz vous saveir,
Friend said he I-make to-you know
veiz ci le cors, veiz ci l'aveir,
see here the body see here the-wealth
ou vous avez autant con gié:
where you have as-much as I
prenez en senz prendre congié.
take thereof without taking leave
Mais combien? Se vous nou savez,
But how-much If you not-it know

tout, se de tant mestier avez,
all if of so-much need you-have
car amis ne prise une prune
for friend not prizes a plum
contre ami les biens de Fortune.
against friend the goods of Fortune
E mes biens natureus meïsmes,
And my goods natural even
puis que si nous entreveïsmes
since that so ourselves we-saw-each-other
que bien nous entrequeneüsmes,
that well ourselves we-knew-each-other
pour quei noz cueurs conjoinz eüsmes,
for which our hearts conjoined we-had
car anceis nous entresprouvasmes
for before ourselves we-tested-each-other
si que bons amis nous trouvasmes,
so that good friends ourselves we-found
car nus ne set senz esprouver
for any not knows without testing
s'il peut leial ami trouver,
if-he can loyal friend find
vous gart je toujourz obligiez,
you keep I always bound
tant sont poissant d'amours li giez;
so-much are powerful of-love the jesses
car mei pour vostre guerison
for me for your recovery
poez», dist il, «metre en prison,
you-can said he put in prison

pour plevines ou pour ostages,
for pledges or for hostages
e mes biens vendre e metre en gages.»
and my goods sell and put in pawns
Ne s'en tint pas encore a tant,
Not himself-thereof held at-all yet at so-much
pour ce qu'il ne m'alast flatant,
for this that-be not me-went flattering
anceis m'en fist a force prendre,
rather me-thereof made by force take
car n'i voulaie la main tendre,
for not-there I-wished the hand to-stretch
tant iere maz e vergoigneus,
so-much I-was downcast and shamefaced
a lei dou povre besoigneus,
in manner of-the poor needy-man
cui honte a si la bouche close
whom shame has so the mouth closed
que sa mesaise dire n'ose,
that his distress to-tell not-dares
ainz seufre e s'enclot e se cache,
but suffers and himself-shuts-in and himself hides
que nus sa povreté ne sache,
that any his poverty not know
e montre le plus bel defores.
and shows the most fair outside
Ainsinc le faisaie je lores.
Thus it did I then

Ce ne font pas, bien le recors,
This not do at-all well it I-recall
li mendiant poissant de cors,
the mendicants powerful of body
qui se vont par tout embatant,
who themselves go through all thrusting
par douces paroles flatant,
by sweet words flattering
e le plus lait dehors demontrent
and the most ugly outside display
a trestouz ceus qui les encontrent,
to all those who them meet
e le plus bel dedenz reponent,
and the most fair within hide
pour deceveir ceus qui leur donent;
for to-deceive those who to-them give
e vont disant que povre sont,
and go saying that poor they-are
e les grasses pitances ont,
and the fat pittances have
e les granz deniers en tresor.
and the great pence in treasure
Mais atant m'en tairai des or,
But thereupon myself-thereof I-will-be-silent from now
car j'en pourraie bien tant dire
for I-thereof could well so-much say
qu'il m'en irait de mal en pire;
that-it to-me-thence would-go from bad to worse

car toujourz heent ypocrite
for always hate hypocrites
verité qui contre aus est dite.
truth which against them is said
Ainsinc es devant diz amis
Thus in-the before said friends
mes fos cueurs son travail a mis;
my foolish heart its toil has put
si sui par mon fol sen traïz,
so I-am by my foolish sense betrayed
despiz, diffamez e haïz,
despised defamed and hated
senz achaison d'autre deserte
without occasion of-other desert
que de la devant dite perte,
than of the before said loss
de toutes genz comunement,
by all folk commonly
fors que de vous tant seulement,
except that by you so only
qui voz amours pas ne perdez,
who your loves at-all not lose
mais a mon cueur vous aerdez,
but to my heart yourself cling
e toujourz, si con je le crei,
and always so as I it believe
qui d'amer vous pas ne recrei,
who of-loving you at-all not I-give-up
se Deu plaist, vous i aerdreiz.
if God please you there will-cling

Mais pour ce que vous me perdreiz
But for this that you me will-lose
quant a corporel compaignie,
as to bodily company
en cete terriene vie,
in this earthly life
quant li darreniers jourz vendra,
when the last day will-come
que Mort des cors son dreit prendra;
that Death of-the bodies its right will-take
car icel jour, bien le recors,
for that day well it I-recall
ne nous toudra fors que le cors
not from-us will-take except that the body
e toutes les apartenances
and all the appurtenances
de par les corporeus substances;
on behalf-of the bodily substances
car ambedui, ce sai, mourron,
for both this I-know we-will-die
plus tost, espeir, que ne vourron,
more soon perhaps than — we-will-wish
car Mort touz compaignons dessemble;
for Death all companions separates
mais ce n'iert pas, espeir, ensemble;
but this not-will-be at-all perhaps together
si sai je bien certainement
so know I well certainly
que, se leial amour ne ment,
that if loyal love not lies

se vous vivez e je mouraie,
if you live and I died
toujourz en vostre cueur vivraie;
always in your heart I-would-live
e se devant mei mouriez,
and if before me you-died
toujourz ou mien revivriez
always in-the mine you-would-live-again
emprès vostre mort par memoire,
after your death by memory
si con vesqui, ce dit l'estoire,
so as lived this says the-story
Pirithoüs emprès sa mort,
Pirithous after his death
que Theseüs tant ama mort.
whom Theseus so-much loved dead
Tant le querait, tant le sivait,
So-much him he-sought so-much him he-followed
car cil dedenz son cueur vivait,
for he within his heart lived
que vis en enfer l'ala querre,
that alive in hell him-he-went to-seek
tant l'ot amé vivant seur terre.
so-much him-he-had loved living on earth
E Povreté fait pis que Mort,
And Poverty does worse than Death
car ame e cors tourmente e mort
for soul and body torments and bites
tant con l'uns o l'autre demeure,
as-long as the-one with the-other remains

non pas, senz plus, une seule eure;
not at-all without more a single hour
e leur ajouste a dannement
and to-them adds to damnation
larrecin e parjurement,
theft and perjury
avec toutes autres durtez,
with all other hardships
don chascuns est griement hurtez;
by-which each is grievously struck
ce que Mort ne veaut mie faire,
what that Death not wishes at-all to-do
anceis les en fait touz retraire,
rather them thence makes all withdraw
e si leur fait en son venir
and so to-them makes in her coming
touz temporeus tormenz fenir,
all temporal torments end
e, senz plus, coment qu'el seit grieve,
and without more however that-she be grievous
en une seule eure les grieve.
in one single hour them grieves
Pour ce, beaus compainz, vous semon
For this fair companion you I-summon
qu'il vous membre de Salemon,
that-it to-you remember of Solomon
qui fu reis de Jerusalen,
who was king of Jerusalem
car de lui mout de bien a l'en.
for from him much of good has one

Il dit, e bien i prenez garde:
He says and well there take heed
«Beaus fiz, de povreté te garde
Fair son from poverty thyself guard
touz les jourz que tu as a vivre.»
all the days that thou hast to live
E la cause rent en son livre:
And the cause gives in his book
«Car, en cete vie terrestre,
For in this life earthly
meauz vient mourir que povres estre.»
better comes to-die than poor to-be
E pour la povreté douteuse
And for the poverty dreadful
il parle de la sofraiteuse,
he speaks of the needy-one
que nous apelons indigence,
which we call indigence
qui si ses ostes desavance
which so its hosts sets-back
qu'onc si despites ne vi genz
that-ever so despised not I-saw folk
con ceus que l'en veit indigenz.
as those whom one sees indigent
Pour tesmoinz neïs les refuse
For witnesses even them refuses
chascuns qui de dreit escrit use,
each-one who of right written uses

pour ce qu'il sont en lei clamez
for this that-they are in law called
equipolenz aus diffamez.
equivalent to-the defamed

Poverty, and What Wins Women

IX

A poor lover should give small gifts sensibly, such as fruit in baskets or roses and violets. Gifts silence slanderers, win prebends, and take both gods and men, and Love and Venus will fell the fortress. Keeping a love is as hard as winning it. Nearly all women are covetous, as Juvenal says of Hiberina, though he meant the bad ones. A young man should trust in learning rather than in his fading beauty; yet songs win little, and a heavy purse of bezants wins all.

Trop est povretez laide chose;
Exceedingly is poverty ugly thing
mais touteveis bien dire l'ose
but nevertheless well to-say it-I-dare
que se vous aviez assez
that if you had plenty
deniers e joiaus amassez,
pence and jewels amassed
e tant doner en vouliez
and so-much to-give thereof you-wished
come prometre en pourriez,
as promise thereof you-could
lors cueudriez boutons e roses,
then you-would-pluck buds and roses
ja si ne seraient encloses.
ever so not they-would-be enclosed

Mais vous n'estes mie si riches,
But you not-are at-all so rich
ne si n'estes avers ne chiches:
nor so not-are miserly nor stingy
donez donc amiablement
give then amiably
beaus petiz dons raisnablement,
fair little gifts reasonably
si que n'en chaiez en poverte;
so that not-thereof you-fall into poverty
domage i avriez e perte:
harm there you-would-have and loss
li pluseur vous en moqueraient,
the most you thereof would-mock
qui de riens ne vous secourraient,
who in anything not you would-help
se vous aviez le cheté
if you had the purchase
outre sa valeur acheté.
beyond its value bought
Il afiert bien que l'en present
It befits well that one present
de fruiz nouveaus un bel present
of fruits new a fair present
en toailles ou en paniers;
in towels or in baskets
de ce ne seiez ja laniers.
of this not be ever slack
Pomes, peires, noiz ou cerises,
Apples pears nuts or cherries

cormes, prunes, fraises, merises,
sorb-apples plums strawberries wild-cherries
chastaignes, coinz, figues, vinetes,
chestnuts quinces figs barberries
pesches, parmainz ou alietes,
peaches pearmains or service-berries
nefles entees ou frambeises,
medlars grafted or raspberries
beloces, davesnes, jorreises,
sloes damsons jujubes
raisins nouveaus leur enveiez,
grapes new to-them send
e des meures fresches aiez;
and of-the mulberries fresh have
e se les avez achetees,
and if them you-have bought
dites qu'eus vous sont presentees
say that-they to-you are presented
d'un vostre ami, de loing venues,
from-a your friend from afar come
tout les achetez vous es rues.
even-if them buy you in-the streets
Ou donez roses vermeilletes,
Or give roses red
ou primerole ou violetes,
or primrose or violets
en beaus glaons en la saison.
in fair baskets in the season
En teus dons n'a pas desraison.
In such gifts not-has at-all unreason

Sachiez que don les genz afolent,
Know that gifts the folk madden
aus mesdisanz les jangles tolent;
from-the slanderers the chatter they-take-away
se mal es doneeurs savaient,
if evil in-the givers they-knew
tout le bien dou monde en diraient.
all the good of-the world thereof they-would-say
Bel don soutienent maint bailli
Fair gifts support many-a bailiff
qui fussent ore mal bailli;
who would-be now ill handled
bel don de vins e de viandes
fair gifts of wines and of meats
ont fait doner maintes provendes;
have made give many prebends
bel don si font, n'en doutez mie,
fair gifts so make not-thereof doubt at-all
porter tesmoing de bone vie;
bear witness of good life
mout tienent par tout bel leu don;
much hold through all fair place gifts
qui beaus dons done il est preudon.
who fair gifts gives he is worthy-man
Don donent los aus doneeurs
Gifts give praise to-the givers
e empirent les preneeurs,
and worsen the takers

quant il leur naturel franchise
when they their natural freedom
obligent a autrui servise.
bind to others' service
Que vous diraie? A la parsome
What to-you would-I-say At the sum
par don sont pris e deu e ome.
by gift are taken both gods and men
Compainz, entendez cete note
Companion hear this note
que je vous amoneste e note:
which I to-you admonish and note
sachiez, se vous voulez ce faire
know if you wish this to-do
que ci m'avez oï retraire,
which here me-you-have heard relate
li deus d'Amours ja n'i faudra,
the god of-Love ever not-there will-fail
quant le fort chastel assaudra,
when the strong castle he-will-assail
qu'il ne vous rende sa promesse;
that-he not to-you render his promise
car il e Venus la deesse
for he and Venus the goddess
tant aus portiers se combatront
so-much with-the porters themselves will-fight
que la forterece abatront;
that the fortress they-will-fell

si pourreiz lors cuillir la rose,
so you-will-be-able then pluck the rose
ja si fort ne l'avront enclose.
ever so strongly not it-they-will-have enclosed
Mais quant l'en a la chose aquise,
But when one has the thing acquired
si recouvient il grant maistrise
so in-turn-behooves it great mastery
au bien garder e sagement,
in-the well guarding and wisely
qui joïr en veaut longuement;
who to-enjoy thereof wishes long
car la vertu n'est mie mendre
for the virtue not-is at-all less
de bien garder e de defendre
of well guarding and of defending
les choses, quant eus sont aquises,
the things when they are acquired
que d'eus aquerre en queusque guises:
than of-them acquiring in whatever ways
s'est bien dreiz que chaitis se claime
and-it-is well right that wretch himself call
vallez quant il pert ce qu'il aime,
young-man when he loses this that-he loves
pour quei ce seit par sa defaute;
provided that this be by his fault

car mout est digne chose e haute
for very is worthy thing and high
de bien saveir garder s'amie
of well knowing to-guard his-friend
si que l'en ne la perde mie,
so that one not her lose at-all
meïsmement quant Deus la done
especially when God her gives
sage, simple, courteise e bone,
wise simple courteous and good
qui s'amour doint e point n'en vende;
who her-love give and at-all not-thereof sell
car onques amour marcheande
for ever love merchant
ne fu par fame controuvee,
not was by woman devised
fors par ribaudie prouvee;
except by harlotry proven
n'il n'i a point d'amour, senz faille,
nor-it not-there has at-all of-love without fail
en fame qui pour don se baille.
in woman who for gift herself gives
Tel amour feinte maus feus l'arde!
Such love feigned evil fire it-burn
La ne deit l'en pas metre garde.
There not ought one at-all put heed

Si sont eles veir pres que toutes
So are they truly nearly that all
couveiteuses de prendre, e gloutes
covetous of taking and greedy
de ravir e de devourer,
of seizing and of devouring
si qu'il ne puist riens demourer
so that-it not can anything remain
a ceus qui plus pour leur se claiment,
to those who most for theirs themselves call
e qui plus leiaument les aiment:
and who most loyally them love
car Juvenaus si nous raconte,
for Juvenal so to-us recounts
qui d'Iberine tient son conte,
who of-Hiberina holds his tale
que meauz vousist un des eauz perdre
that rather she-would one of-the eyes lose
que sei a un seul ome aerdre,
than herself to one single man to-cling
car nus seus n'i peüst soufire,
for any alone not-there could suffice
tant estait de chaude matire;
so-much she-was of hot matter
car ja fame n'iert tant ardanz,
for ever woman not-will-be so ardent

ne ses amours si bien gardanz
nor her loves so well guarding
que de son chier ami ne vueille
that of her dear friend not she-wish
e les tormenz e la despueille.
both the torments and the spoil
Or veiz que les autres feraient,
Now see what the others would-do
qui pour dons aus omes s'otraient;
who for gifts to-the men themselves-grant
ne nule n'en peut l'en trouver
nor any not-thereof can one find
qui ne se vueille ainsinc prouver,
who not herself wish thus to-prove
tant ait ome en subjeccion;
however-much she-have man in subjection
toutes ont cete entencion.
all have this intention
Veiz ci la regle qu'il en baille;
See here the rule that-he thereof gives
mais il n'est regle qui ne faille,
but it not-is rule that not fail
car des mauvaises entendi
for of-the bad-ones he-meant
quant cete sentence rendi.
when this sentence he-rendered
Mais s'ele est teus con je devis,
But if-she is such as I describe
leiaus de cueur, simple de vis,
loyal of heart simple of face

je vous dirai que l'en deit faire.
I to-you will-say what one ought do
Vallez courteis e debonaire
Young-man courteous and gracious
qui veaut a ce metre sa cure
who wishes to this to-put his care
gart que dou tout ne s'asseüre
let-him-take-care that in-the whole not himself-be-assure
en sa beauté ne en sa fourme;
in his beauty nor in his form
dreiz est que son engin enfourme
right it-is that his wit be-inform
de meurs e d'arz e de sciences;
with manners and with-arts and with sciences
car, qui les fins e les prouvances
for who the ends and the proofs
de beauté savrait regarder,
of beauty would-know to-regard
beauté se peut trop po garder;
beauty itself can exceedingly little keep
tantost a faite sa vespree,
at-once has made its evening
con les floretes en la pree,
as the little-flowers in the meadow
car beauté est de tel matire:
for beauty is of such matter
quant el plus vit e plus empire.
when it more lives and more worsens

Mais li sens, qui le veaut aquerre,
But the wit who it wishes to-acquire
tant come il peut vivre seur terre
as-long as he can live on earth
fait a son maistre compaignie,
makes to its master company
e meauz vaut au chief de sa vie
and more is-worth at-the end of his life
qu'onc ne fist au comencement;
than-ever not it-did at-the beginning
toujourz va par avancement;
always goes by advancement
ja n'iert par tens apetisiez.
ever not-will-be by time lessened
Mout deit estre amez e prisiez
Much ought be loved and prized
vallez de noble entendement
young-man of noble understanding
quant il en use sagement.
when he thereof uses wisely
Mout redeit estre fame liee
Much in-turn-ought be woman glad
quant ele a s'amour empleiee
when she has her-love employed
en beau vallet, courteis e sage,
in fair young-man courteous and wise
qui de sen a tel tesmoignage.
who of sense has such witness

Nepourquant, s'il me requerait
Nevertheless if-he me asked
conseil, saveir se bon serait
counsel to-know if good would-be
qu'il feïst rimes jolietes,
that-he made rhymes pretty
motez, fableaus e chançonetes,
motets fabliaux and little-songs
qu'il vueille a s'amie enveier,
that-he wish to his-friend to-send
pour li tenir e apaier:
for her to-keep and to-please
ha! las! de ce ne peut chaleir,
ah alas of this not can it-matter
beaus diz i peut trop po valeir;
fair sayings there can exceedingly little avail
li dit, espeir, loé seront,
the sayings perhaps praised will-be
d'autre preu petit i feront.
of-other profit little there will-make
Mais une granz bourse pesanz,
But a great purse heavy
toute farsie de besanz,
all stuffed with bezants
s'el la voait saillir en place,
if-she it saw leap-forth on-the spot
tost i courrait a pleine brace;
soon there would-run with full arm

qu'eles sont mais si aoursees
for-they are now so frenzied
qu'eus ne cueurent fors aus boursees.
that-they not run except to-the purse-loads
Jadis soulait estre autrement,
Formerly it-was-wont to-be otherwise
or va tout par empirement.
now goes all by worsening

The Golden Age
x

In the time of the first fathers, loves were loyal and free of covetousness. People ate acorns, fruits, and honey, drank water, wore hides, slept on leaves in huts, and fled storms into rocks and hollow oaks. In calm weather, as in an everlasting spring, with Zephyrus and Flora strewing flowers, they danced and loved under the trees, all equal and owning nothing, for love and lordship never keep company.

Jadis, au tens des prumiers peres
Formerly in-the time of-the first fathers
e de noz prumeraines meres,
and of our first mothers
si con la letre le tesmoigne,
so as the letter it witnesses
par cui nous savons la besoigne,
by which we know the matter
furent amours leiaus e fines,
were loves loyal and true
senz couveitise e senz rapines,
without covetousness and without plunder

e li siecles mout precieus;
and the world very precious
n'ierent pas si delicieus
not-were at-all so delicate
ne de robes ne de viandes;
neither in robes nor in meats
il cuillaient es bois les glandes
they gathered in-the woods the acorns
pour pains, pour chars e pour poissons,
for breads for meats and for fishes
e cerchaient par ces boissons,
and searched through these bushes
par vaus, par plains e par montaignes
through valleys through plains and through mountains
pomes, peires, noiz e chastaignes,
apples pears nuts and chestnuts
boutons e meures e pruneles,
hips and mulberries and sloes
frambeises, fraises e ceneles,
raspberries strawberries and haws
feves e peis e teus chosetes
beans and peas and such little-things
con fruiz, racines e erbetes;
as fruits roots and little-herbs
e des espis des blez frotaient
and of-the ears of-the grains they-rubbed
e des raisins aus chans grapaient,
and of-the grapes in-the fields they-gleaned
senz metre en pressoers n'en esnes.
without putting in presses nor-in vats

Li miel decouraient des chesnes,
The honeys ran-down from-the oaks
don abondament se vivaient;
on-which abundantly themselves they-lived
e de l'eve simple bevaient,
and of the-water plain they-drank
senz querre piment ne claré;
without seeking spiced-wine nor claret
n'onques ne burent vin paré.
nor-ever not drank wine adorned
N'iert point la terre lors aree,
Not-was at-all the earth then plowed
mais, si con Deus l'avait paree,
but so as God it-had adorned
par sei meïsmes aportait
by itself same brought
ce don chascuns se confortait.
that by-which each himself comforted
Ne queraient saumons ne luz,
Not they-sought salmons nor pikes
e vestaient les cuirs veluz,
and they-wore the hides hairy
e faisaient robes des laines,
and made robes of-the wools
senz teindre en erbes ne en graines,
without dyeing in herbs nor in grains
si come eus venaient des bestes.
so as they came from-the beasts
Couvertes ierent de genestes,
Covered were with brooms

de foilliees e de rameaus,
with leafage and with branches
leur bordetes e leur hameaus;
their little-huts and their hamlets
e faisaient en terre fosses.
and they-made in earth ditches
Es roches e es tiges grosses
In-the rocks and in-the trunks great
des chesnes crues se reboutaient
of-the oaks hollow themselves they-thrust
quant l'air tempesté redoutaient
when the-air stormy they-dreaded
de quelque tempeste aparant;
of some storm appearing
la s'en fuiaient a garant;
there themselves-thence they-fled to safety
e quant par nuit dormir voulaient,
and when by night to-sleep they-wished
en leu de coutes aportaient
in place of quilts they-brought
en leur caseaus monceaus ou gerbes
into their huts heaps or sheaves
de feuilles ou de mousse ou d'erbes.
of leaves or of moss or of-herbs
E quant li airs iert apaisiez,
And when the air was appeased
e li tens douz e aaisiez,
and the weather sweet and eased
e li vent mol e delitable,
and the wind soft and delightful

si come en printens pardurable,
so as in springtime everlasting
que cil oisel chascun matin
that those birds each morning
s'estudient en leur latin
themselves-strive in their Latin
a l'aube dou jour saluer,
to the-dawn of-the day greet
qui touz leur fait les cueurs muer,
which all to-them makes the hearts stir
Zephirus e Flora sa fame,
Zephyrus and Flora his wife
qui des fleurs est deesse e dame,
who of-the flowers is goddess and lady
(cist dui font les floretes naistre;
these two make the little-flowers be-born
fleurs ne quenoissent autre maistre,
flowers not know other master
car par tout le monde semant
for through all the world sowing
les va cil e cele ensement,
them goes he and she likewise
e les fourment e les couleurent
and them form and them color
des couleurs don les fleurs eneurent
with-the colors with-which the flowers honor
puceles e vallez preisiez
maidens and young-men prized
de beaus chapelez renveisiez,
with fair garlands merry

pour l'amour des fins amoureus;
for the-love of-the true lovers
car mout ont en grant amour eus)
for much have in great love them
de floretes leur estendaient
with little-flowers for-them they-spread
les coutes pointes, qui rendaient
the quilts embroidered which gave-back
8425 tel resplendeur par ces erbages,
such splendor through these grasses
par ces prez e par ces ramages,
through these meadows and through these boughs
qu'il vous fust avis que la terre
that-it to-you would-be seeming that the earth
vousist emprendre estrif ou guerre
wished to-undertake strife or war
au ciel d'estre meauz estelee,
with-the sky of-being better starred
8430 tant iert pour ses fleurs revelee.
so-much it-was for its flowers merry
Seur teus couches con je devise,
On such couches as I describe
senz rapine e senz couveitise,
without plunder and without covetousness
s'entracolaient e baisaient
themselves-embraced and kissed
cil cui li jeu d'Amours plaisaient.
those whom the games of-Love pleased

Cil arbre vert par ces gaudines
Those trees green through these groves
leur paveillons e leur courtines
their pavilions and their curtains
de leur rains seur aus estendaient,
with their branches over them spread
qui dou soleil les defendaient.
which from-the sun them defended
La demenaient leur queroles,
There they-led their carols
leur jeus e leur oiseuses moles
their games and their idlenesses soft
les simples genz asseürees,
the simple folk secure
de toutes cures escurees,
of all cares cleansed
fors de mener jolietez
except of leading merriments
par leiaus amiabletez.
by loyal friendships
N'encor n'avait fait rei ne prince
Not-yet not-had made king nor prince
mesfaiz, qui l'autrui tost e pince.
misdeeds which the-others' takes and pinches
Trestuit pareil estre soulaient,
All equal to-be were-wont
ne rien propre aveir ne voulaient:
nor anything own to-have not they-wished
bien savaient cele parole,
well they-knew that word

qui n'est mençongiere ne fole,
which not-is lying nor foolish
qu'onques amour e seignourie
that-ever love and lordship
ne s'entrefirent compaignie,
not each-other-made company
ne ne demourerent ensemble:
nor not remained together
cil qui maistrie les dessemble.
he who masters them separates

Marriage, and the Jealous Husband

XI

Love cannot last in a marriage where the husband wants mastery, and Friend gives the jealous husband's tirade. When he is away his wife dances and dresses up, saying it is for love of him, and she keeps company with a young bachelor in a green garland; he threatens to beat her. Theophrastus, he says, warns against taking any wife, for a poor one must be kept, a rich one is proud, and a fair one is besieged by all.

Pour ce veit l'en des mariages,
For this sees one of-the marriages
quant li mariz cuide estre sages,
when the husband thinks to-be wise
e chastie sa fame e bat,
and chastises his wife and beats

e la fait vivre en tel debat
and her makes live in such strife
(qu'il li dit qu'ele est nice e fole
that-he to-her says that-she is silly and foolish
don tant demeure a la querole,
for-which so-long she-stays at the carol
e don el hante si souvent
and for-which she frequents so often
des jolis vallez le couvent)
of-the merry young-men the company
que bone amour n'i peut durer,
that good love not-there can last
tant s'entrefont maus endurer,
so-much each-other-make ills to-endure
quant cil veaut la maistrise aveir
when he wishes the mastery to-have
dou cors sa fame e de l'aveir.
of-the body (of-)his wife and of the-goods
«Trop estes», fait il, «vilotiere,
Exceedingly you-are says he wanton
si ravez trop nice maniere;
so in-turn-you-have exceedingly silly manner
quant sui en mon labeur alez,
when I-am to my labor gone
tantost espinguiez e balez,
at-once you-skip and dance
e demenez tel resbaudie
and carry-on such revelry
que ce semble grant ribaudie,
that this seems great harlotry

e chantez come une sereine.
and sing like a siren
Deus vous mete en male semaine!
God you put in evil week
E quant vois a Rome ou en Frise
And when I-go to Rome or into Frisia
porter nostre marcheandise,
to-carry our merchandise
vous devenez tantost si cointe,
you become at-once so elegant
car je sai bien qui m'en acointe,
for I know well who me-thereof informs
que par tout en vait la parole;
that through all thereof goes the word
e quant aucuns vous aparole
and when anyone you addresses
pour quei si cointe vous tenez
for why so elegant yourself you-hold
en touz les leus ou vous venez,
in all the places where you come
vous responez: «Hari, hari,
you answer Alas alas
c'est pour l'amour de mon mari.»
this-is for the-love of my husband
Pour mei, las, doulereus, chaitis!
For me alas woeful wretch
Qui set se je forge ou je tis,
Who knows if I forge or I weave
ou se je sui ou morz ou vis?
or if I am either dead or alive

L'en me devrait flatir ou vis
One me ought slap on-the face
une vessie de mouton.
a bladder of sheep
Certes, je ne vail un bouton,
Certainly I not am-worth a button
quant autrement ne vous chasti.
when otherwise not you I-chastise
Mout m'avez or grant los basti,
Much me-you-have now great praise built
quant de tel chose vous vantez.
when of such thing yourself you-boast
Chascuns set bien que vous mentez.
Each knows well that you lie
Pour mei, las, doulereus! pour mei!
For me alas woeful for me
Maus ganz de mes mains enfourmai,
Evil gloves of my hands I-shaped
e crueusement me deçui
and cruelly myself I-deceived
quant onques vostre fei reçui
when ever your faith I-received
le jour de nostre mariage.
the day of our marriage
Pour mei menez tel rigolage!
For me you-carry-on such merriment
Pour mei menez vous tel bobant!
For me carry-on you such pomp
Cui cuidiez vous aler lobant?
Whom think you to-go fooling

Ja n'ai je pas lors le poeir
Ever not-have I at-all then the power
de ces cointeries voeir
of these elegances to-see
que cil ribaut safre e friant,
that those rascals lecherous and greedy
qui ces putains vont espiant,
who these whores go spying
entour vous remirent e veient,
around you gaze and see
quant par ces rues vous conveient.
when through these streets you they-escort
A cui parez vous ces chastaignes?
For whom adorn you these chestnuts
Qui me peut faire plus d'engaignes?
Who me can make more of-tricks
Vous faites de mei chape a pluie,
You make of me cloak against rain
quant orendreit lez vous m'apuie.
when right-now beside you myself-I-lean
Je vei que vous estes plus simple
I see that you are more simple
en cel seurcot, en cele guimple
in that surcoat in that wimple
que tourterele ne coulons.
than turtledove or dove
Ne vous chaut s'il est courz ou lons,
Not to-you matters if-it is short or long
quant sui touz seus lez vous presenz.
when I-am all alone beside you present

Qui me donrait quatre besanz,
Who to-me would-give four bezants
combien que debonaires seie,
however-much that gracious I-be
se pour honte ne le laissaie,
if for shame not it I-left
ne me tendraie de vous batre,
not myself I-would-hold from you beating
pour vostre grant orgueil abatre.
for your great pride to-lower
Si sachiez qu'il ne me plaist mie
So know that-it not me pleases at-all
qu'il ait seur vous nule cointie,
that-there be on you any elegance
seit a querole, seit a dance,
be-it at carol be-it at dance
fors seulement en ma presence.
except only in my presence
D'autre part, nou puis plus celer,
On-other part not-it can-I more conceal
entre vous e ce bacheler,
between you and this bachelor
robichonet au vert chapel,
little-robin with-the green garland
qui si tost vient a vostre apel,
who so soon comes at your call
avez vous terres a partir?
have you lands to divide
Vous ne poez de lui partir;
You not can from him part

toujourz ensemble flajolez:
always together you-pipe
ne sai que vous entrevolez,
not I-know what you each-other-wish
que vous poez vous entredire.
what you can yourselves say-to-each-other
Tout vif m'esteut enragier d'ire
All alive me-behooves to-rage with-anger
par vostre fol contenement.
by your foolish conduct
Par icelui Deu qui ne ment,
By that God who not lies
se vous jamais palez a li,
if you ever speak to him
vous en avreiz le vis pali,
you thereof will-have the face pale
veire, certes, plus neir que meure,
indeed certainly more black than mulberry
car des cos, si Deus me secueure,
for of-the blows so God me help
ainz que ne vous ost le musage,
before that — from-you I-take-away the gaping
tant vous donrai par ce visage,
so-many to-you I-will-give on this face
qui tant est aus musarz plaisanz,
which so-much is to-the gapers pleasing
que vous tendreiz queie e taisanz;
that you will-hold-yourself quiet and silent
ne jamais hors senz mei n'ireiz,
nor ever out without me not-you-will-go

mais a l'ostel me servireiz,
but at the-house me you-will-serve
en bons aneaus de fer rivee.
in good rings of iron riveted
Deable vous font si privee
Devils you make so intimate
de ces ribauz pleins de losenge,
with these rascals full of flattery
don vous deüssiez estre estrange.
of-whom you ought be a-stranger
Ne vous pris je pour mei servir?
Not you took I for me to-serve
Cuidiez vous m'amour deservir
Think you my-love to-deserve
pour acointier ces orz ribauz,
for to-befriend these filthy rascals
pour ce qu'il ont les cueurs si bauz
for this that-they have the hearts so bold
e qu'il vous retreuvent si baude?
and that-they you find-in-turn so bold
Vous estes mauvaise ribaude,
You are wicked harlot
si ne me puis en vous fier.
so not myself I-can in you trust
Maufé me firent marier.
Devils me made marry
Ha! se Theofrastus creüsse,
Ah if Theophrastus I-had-believed
ja fame espousee n'eüsse.
ever wife espoused not-I-would-have

Il ne tient pas ome pour sage
He not holds at-all man for wise
qui fame prent par mariage,
who woman takes by marriage
seit bele ou laide ou povre ou riche,
be-she fair or ugly or poor or rich
car il dit, e pour veir l'afiche,
for he says and for truth it-affirms
en son noble livre Aureole,
in his noble book Aureolus
qui bien fait a lire en escole,
which well is to read in school
qu'il i a vie trop grevaine,
that-it there has life exceedingly grievous
pleine de travail e de peine,
full of toil and of pain
e de contenz e de riotes,
and of quarrels and of riots
par les orgueauz des fames sotes,
by the prides of-the women stupid
e de dangiers e de reprouches
and of disdains and of reproaches
qu'eus font e dient par leur bouches,
which-they do and say by their mouths
e de requestes e de plaintes
and of requests and of complaints
qu'eus treuvent par achaisons maintes.
which-they find by occasions many
Si ra grant peine en eus garder,
So in-turn-is great pain in them guarding

pour leur fos vouleirs retarder.
for their foolish wills to-hold-back
E qui veaut povre fame prendre,
And who wishes poor woman to-take
a nourrir la l'esteut entendre,
to feeding her him-behooves to-attend
e a vestir e a chaucier.
and to clothing and to shoeing
E s'il tant se cuide essaucier
And if-he so-much himself thinks to-exalt
qu'il la preigne riche forment,
that-he her take rich greatly
a sofrir la ra grant torment,
to suffering her in-turn-is great torment
tant la treuve orguilleuse e fiere
so-much her he-finds proud and fierce
e seurcuidiee e bobanciere.
and presumptuous and boastful
S'el rest bele, tuit i acueurent,
If-she is-in-turn fair all there run
tuit la poursivent, tuit l'eneurent,
all her pursue all her-honor
tuit i hurtent, tuit i travaillent,
all there strike all there toil
tuit i luitent, tuit i bataillent,
all there wrestle all there battle
tuit a li servir s'estudient,
all to her serve themselves-strive
tuit li vont entour, tuit la prient,
all to-her go around all her beg

tuit i musent, tuit la couveitent,
all there gape all her covet
si l'ont en la fin, tant espleitent,
so her-they-have in the end so-much they-succeed
car tour de toutes parz assise
for tower from all parts besieged
enviz eschape d'estre prise.
hardly escapes from-being taken

The Jealous Husband: Fair or Foul

XII

An ugly wife wants to please every man, and any woman would yield if she were entreated well, even Penelope or Lucretia, who killed herself after Tarquin's son raped her, though her husband pardoned her. A man tests a horse before buying it, but never a wife. Good women are rarer than phoenixes or white crows, and Valerius, Juvenal, and King Phoroneus all warn men against marrying.

S'el rest laide, el veaut a touz plaire;
If-she is-in-turn ugly she wishes to all to-please
e coment pourrait nus ce faire
and how could anyone this do
qu'il gart chose que tuit guerreient,
that-he guard thing which all war-upon
ou qui veaut touz ceus qui la veient?
or who wishes all those who her see
S'il prent a tout le monde guerre,
If-he takes with all the world war
il n'a poeir de vivre en terre;
he not-has power to live on earth

nus nes garderait d'estre prises
any not-them would-guard from-being taken
pour tant qu'eus fussent bien requises.
for so-much that-they were well entreated
Penelope neïs prendrait
Penelope even would-take
qui bien a li prendre entendrait;
who well to her taking would-attend
si n'ot il meilleur fame en Grece.
so not-was there better woman in Greece
Si ferait il, par fei, Lucrece,
So would-do he by faith Lucretia
ja seit ce qu'el se seit ocise
even be it that-she herself be killed
pour ce qu'a force l'avait prise
for this that-by force her-had taken
li fiz le rei Tarquinius;
the son of-the king Tarquinius
n'onc, ce dit Titus Livius,
nor-ever this says Titus Livius
mariz ne peres ne parent
husband nor father nor kinsman
ne li porent estre garant,
not to-her could be protector
pour peine que nus i meïst,
for pain that anyone there put
que devant aus ne s'oceïst.
that before them not herself-she-killed
Dou deul laissier mout la requistrent,
Of-the grief to-leave much her they-besought

mout de beles raisons li distrent,
many of fair reasons to-her they-said
e ses mariz meïsmement
and her husband especially
la confortait piteusement,
her comforted piteously
e de bon cueur li pardonait
and with good heart to-her pardoned
tout le fait, e li sarmonait,
all the deed and to-her preached
e s'estudiait a trouver
and himself-strove to find
vives raisons a li prouver
lively reasons to her to-prove
que ses cors n'avait pas pechié
that her body not-had at-all sinned
quant li cueurs ne vost le pechié,
since the heart not wished the sin
car cors ne peut estre pechierres
for body not can be sinner
se li cueurs n'en est consentierres;
if the heart not-thereof is consenter
mais ele, qui son deul menait,
but she who her grief led
un coutel en son sein tenait
a knife in her bosom held
repost, que nus ne le veïst
hidden that any not it saw
quant pour sei ferir le preïst,
when for herself to-strike it she-took

si leur respondi senz vergoigne:
so to-them answered without shame
«Beau seigneur, qui que me pardoigne
Fair lords who that me pardon
l'ort pechié don si fort me poise,
the-foul sin of-which so strongly to-me it-weighs
ne coment que dou pardon voise,
nor however that of-the pardon go
je ne m'en pardoing pas la peine.»
I not myself-thereof pardon at-all the penalty
Lors fiert, de grant angoisse pleine,
Then strikes with great anguish full
son cueur e le fent, si se porte
her heart and it cleaves so herself carries
devant aus a la terre morte;
before them to the earth dead
mais ainz pria qu'il travaillassent
but first she-begged that-they labored
tant pour li que sa mort venchassent.
so-much for her that her death they-avenged
Cet essemple vost procurer
This example she-wished to-procure
pour les fames asseürer
for the women to-assure
que nus par force nes eüst
that any by force not-them had
qui de mort mourir ne deüst.
who of death die not should

Don li reis e ses fiz en furent
Whence the king and his son thereby were
mis en essill e la moururent.
put in exile and there died
N'onc puis Romain pour ce desrei
Nor-ever after Romans for this outrage
ne voudrent faire a Rome rei.
not wished to-make at Rome king
Si n'est il mais nule Lucrece,
So not-is there now any Lucretia
ne Penelope nule en Grece,
nor Penelope any in Greece
ne preudefame nule en terre,
nor worthy-woman any on earth
se l'en les savait bien requerre;
if one them knew well to-entreat
n'onc fame ne se defendi,
nor-ever woman not herself defended
qui bien a li prendre entendi:
who well to her taking attended
ainsinc le dient li paien,
thus it say the pagans
n'onques nus n'i trouva meien.
nor-ever anyone not-there found means
Maintes neïs par eus se baillent
Many even by themselves themselves give
quant li requereeur defaillent.
when the entreaters fail

E cil qui font le mariage
And those who make the marriage
si ront trop perilleus usage,
so in-turn-have exceedingly perilous usage
e coustume si despareille
and custom so unequal
qu'el me vient a trop grant merveille.
that-it to-me comes as exceedingly great marvel
Ne sai don vient cete folie,
Not I-know whence comes this folly
fors de rage e de desverie.
except from rage and from madness
Je vei que qui cheval achete
I see that who horse buys
n'iert ja si fos que riens i mete,
not-will-be ever so foolish that anything there he-put
coment que l'en l'ait bien couvert,
however that one it-have well covered
se tout nou veit a descouvert;
if all not-it he-sees in-the open
par tout le regarde e espreuve.
through all it he-regards and tests
Mais l'en prent fame senz espreuve,
But one takes woman without test
ne ja n'i sera descouverte,
nor ever not-there she-will-be uncovered
ne pour gaaigne ne pour perte,
neither for gain nor for loss
ne pour soulaz ne pour mesaise,
nor for solace nor for distress

pour ce, senz plus, qu'el ne desplaise
for this without more that-she not displease
devant qu'ele seit espousee.
before that-she be espoused
E quant el veit la chose outree,
And when she sees the thing carried-through
lors primes montre sa malice,
then first shows her malice
lors pert s'ele a sus sei nul vice,
then appears if-she has on herself any vice
lors fait au fol ses meurs sentir,
then makes to-the fool her ways feel
quant riens n'i vaut le repentir.
when anything not-there avails the repenting
Si sai je bien certainement,
So know I well certainly
combien qu'el se meint sagement,
however-much that-she herself conduct wisely
n'est nus qui mariez se sente,
not-is anyone who married himself feels
s'il n'est fos, qu'il ne s'en repente.
if-he not-is fool that-he not himself-thereof repent
Preudefame, par saint Denis!
Worthy-woman by saint Denis
Don il est meins que de fenis,
Of-which there is fewer than of phoenixes
si con Valerius tesmoigne,
so as Valerius witnesses

ne peut nus amer qu'el nou poigne
not can anyone love that-she not-him prick
de granz peeurs e de granz cures
with great fears and with great cares
e d'autres mescheances dures.
and with-other mischances hard
Meins que de fenis? par ma teste!
Fewer than of phoenixes by my head
Par comparaison plus oneste,
By comparison more seemly
veire meins que de blans corbeaus,
indeed fewer than of white crows
combien qu'eus aient les cors beaus.
however-much that-they have the bodies fair
E nepourquant, quei que j'en die,
And nevertheless whatever that I-thereof say
pour ce que ceus qui sont en vie
for this that those who are in life
ne puissent dire que je cueure
not can say that I run
a toutes fames trop a seure,
at all women too-much at upon
qui preudefame veaut quenoistre,
who worthy-woman wishes to-know
seit seculiere ou seit de cloistre,
be-she secular or be-she of cloister
se travail veaut metre en li querre,
if toil he-wishes to-put in her seeking
c'est oiseaus cler semez en terre,
this-is bird thinly sown on earth

si legierement quenoissables
so easily recognizable
qu'il est au cigne neir semblables.
that-it is to-the swan black like
Juvenaus neïs le conferme,
Juvenal even it confirms
qui redit par sentence ferme:
who says-again by sentence firm
«Se tu treuves chaste moillier,
If thou findest chaste wife
va t'en au temple agenoillier
go thyself-thence to-the temple to-kneel
e Jupiter enclins aeure,
and Jupiter bowed worship
e de sacrefier labeure
and to sacrifice labor
a Juno, la dame honoree,
to Juno the lady honored
une vache toute doree;
a cow all gilded
qu'onc plus merveilleuse aventure
for-ever more marvelous adventure
n'avint a nule creature.
not-befell to any creature
E qui veaut les males amer,
And who wishes the bad-ones to-love
don deça mer e dela mer,
of-which on-this-side sea and beyond sea
si con Valerius raconte,
so as Valerius recounts

qui de veir dire n'a pas honte,
who of truth telling not-has at-all shame
sont essain plus grant que de mousches
are swarms more great than of flies
qui se recuillent en leur rousches,
which themselves gather in their hives
a quel chief en cuide il venir?
to what end thereof thinks he to-come
Mal se fait a tel rain tenir;
Ill itself it-does to such branch hold
e qui s'i tient, bien le recors,
and who himself-there holds well it I-recall
il en perdra l'ame e le cors.
he thereof will-lose the-soul and the body
Valerius qui se doulait
Valerius who himself grieved
de ce que Rufins se voulait
of this that Rufinus himself wished
marier, qui ses compainz iere,
to-marry who his companion was
li dist une parole fiere:
to-him said a word fierce
«Deus touz poissanz», fait il, «amis,
God all powerful says he friend
gart que tu ne seies ja mis
guard that thou not be ever put
es laz de fame tout poissant,
in-the snares of woman all powerful
toutes choses par art froissant.»
all things by art breaking

Juvenaus meïsmes escrie
Juvenal himself cries
a Postumus qui se marie:
to Postumus who himself marries
«Postumus, veauz tu fame prendre?
Postumus wishest thou wife to-take
Ne peuz tu pas trouver a vendre
Not canst thou at-all find for sale
ou harz, ou cordes, ou chevestres,
either nooses or cords or halters
ou saillir hors par les fenestres
or leap out through the windows
don l'en peut haut e loing voeir,
whence one can high and far see
ou laissier tei dou pont choeir?
or let thyself from-the bridge fall
Quel Forsenerie te meine
What Madness thee leads
a cet torment, a cete peine?»
to this torment to this pain
Li reis Phoroneüs meïsmes,
The king Phoroneus himself
qui, si come nous apreïsmes,
who so as we learned
ses leis au peuple grec dona,
his laws to-the people Greek gave
ou lit de sa mort sarmona
in-the bed of his death preached
e dist a son frere Leonce:
and said to his brother Leontius

«Frere», fait il, «je te denonce
Brother says he I thee declare
que trés beneürez mourusse
that very blessed I-would-die
s'onc fame espousee n'eüsse.»
if-ever wife espoused not-I-had
E Leonces tantost la cause
And Leontius at-once the cause
li demanda de cete clause:
of-him asked of this clause
«Tuit li mari», dist il, «l'espreuvent
All the husbands said he it-test
e par esperiment le treuvent;
and by experiment it find
e quant tu avras fame prise,
and when thou wilt-have wife taken
tu le savras bien a devise.»
thou it wilt-know well at will

Abelard and Heloise

XIII

Heloise urged Peter Abelard not to marry her, wanting love freely given without lordship, but he married her and was castrated; she, later abbess of the Paraclete, wrote that she would rather be called his whore than an empress. The husband curses his own marriage and his wife's costly robe, which hinders him in bed, and says her furs, hanging all night on the peg, are good only to sell or pawn.

Pierres Abailarz reconfesse
Peter Abelard confesses-in-turn
que seur Heloïs, abaesse
that sister Heloise abbess
dou Paraclit, qui fu s'amie,
of-the Paraclete who was his-friend
acorder ne se voulait mie
to-agree not herself wished at-all
pour riens qu'il la preïst a fame;
for anything that-he her took as wife
ainz li faisait la jenne dame,
rather to-him made the young lady
bien entendanz e bien letree,
well understanding and well lettered
e bien amanz e bien amee,
and well loving and well loved
argumenz a lui chastier
arguments for him to-admonish
qu'il se gardast de marier;
that-he himself guard from marrying

e li prouvait par escritures
and to-him proved by writings
e par raisons que trop sont dures
and by reasons that exceedingly are hard
condicions de mariage,
the-conditions of marriage
combien que la fame seit sage;
however-much that the woman be wise
car les livres avait veüz
for the books she-had seen
e estudiez e seüz,
and studied and known
e les meurs femenins savait,
and the ways feminine she-knew
car trestouz en sei les avait.
for all in herself them she-had
E requerait que il l'amast,
And she-asked that he her-love
mais que nul dreit n'i reclamast
but that any right not-there he-claim
fors que de grace e de franchise,
except that of grace and of freedom
senz seignourie e senz maistrise,
without lordship and without mastery
si qu'il peüst estudier,
so that-he could study
touz siens, touz frans, senz sei lier;
all his-own all free without himself binding
e qu'el rentendist a l'estuide,
and that-she in-turn-attended to the-study

qui de science n'iert pas vuide.
who of knowledge not-was at-all empty
E li redisait toutes voies
And to-him said-again all the-same
que plus plaisanz ierent leur joies
that more pleasing were their joys
e li soulaz plus en creissaient
and the solaces more thereof grew
quant plus a tart s'entrevoaient;
when more at late each-other-they-saw
mais il, si come escrit nous a,
but he so as written to-us he-has
qui tant l'amait, puis l'espousa
who so-much her-loved afterward her-espoused
contre son amonestement,
against her admonishment
si l'en meschaï malement;
so him-thereof befell-ill badly
car puis qu'el fu, si com mei semble,
for after that-she was so as to-me seems
par l'acort d'ambedeus ensemble,
by the-accord of-both together
d'Argenteuil none revestue,
of-Argenteuil nun veiled
fu la coille a Pierre tolue,
was the testicle from Peter taken
a Paris, en son lit, de nuiz,
at Paris in his bed by night
don mout ot travauz e enuiz.
whereof much he-had toils and troubles

E fu puis cete mescheance
And was after this mischance
moines de Saint Denis en France,
monk of Saint Denis in France
puis abes d'une autre abaïe,
then abbot of-an other abbey
puis fonda, ce dit en sa Vie,
then founded this he-says in his Life
une abaïe renomee
an abbey renowned
qu'il a dou Paraclit nomee,
which-he has of-the Paraclete named
don Heloïs fu abaesse,
of-which Heloise was abbess
qui devant iert none professe.
who before was nun professed
Ele meïsmes le raconte,
She herself it recounts
e escrit, e n'en a pas honte,
and writes and not-thereof has at-all shame
a son ami, que tant amait
to her friend whom so-much she-loved
que pere e seigneur le clamait,
that father and lord him she-called
une merveilleuse parole,
a marvelous word
que mout de genz tendront a fole,
which many of folk will-hold for foolish
qu'il est escrit en ses epistres,
for-it is written in her epistles

qui bien cercherait les chapitres,
whoever well would-search the chapters
qu'el li manda par letre espresse,
that-she to-him sent by letter express
puis qu'el fu neïs abaesse:
after that-she was even abbess
«Se li empereres de Rome,
If the emperor of Rome
souz qui deivent estre tuit ome,
under whom ought be all men
me deignait vouleir prendre a fame
me deigned to-wish to-take as wife
e faire mei dou monde dame,
and make me of-the world lady
si voudraie je meauz», fait ele,
so would-wish I rather says she
«e Deu a tesmoing en apele,
and God as witness thereof calls
estre ta putain apelee
to-be thy whore called
que empereriz couronee.»
than empress crowned
Mais je ne crei mie, par m'ame,
But I not believe at-all by my-soul
qu'onques puis fust nule tel fame;
that-ever afterward was any such woman

si crei je que sa letreüre
so believe I that her learning
la mist a ce que la nature
her put to this that the nature
que des meurs femenins avait
which of-the ways feminine she-had
vaincre e donter meauz en savait.
to-vanquish and to-tame better thereby she-knew
Cete, se Pierres la creüst,
This-one if Peter her had-believed
onc espousee ne l'eüst.
ever espoused not her-he-would-have
Mariages est maus liens,
Marriage is evil bond
ainsinc m'aïst sainz Juliens,
so me-help saint Julian
qui pelerins erranz herberge,
who pilgrims wandering harbors
e sainz Lienarz, qui desferge
and saint Leonard who unfetters
les prisoniers bien repentanz,
the prisoners well repenting
quant les veit a sei dementanz.
when them he-sees to himself lamenting
Meauz me venist estre alez pendre
Better to-me would-have-come to-be gone to-hang
le jour que je dui fame prendre,
the day that I was-to wife take
quant si cointe fame acointai;
when so elegant woman I-befriended

morz sui quant fame si cointe ai.
dead I-am since woman so elegant I-have
Mais, pour le fill sainte Marie,
But by the son of-saint Mary
que me vaut cete cointerie,
what to-me avails this elegance
cete robe cousteuse e chiere,
this robe costly and dear
qui si vous fait haucier la chiere;
which so you makes lift the face
qui tant me grieve e ataïne,
which so-much me grieves and provokes
tant est longue e tant vous traïne,
so-much is-it long and so-much you trails
pour quei tant d'orgueil demenez
for which so-much of-pride you-carry-on
que j'en devieng touz forsenez?
that I-thereof become all mad
Que me fait ele de profit?
What to-me does it of profit
Combien qu'ele aus autres profit,
However-much that-it to-the others profit
a mei ne fait ele fors nuire;
to me not does it except harm
car, quant me vueil a vous deduire,
for when myself I-wish with you to-delight
je la treuve si encombreuse,
I it find so encumbering

si grevaine e si enuieuse
so grievous and so annoying
que je n'en puis a chief venir;
that I not-thereof can to end come
ne vous i puis a dreit tenir,
nor you there I-can at right hold
tant me faites e tourz e ganches
so-much to-me you-make both turns and dodges
de braz, de trumeaus e de hanches,
with arms with shins and with hips
e tant vous alez detortant.
and so-much yourself you-go twisting
Ne sai coment ce va, fors tant
Not I-know how this goes except so-much
que bien vei que ma druerie
that well I-see that my love-making
ne mes soulaz ne vous plaist mie.
nor my solaces not you please at-all
Neïs au seir, quant je me couche,
Even at-the evening when I myself lie-down
ainz que vous receive en ma couche,
before that you I-receive in my bed
si com preudon fait sa moillier,
so as worthy-man does his wife
la vous couvient il despoillier.
it you behooves it to-take-off

N'avez seur chief, seur cors, seur hanche
Not-you-have on head on body on hip
qu'une coife de teile blanche
but-a cap of linen white
e les treçons, indes ou verz,
and the braids indigo or green
espeir souz la coife couverz.
perhaps under the cap covered
Les robes e les pennes grises
The robes and the furs gray
sont lores a la perche mises,
are then on the peg put
toute la nuit pendanz a l'air.
all the night hanging in the-air
Que me peut lors tout ce valeir,
What to-me can then all this avail
fors a vendre ou a engagier?
except to selling or to pawning
Vif me veiez vous enragier,
Alive me see you rage
e mourir de la male rage,
and to-die of the evil rage
se je ne vent tout e engage;
if I not sell all and pawn
car, puis que par jour si me nuisent,
for since that by day so me they-harm
e par nuit point ne me deduisent,
and by night at-all not me they-delight

quel profit i puis autre atendre
what profit there can-I other expect
fors que d'engagier ou de vendre?
except that of-pawning or of selling
Ne vous, se par le veir alez, 8885
Not you if by the truth you-go
de nule riens meauz n'en valez,
in any anything better not-thereof you-are-worth
ne de sen ne de leiauté,
neither in sense nor in loyalty
non, par Deu, neïs de beauté.
no by God even in beauty

The Jealous Husband: Finery

XIV

Finery makes no woman fair, the husband says: the beauty is in the silk and the flowers, and a dunghill covered with silk still stinks underneath. Eyes like a lynx's would see the ugliness within, as Boethius says of Alcibiades. Beauty and Chastity are always at war, and even Ugliness drives Chastity out; women who adorn themselves serve Venus and despise God's gift by seeking a borrowed beauty.

E se nus on, pour mei confondre,
And if any man for me to-confound
voulait oposer ou respondre 8890
wished to-object or to-answer
que les bontez des choses bones
that the goodnesses of-the things good
vont bien es estranges persones,
go well into-the strange persons

e que beau garnement font beles
and that fair garments make fair
les dames e les dameiseles,
the ladies and the damsels
certes quiconques ce dirait,
certainly whoever this would-say
je diraie qu'il mentirait;
I would-say that-he would-lie
car les beautez des beles choses,
for the beauties of-the fair things
seient violetes ou roses,
be-they violets or roses
ou dras de seie ou fleurs de lis,
or cloths of silk or flowers of lily
si come escrit en livre lis,
so as written in book I-read
sont en eus e non pas es dames;
are in them and not at-all in-the ladies
car saveir deivent toutes fames
for know ought all women
que ja fame, jour qu'ele vive,
that ever woman day that-she live
n'avra fors sa beauté naïve.
not-will-have except her beauty native
E tout autant di de bonté
And all as-much I-say of goodness
con de beauté vous ai conté.
as of beauty to-you I-have told
Si di, pour ma parole ouvrir:
So I-say for my word to-open

qui voudrait un fumier couvrir
who would-wish a dunghill to-cover
de dras de seie ou de floretes,
with cloths of silk or with little-flowers
bien coulourees e bien netes,
well colored and well clean
si serait certes li fumiers,
so would-be certainly the dunghill
qui de puïr est coustumiers,
which of stinking is accustomed
teus come avant estre soulait.
such as before to-be it-was-wont
E se nus on dire voulait:
And if any man to-say wished
«Se li fumiers est laiz par enz,
If the dunghill is ugly in within
dehors en est plus beaus paranz;
outside thereof it-is more fair appearing
tout ainsinc les dames se perent
all just-so the ladies themselves adorn
pour ce que plus beles en perent
for this that more fair thereby they-appear
ou pour leur laidures repondre.»
or for their uglinesses to-hide
Par fei! ci ne sai je respondre,
By faith here not know I to-answer

fors tant que tel decepcion
except so-much that such deception
vient de la fole vision
comes from the foolish vision
des eauz qui parees les veient,
of-the eyes which adorned them see
par quei li cueur si s'en desveient
by which the hearts so themselves-thence go-astray
pour la plaisant impression
for the pleasing impression
de leur imaginacion,
of their imagination
qu'il n'i sevent aperceveir
that-they not-there know to-perceive
ne la mençonge ne le veir,
neither the lie nor the truth
ne le sofime deviser,
nor the sophism to-distinguish
par defaut de bien aviser.
by default of well discerning
Mais s'il eüssent eauz de lins,
But if-they had eyes of lynxes
ja pour les manteaus sebelins,
ever for the mantles sable
ne pour seurcoz, ne pour coteles,
nor for surcoats nor for kirtles
ne pour guindes, ne pour toeles,
nor for wimples nor for linens
ne pour chainses, ne pour pelices,
nor for chemises nor for pelisses

ne pour joiaus, ne pour devices,
nor for jewels nor for devices
ne pour leur moes desguisees,
nor for their pouts disguised
qui bien les avrait avisees,
who well them would-have examined
ne pour leur luisanz superfices,
nor for their shining surfaces
don eus resemblent artefices,
whereby they resemble artifices
ne pour chapeaus de fleurs nouveles,
nor for garlands of flowers new
ne leur semblassent estre beles;
not to-them they-would-seem to-be fair
car le cors Alcipiadès,
for the body of-Alcibiades
qui de beautez avait adès
who of beauties had ever
e de couleur e de faiture,
and of color and of fashioning
tant l'avait bien fourmé Nature,
so it-had well formed Nature
qui dedenz voeir le pourrait,
who within see it could
pour trop lait tenir le vourrait;
for too ugly to-hold it would-wish
ainsinc le raconte Boeces,
thus it recounts Boethius
sages on e pleins de proeces;
wise man and full of prowesses

e trait a tesmoing Aristote,
and draws as witness Aristotle
qui la parole ainsinc li note;
who the word thus to-him notes
car lins a la regardeüre
for lynx has the sight
si fort, si perçant e si pure
so strong so piercing and so pure
qu'il veit tout quanque l'en li moutre,
that-he sees all whatever one to-him shows
e dehors e dedenz tout outre.
both outside and within all through
Si di qu'onques en nul eé
So I-say that-ever in any age
Beauté n'ot pais a Chasteé;
Beauty not-had peace with Chastity
toujourz i a si grant tençon
always there has so great quarrel
qu'onc en fable ne en chançon
that-ever in fable nor in song
dire n'oï ne recorder
to-say not-I-heard nor to-recall
que riens les peüst acorder;
that anything them could reconcile
qu'eus ont entre eus si mortel guerre
for-they have between them so mortal war
que ja l'une plein pié de terre
that ever the-one full foot of earth
a l'autre ne laira tenir,
to the-other not will-let hold

pour qu'el puisse au desus venir.
provided that-she can on-the top come
Mais la chose est si mal partie
But the thing is so ill divided
que Chasteé par sa partie,
that Chastity for her part
quant assaut ou quant se revenche,
when she-assails or when herself she-avenges
tant set po de luite e de ganche
so-much knows little of wrestling and of dodging
qu'il li couvient ses armes rendre;
that-it to-her behooves her arms to-yield
qu'el ne s'a poeir de defendre
for-she not herself-has power to defend
contre Beauté, qui trop est fiere.
against Beauty who exceedingly is fierce
Laideur neïs, sa chamberiere,
Ugliness even her chambermaid
qui li deit eneur e servise,
who to-her owes honor and service
ne l'aime pas tant ne ne prise
not her-loves at-all so-much nor not prizes
que de son ostel ne la chace,
that from her house not her she-chase
e li cueurt sus, au col sa mace,
and on-her runs up at-the neck her mace

qui tant est grosse e tant li peise
which so-much is big and so-much to-her weighs
que merveilleusement li peise
that marvelously to-her it-grieves
don sa dame en vie demeure
whereby her lady in life remains
la montance d'une seule eure.
the amount of-a single hour
S'est Chasteé trop mal baillie,
So-is Chastity exceedingly ill handled
qu'ele est de deus parz assaillie,
for-she is from two sides assailed
si n'a de nule part secours,
so not-has from any side succor
si l'en couvient foïr le cours,
so to-her-thence behooves to-flee the course
car el se veit en l'estour seule;
for she herself sees in the-fray alone
s'el l'avait juré sus sa gueule,
if-she it-had sworn on her throat
seüst neïs assez de luite,
she-knew even plenty of wrestling
quant chascune encontre li luite,
when each against her wrestles
n'oserait ele contrester,
not-would-dare she to-resist
si qu'el n'i peut riens conquester.
so that-she not-there can anything conquer
Laideur ait ore mal dehé,
Ugliness have now ill curse

quant si cueurt sus a Chasteé,
since so runs up at Chastity
que defendre e tenser deüst;
whom defend and protect she-ought
neïs se mucier la peüst
even if hide her she-could
entre sa char e sa chemise,
between her flesh and her shift
si l'i deüst ele aveir mise.
so her-there ought she have put
Mout refait certes a blasmer
Much in-turn-is certainly to blame
Beauté qui la deüst amer,
Beauty who her ought love
e procurer, s'il li pleüst,
and procure if-it to-her pleased
que bone pais entre eus eüst;
that good peace between them there-were
son poeir au meins en feïst,
her power at-the least thereof she-made
ou qu'en sa merci se meïst;
or that-in her mercy herself she-put
qu'el li deüst bien faire omage
for-she to-her ought well do homage
s'el fust preuz e courteise e sage,
if-she were worthy and courteous and wise
non pas faire honte e vergoigne;
not at-all to-do shame and disgrace
car la letre neïs tesmoigne,
for the letter even witnesses

ou sisieme livre Virgile,
in-the sixth book of-Virgil
par l'auctorité de Sebile,
by the-authority of Sibyl
que nus qui vive chastement
that any who lives chastely
ne peut venir a dannement.
not can come to damnation
Don je jur Deu, le rei celestre,
Whence I swear by-God the king celestial
que fame qui bele veaut estre,
that woman who fair wishes to-be
ou qui dou resembler se peine,
or who of-the seeming herself takes-pains
e se remire e se demeine
and herself mirrors and herself busies
pour sei parer e cointeier,
for herself to-adorn and to-prettify
qu'el veaut Chasteé guerreier,
that-she wishes Chastity to-war-on
qui mout a certes d'anemies.
who much has certainly of-enemies
Par cloistres e par abaïes
Through cloisters and through abbeys
sont toutes contre li jurees;
are all against her sworn
ja si ne seront enmurees
ever so not they-will-be walled-in
que Chasteé si fort ne heent,
that Chastity so strongly not they-hate

que toutes a honir la beent.
that all to shame her aim
Toutes font a Venus omage,
All do to Venus homage
senz regarder preu ne domage,
without regarding profit nor harm
e se cointeient e se fardent,
and themselves prettify and themselves paint
pour ceus bouler qui les regardent,
for those to-trick who them regard
e vont traçant par mi les rues
and go tracing through-the midst-of the streets
pour voeir, pour estre veües,
for to-see for to-be seen
pour faire aus compaignons desir
for to-make to-the companions desire
de vouleir avec eus gesir;
of wishing with them to-lie
pour ce portent eus les cointises
for this carry they the finery
aus queroles e aus iglises,
to-the carols and to-the churches
car ja nule ce ne feïst
for ever any this not would-do
s'el ne cuidast qu'en la veïst
if-she not thought that-one her saw
e que par ce plus tost pleüst
and that by this more soon she-would-please
a ceus que deceveir peüst.
to those whom deceive she-could

Mais certes, qui le veir en conte,
But certainly who the truth thereof tells
mout font fames a Deu grant honte,
much do women to God great shame
come foles e desveiees,
as foolish and gone-astray
quant ne se tienent a paiees
when not themselves hold as paid
de la beauté que Deus leur done.
with the beauty that God to-them gives
Chascune a sus son chief courone
Each has on her head crown
de floretes, d'or ou de seie,
of little-flowers of-gold or of silk
e s'en orguillist e cointeie,
and herself-thereof prides and prettifies
quant se va montrant par la vile,
when herself goes showing through the town
par quei trop malement s'avile
by which exceedingly evilly herself-debases
la maleüree, la lasse,
the unhappy-one the wretched-one
quant chose plus vil e plus basse
when thing more vile and more base
de sei veaut sus son chief atraire,
than herself she-wishes on her head to-draw
pour sa beauté creistre ou parfaire;
for her beauty to-increase or to-perfect

e vait ainsinc Deu despisant
and goes thus God despising
qu'el le tient pour non soufisant,
for-she him holds for not sufficient
e se pense en son fol courage
and herself thinks in her foolish heart
que mout li fist Deus grant outrage,
that much to-her did God great outrage
qui, quant beauté li compassa,
who when beauty to-her he-measured
trop negligemment s'en passa.
too negligently himself-thence passed
Si quiert beauté de creatures
So seeks beauty from creatures
que Deus fait de plus vils figures,
which God makes of more vile figures
con de metauz ou de floretes,
as from metals or from little-flowers
ou d'autres estranges chosetes.
or from-other strange little-things

The Jealous Husband: Rascals and Cuckolds

XV

Men who adorn themselves also wrong God, the husband says, and he wants only clothes that keep out the cold. The fine robes he buys only make his wife wild: she refuses him in bed, then goes dancing with rascals who mock him as a foul jealous churl, and through her, he says, he has joined Saint Arnold's brotherhood of cuckolds. He sneers that Juvenal comforts her, calling this trade the least of a woman's sins, since stepmothers brew poisons and charms.

Senz faille, ausinc est il des omes:
Without fail likewise is it of-the men
se nous, pour plus bel estre, fomes
if we for more fair to-be make
les chapelez e les cointises
the garlands and the finery
seur les beautez que Deus a mises
over the beauties that God has put
en nous, vers lui mout mesprenons
in us toward him much we-misdo
quant a paiez ne nous tenons
when as paid not ourselves we-hold
des beautez qu'il nous a donees
with-the beauties that-he to-us has given
seur toutes creatures nees.
above all creatures born
Mais je n'ai de teus trufles cure,
But I not-have of such trifles care
je vueil soufisant vesteüre,
I wish sufficient clothing

qui de freit e de chaut me gart.
which from cold and from heat me guard
Ausinc bien, si Deus me regart,
Just-as well so God me regard
me garantist e cors e teste,
me protects both body and head
par vent, par pluie e par tempeste,
through wind through rain and through storm
fourrez d'agneaus cist miens bureaus
furred with-lambs this my frieze
come pers fourrez d'escureaus.
as perse furred with-squirrels
Mes deniers, ce me semble, pers
My pence this to-me seems I-lose
quant je pour vous robe de pers,
when I for you robe of perse
de camelot ou de brunete,
of camlet or of brunette
de vert ou d'escalate achete,
of green or of-scarlet buy
e de vair e de gris les fourre:
and with vair and with gray them fur
ce vous fait en folie courre
this you makes in folly run
e faire les tourz e les moes
and make the turns and the pouts
par les poudres e par les boes,
through the dusts and through the muds
ne Deu ne mei riens ne prisiez.
neither God nor me in-anything not you-prize

Neïs la nuit, quant vous gisiez
Even the night when you lie
en mon lit lez mei toute nue,
in my bed beside me all naked
n'i poez vous estre tenue,
not-there can you be held
car quant je vous vueil embracier,
for when I you wish to-embrace
pour vous baisier e soulacier,
for you to-kiss and to-solace
e sui plus forment eschaufez,
and am more strongly heated
vous rechigniez come maufez,
you grimace like devils
ne vers mei, pour riens que je face,
nor toward me for anything that I do
ne voulez tourner vostre face;
not wish to-turn your face
mais si malade vous feigniez,
but so sick yourself you-feign
tant soupirez, tant vous plaigniez,
so-much you-sigh so-much yourself you-complain
e faites si le dangereus
and make so the difficult-one
que j'en devieng si poereus
that I-thereof become so fearful
que je ne vous ros assaillir,
that I not you in-turn-dare to-assail
tant ai grant peeur de faillir,
so-much I-have great fear of failing

quant après dormir me resveille.
when after sleeping myself I-wake
Mais trop me vient a grant merveille
But exceedingly to-me comes as great marvel
coment cil ribaut i avienent
how those rascals there succeed
qui par jour vestue vous tienent
who by day clothed you hold
se vous ainsinc vous detortez
if you thus yourself twist
quant avec aus vous deportez,
when with them yourself you-delight
e se tant leur faites d'enuiz
and if so-much to-them you-make of-troubles
come a mei de jourz e de nuiz.
as to me by days and by nights
Mais n'en avez, ce cuit, talent,
But not-thereof you-have this I-think desire
ainz alez chantant e balant
rather you-go singing and dancing
par ces jardins, par ces praiaus,
through these gardens through these meadows
avec ces ribauz desleiaus,
with these rascals disloyal
qui traïnent cete espousee
who drag this bride
par l'erbe vert a la rousee,
through the-grass green in the dew

e me vont ileuc despisant
and me go there despising
e par despit entr'aus disant:
and in spite among-themselves saying
«C'est maugré l'ort vilain jalous!»
This-is in-spite-of the-foul churl jealous
La char seit or livree a lous,
The flesh be now delivered to wolves
e les os a chiens enragiez
and the bones to dogs mad
par cui sui si ahontagiez!
by whom I-am so shamed
C'est par vous, dame pautoniere,
This-is by you lady villainous
e par vostre fole maniere,
and by your foolish manner
ribaude, orde, vil, pute lisse,
harlot filthy vile whore bitch
ja vostre cors de cet an n'isse,
ever your body from this year not-go-out
quant a teus mastins le livrez!
when to such mastiffs it you-deliver
Par vous sui a honte livrez.
By you I-am to shame delivered
Par vous, par vostre lecherie
By you by your lechery
sui je mis en la confrarie
am I put in the confraternity
saint Ernoul, le seigneur des cous,
of-saint Arnold the lord of-the cuckolds

don nus ne peut estre rescous
from-which any not can be rescued
qui fame ait, au mien escient,
who wife have to-the my knowledge
tant l'aut gardant ne espiant,
however-much her-he-go guarding or spying
bien ait neïs d'eauz un millier:
well he-have even of-eyes a thousand
toutes se font hurtebillier,
all themselves make be-tumbled
qu'il n'est garde qui riens i vaille;
for-it not-is guard that anything there avail
e s'il avient que li faiz faille,
and if-it happens that the deed fail
ja la volentez n'i faudra,
ever the will not-there will-fail
par quei, s'el peut, au fait saudra,
by which if-she can to-the deed she-will-leap
car le vouleir toujourz en porte.
for the will always thereof she-carries
Mais forment vous en reconforte
But greatly you thereof comforts
Juvenaus, qui dit dou mestier
Juvenal who says of-the trade
que l'en apele rafaitier
which one calls patching-up
que c'est li mendres des pechiez
that this-is the least of-the sins
don cueurs de fame est entechiez,
with-which heart of woman is tainted

car leur nature leur comande
for their nature to-them commands
que chascune a pis faire entende.
that each to worse doing attend
Ne veit l'en coment les marrastres
Not sees one how the stepmothers
cuisent venins a leur fillastres,
cook poisons for their stepdaughters
e font charmes e sorceries,
and make charms and sorceries
e tant d'autres granz deablies
and so-many of-other great devilries
que nus nes pourrait recenser,
that any not-them could recount
tant i seüst forment penser?
however-much there he-knew strongly to-think

The Jealous Husband: Hercules and Samson

XVI

All women are whores in deed or in will, the husband says, since no one can constrain a will. He cannot fight the rascals, who think themselves Roland, Hercules, or Samson; yet Hercules was undone by Deianira and Samson by Delilah. He threatens to break his wife's ribs, says the rascals who call her a whore love only her jewels, and vows to strip her of her garlands, clasps, and crowns and dress her in coarse cloth and big shoes.

Toutes estes, sereiz e fustes
All you-are will-be and were
de fait ou de volenté putes,
in deed or in will whores
car, qui que puist le fait esteindre,
for who that can the deed extinguish
volenté ne peut nus contraindre.
will not can anyone constrain
Tel avantage ont toutes fames
Such advantage have all women
qu'eus sont de leur volentez dames.
that-they are of their wills ladies
L'en ne vous peut les cueurs changier
One not to-you can the hearts change
pour batre ne pour laidengier;
for beating nor for reviling
mais qui changier les vous peüst
but who change them to-you could
des cors la seignourie eüst.
of-the bodies the lordship would-have

Or laissons ce qui ne peut estre;
Now leave this which not can be
mais, beaus douz Deus, beaus reis celestre,
but fair sweet God fair king celestial
des ribauz que pourrai je faire
of-the rascals what will-be-able I do
qui si me font honte e contraire?
who so me do shame and wrong
S'il avient que je les menace,
If-it happens that I them threaten
que priseront il ma menace?
what will-prize they my threat
Se je me vois a aus combatre,
If I myself go with them to-fight
tost me pourront tuer ou batre,
soon me they-will-be-able kill or beat
qu'il sont felon e outrageus,
for-they are cruel and outrageous
de touz maus faire courageus,
of all evils to-do eager
jenne e joli, fol e testu;
young and merry foolish and headstrong
ne me priseront un festu,
not me they-will-prize a straw
car jennece si les enflame,
for youth so them inflames
qui de feu les emple e de flame,
which with fire them fills and with flame

e touz leur fait par estouveir
and all to-them makes by necessity
les cueurs a folie esmouveir,
the hearts to folly stir
e si legiers e si volanz,
and so light and so flighty
que chascuns cuide estre Rolanz,
that each thinks to-be Roland
veire Herculès, veire Sanson.
indeed Hercules indeed Samson
Si rorent cil dui, ce pense on,
So in-turn-had those two this thinks one
qu'il est escrit e jou recors,
for-it is written and I-it recall
resemblables forces de cors.
like strengths of body
Cist Herculès avait, selonc
This Hercules had according-to
l'aucteur Solin, set piez de lonc,
the-author Solinus seven feet of length
n'onc ne pot a quantité graindre
nor-ever not could to stature greater
nus on, si come il dit, ataindre.
any man so as he says attain
Cist Herculès ot mout d'encontres:
This Hercules had many of-encounters
il vainqui doze orribles montres,
he vanquished twelve horrible monsters
e quant ot vaincu le dozieme,
and when he-had vanquished the twelfth

onc ne pot chevir dou trezieme,
ever not he-could manage of-the thirteenth
ce fu de Deïanira
this was of Deianira
s'amie, qui li descira
his-friend who to-him tore
sa char de venin toute esprise
his flesh with venom all aflame
par la venimeuse chemise.
by the venomous shirt
Si ravait il pour Yolé
So in-turn-had he for Iole
son cueur ja d'amour afolé.
his heart already with-love maddened
Ainsinc fu par fame dontez
Thus was by woman tamed
Herculès, qui tant ot bontez.
Hercules who so-much had goodnesses
Ausinc Sanson, qui pas dis omes
Likewise Samson who at-all ten men
ne redoutast ne que dis pomes
not would-dread nor than ten apples
s'il eüst ses cheveus eüz,
if-he had his hair had
fu par Dalida deceüz.
was by Delilah deceived
Si faz je que fos de ce dire,
So do I as fool of this saying

car je sai bien que tire a tire
for I know well that rank by rank
mes paroles toutes direiz
my words all you-will-tell
quant vous de mei departireiz;
when you from me will-depart
aus ribauz vous ireiz clamer
to-the rascals yourself you-will-go to-complain
e me pourreiz faire entamer
and me you-will-be-able make cut-open
la teste, ou les cuisses brisier,
the head or the thighs break
ou les espaules encisier,
or the shoulders slit
se ja poez a aus aler.
if ever you-can to them go
Mais se j'en puis oïr paler
But if I-thereof can hear speak
ainz que ce me seit avenu,
before that this to-me be happened
e li braz ne me sont tenu,
and the arms not to-me are held
ou li pestauz ne m'est ostez,
or the pestle not from-me-is taken
je vous briserai les costez;
I to-you will-break the ribs
ami ne veisin ne parent
friend nor neighbor nor kinsman
ne vous i seront ja garant,
not to-you there will-be ever protector

ne vostre lecheeur meïsmes.
nor your lecher himself
Las! pour quei nous entreveïsmes!
Alas for why ourselves we-saw-each-other
Las! de quel eure fui je nez,
Alas in what hour was I born
quant en tel vilté me tenez
when in such vileness me you-hold
que cil ribaut mastin puant,
that those rascals mastiffs stinking
qui flatant vous vont e chuant,
who flattering you go and coaxing
sont si seigneur de vous e maistre,
are so lords of you and masters
don seus deüsse sires estre,
of-whom alone I-ought lord be
par cui vous estes soutenue,
by whom you are sustained
vestue, chauciee e peüe,
clothed shod and fed
e vous m'en faites parçoniers
and you me-thereof make partners
ces orz ribauz, ces pautoniers,
these filthy rascals these villains
qui ne vous font se honte non!
who not to-you do except shame not
Tolu vous ont vostre renon,
Taken from-you they-have your renown

de quei garde ne vous prenez
of which heed not yourself you-take
quant entre voz braz les tenez;
when between your arms them you-hold
par devant dient qu'il vous aiment,
in front they-say that-they you love
e par darriers putain vous claiment,
and from behind whore you call
e dient ce que pis leur semble,
and say what that worst to-them seems
quant il resont entr'aus ensemble,
when they in-turn-are among-themselves together
coment que chascuns d'aus vous serve,
however that each of-them you serve
car bien quenois toute leur verve
for well I-know all their whim
senz faille, bien est veritez,
without fail well is truth
quant a leur bandon vous gitez,
when to their mercy yourself you-throw
il vous sevent bien metre a point;
they you know well to-put to point
car de dangier en vous n'a point,
for of difficulty in you not-has at-all
quant entree estes en la foule,
when entered you-are in the throng
ou chascuns vous herce e defoule.
where each you harrows and tramples

Il me prent par fei grant envie
It me takes by faith great envy
de leur soulaz e de leur vie.
of their solace and of their life
Mais sachiez, e bien le recors,
But know and well it I-recall
que ce n'est pas pour vostre cors,
that this not-is at-all for your body
ne pour vostre doneiement,
nor for your dalliance
ainz est pour ce tant seulement
rather it-is for this so only
qu'il ont le deduit des joiaus,
that-they have the delight of-the jewels
des fermauz d'or e des noiaus,
of-the clasps of-gold and of-the buckles
e des robes e des pelices
and of-the robes and of-the pelisses
que je vous lais con fos e nices;
which I to-you leave as fool and silly
car, quant vous alez aus queroles,
for when you go to-the carols
ou a voz assemblees foles,
or to your gatherings foolish
e je remaing con fos e ivres,
and I remain as fool and drunk
vous i portez qui vaut cent livres
you there carry what is-worth a-hundred pounds
d'or e d'argent seur vostre teste,
of-gold and of-silver on your head

e comandez que l'en vous veste
and command that one you clothe
de camelot, de vair, de gris,
in camlet in vair in gray
si que trestouz en amaigris
so that all thereof I-grow-thin
de mautalent e de soussi,
with ill-will and with care
tant m'en esmai, tant m'en soussi.
so-much myself-thereof I-dismay so-much myself-thereof I-care
Que me revalent ces galandes,
What to-me in-turn-avail these garlands
ces coifes a dorees bandes,
these caps with gilded bands
e cil dioré treçoer,
and that gilded braid-case
e cil ivorin miroer,
and that ivory mirror
cil cercle d'or bien entaillié,
that circlet of-gold well carved
precieusement esmaillié,
preciously enameled
e ces courones de fin or,
and these crowns of fine gold
don enragier ne me fin or,
of-which to-rage not myself I-cease now
tant sont beles e bien polies,
so-much are-they fair and well polished
ou tant a beles perreries,
where so-much has fair jewels

safirs, rubiz e esmeraudes,
sapphires rubies and emeralds
qui si vous font les chieres baudes?
which so you make the faces bold
Cil fermail d'or a pierres fines
That clasp of-gold with stones fine
a voz cos e a voz peitrines,
at your necks and at your breasts
e cil tessu e ces ceintures,
and those girdles and these belts
don tant coustent les ferreüres,
of-which so-much cost the metalwork
que l'or que les pelles menues:
what-with the-gold what-with the pearls small
que me valent teus fanfelues?
what to-me avail such baubles
E tant estreit vous rechauciez
And so tight yourself you-shoe
que la robe souvent hauciez
that the robe often you-lift
pour moutrer voz piez aus ribauz.
for to-show your feet to-the rascals
Ainsinc me confort sainz Tibauz
So me comfort saint Theobald
que tout dedenz tierz jour vendrai
that all within third day I-will-come
e vil e souz piez vous tendrai;
and vile and under feet you I-will-hold
n'avreiz de mei, par le cors Dé,
not-you-will-have from me by the body of-God

fors cote e seurcot de cordé,
except coat and surcoat of serge
e une toele de chanvre,
and a cloth of hemp
mais el ne sera mie tenvre,
but it not will-be at-all tender
ainz sera grosse e mal tessue,
rather will-be coarse and ill woven
e desciriee e recousue,
and torn and resewn
qui qu'en face ne deul ne plainte;
whoever thereof make or grief or complaint
e par mon chief, bien sereiz ceinte,
and by my head well you-will-be girded
mais dirai vous de quel ceinture:
but I-will-tell you of what belt
d'un cuir tout blanc senz ferreüre.
of-a leather all white without metalwork
E de mes houseaus anciens
And of my boots ancient
ravreiz granz solers a liens,
you-will-have-in-turn great shoes with laces
larges a metre granz panufles.
wide to put great slippers
Toutes vous osterai ces trufles,
All from-you I-will-remove these trifles
qui vous donent occasion
which to-you give occasion
de faire fornicacion,
of doing fornication

si ne vous ireiz plus moutrer
so not yourself you-will-go more to-show
pour vous faire aus ribauz voutrer.
for yourself to-make to-the rascals wallow

The Jealous Husband Beats His Wife

XVII

The husband asks where her new robe came from and curses the old procuress mother who takes her on false pilgrimages. Then he drags her by the hair and beats her until the neighbors pull her away. She will never love him again, and he should fear poison or a knife. Friend concludes that a fool who makes himself lord of his wife, who should be his equal and companion, will never be loved.

Mais or me dites senz contreuve:
But now to-me tell without invention
cele autre riche robe neuve
that other rich robe new
9315 don l'autre jour si vous parastes,
in-which the-other day so yourself you-adorned
quant aus queroles en alastes,
when to-the carols thence you-went
car bien quenois e raison ai
for well I-know and reason I-have
qu'onques cele ne vous donai,
that-ever that-one not to-you I-gave
par amours, ou l'avez vous prise?
by love where it-have you taken

Vous m'avez juré saint Denise
You me-have sworn saint Denis
e saint Philebert e saint Pere
and saint Philibert and saint Peter
qu'el vous vint de par vostre mere,
that-it to-you came on behalf-of your mother
qui le drap vous en enveia,
who the cloth to-you thereof sent
car si grant amour en mei a,
for so great love in me she-has
si con vous me faites entendre,
so as you to-me make understand
qu'el veaut bien ses deniers despendre
that-she wishes well her pence to-spend
pour mei faire les miens garder.
for me to-make the mine keep
Vive la face l'en larder,
Alive her may-make one lard
l'orde vieille putain, prestresse,
the-filthy old whore priestess
maquerele e charaierresse,
procuress and witch
e vous avec par voz merites,
and you with-her by your merits
s'il n'est ainsinc con vous le dites.
if-it not-is thus as you it say
Certes, je li demanderaie,
Certainly I to-her would-ask
mais en vain m'en travailleraie,
but in vain myself-thereof I-would-toil

tout ne me vaudrait une bille:
all not to-me would-avail a marble
tel la mere, tele la fille.
such the mother such the daughter
Bien sai palé avez ensemble,
Well I-know talked you-have together
andeus avez, e bien le semble,
both you-have and well it seems
les cueurs d'une verge tochiez:
the hearts with-one rod touched
bien sai de quel pié vous clochiez.
well I-know of which foot you limp
L'orde vieille pute fardee
The-filthy old whore painted
s'est a vostre acort acordee;
herself-is to your accord accorded
autre feiz a cete hart torse,
other time she-has this halter twisted
de mainz mastins a esté morse,
by many mastiffs has been bitten
tant a divers chemins traciez;
so-many she-has diverse roads traced
mais tant est ses vis effaciez
but so-much is her face effaced
qu'el ne peut faire riens de sei,
that-she not can make anything of herself
si vous vent ore, bien le sai.
so you sells now well it I-know

El vient çaienz e vous en meine
She comes in-here and you thence leads
treis feiz ou quatre la semaine,
three times or four the week
e feint nouveaus pelerinages
and feigns new pilgrimages
selonc ses anciens usages,
according-to her ancient usages
car j'en sai trestout le couvine,
for I-thereof know all the plot
e de vous promener ne fine,
and of you parading not ceases
si con l'en fait destrier a vendre,
so as one does war-horse for sale
e prent e vous enseigne a prendre.
and takes and you teaches to take
Cuidiez que bien ne vous quenoisse?
Think-you that well not you I-know
Qui me tient que je ne vous froisse
Who me holds that I not you crush
les os come a poucin en paste
the bones as for chick in pastry
a ce pestail ou a ce haste!
with this pestle or with this spit
Lors la prent espeir de venue
Then her takes perhaps of arrival
cil qui de mautalent tressue
he who with ill-will sweats
par les treces e sache e tire,
by the braids and drags and pulls

ront li les cheveus e descire
breaks to-her the hair and tears
li jalous e seur li s'aourse,
the jealous-one and on her himself-flings
pour neient fust lions seur ourse,
for nothing were lion on she-bear
e par tout l'ostel la traïne
and through all the-house her drags
par courrouz e par ataïne,
by anger and by provocation
e la laidenge malement.
and her reviles evilly
Ne ne veaut pour nul sairement
Nor not wishes for any oath
receveir excusacion,
to-receive excuse
tant est de male entencion;
so-much he-is of evil intention
ainz fiert e frape e roille e maille
rather strikes and smites and drubs and hammers
cele qui brait e crie e baille,
her who brays and cries and yells
e fait sa voiz voler aus venz
and makes her voice fly to-the winds
par fenestres e par auvenz,
through windows and through porches
e tout quanqu'el set li reprouche,
and all whatever-she knows to-him reproaches
si come il li vient a la bouche,
so as it to-her comes to the mouth

devant les veisins qui la vienent,
before the neighbors who there come
qui pour fous ambedeus les tienent,
who for fools both them hold
e la li tolent a grant peine
and her from-him take with great pain
tant qu'il est a la grosse aleine.
until that-he is at the heavy breath
E quant la dame sent e note
And when the lady feels and notes
cet torment e cete riote,
this torment and this riot
e cete deduisant viele,
and this delightful viol
don cist jouglierres li viele,
with-which this jongleur to-her fiddles
pensez vous qu'el l'en aint ja meauz?
think you that-she him-thereof love ever better
El voudrait ja qu'il fust a Meauz,
She would-wish now that-he were at Meaux
veire certes en Romenie.
indeed certainly in Romania
Plus dirai, que je ne crei mie
More I-will-say that I not believe at-all
qu'ele le vueille amer jamais;
that-she him wish to-love ever
semblant, espeir, en fera, mais
semblance perhaps thereof she-will-make but
s'il poait voler jusqu'aus nues,
if-he could fly up-to-the clouds

ou si haut lever ses veües
or so high lift his sights
qu'il peüst d'ileuc, senz choeir,
that-he could from-there without falling
touz les faiz des omes voeir
all the deeds of-the men see
e s'apensast tout par loisir,
and himself-bethought all at leisure
si faudrait il bien a choisir
so would-fail he well to discern
en quel perill il est cheüz,
into what peril he is fallen
s'il n'a touz les baraz veüz,
if-he not-has all the tricks seen
pour sei garantir e tenser,
for himself to-protect and to-defend
don fame se set pourpenser.
which woman herself knows to-devise
S'il dort puis en sa compaignie,
If-he sleeps afterward in her company
trop met en grant perill sa vie,
exceedingly he-puts in great peril his life
veire en veillant e en dormant
indeed in waking and in sleeping
se deit il douter trop forment
himself ought he fear exceedingly greatly
qu'el nou face, pour sei venchier,
that-she not-him make for herself to-avenge
empoisoner ou detrenchier,
poison or cut-to-pieces

ou mener vie enlangouree
or lead life languishing
par cautele desesperee;
by stratagem desperate
ou qu'el ne penst de s'en foïr,
or that-she not think of herself-thence fleeing
s'el n'en peut autrement joïr.
if-she not-thereof can otherwise enjoy
Feme ne prise eneur ne honte
Woman not prizes honor nor shame
quant riens en la teste li monte;
when anything into the head to-her mounts
qu'il est veritez senz doutance:
for-it is truth without doubt
fame si n'a point de science;
woman so not-has at-all of knowledge
vers quanqu'el het e quanqu'ele aime,
toward whatever-she hates and whatever-she loves
Valerius neïs la claime
Valerius even her calls
hardie et artificieuse
bold and artful
e trop a nuire estudieuse.
and exceedingly to harm studious
Compainz, cist fos vilains jalous,
Companion this foolish churl jealous
don la char seit livree a lous,
whose the flesh be delivered to wolves
qui si de jalousie s'emple,
who so with jealousy himself-fills

con ci vous ai mis en essemple,
as here to-you I-have put in example
e se fait seigneur de sa fame,
and himself makes lord of his wife
qui ne redeit pas estre dame,
who not in-turn-ought at-all be lady
mais sa pareille e sa compaigne,
but his equal and his companion
si con la lei les acompaigne,
so as the law them accompanies
e il redeit ses compainz estre,
and he in-turn-ought her companion be
senz sei faire seigneur ne maistre,
without himself making lord nor master
quant teus tormenz li apareille
when such torments for-her he-prepares
e ne la tient come pareille,
and not her holds as equal
ainz la fait vivre en tel mesaise,
rather her makes live in such distress
cuidiez vous qu'il ne li desplaise
think you that-it not to-her displease
e que l'amour entr'aus ne faille?
and that the-love between-them not fail
Que qu'ele die, oïl, senz faille,
Whatever that-she say yes without fail
ja de sa fame n'iert amez
ever by his wife not-will-be loved
qui sires veaut estre clamez;
who lord wishes to-be called

car il couvient amour mourir
for it behooves love to-die
quant amant veulent seignourir. 9440
when lovers wish to-lord
Amour ne peut durer ne vivre
Love not can last nor live
s'el n'est en cueur franc e delivre.
if-she not-is in heart frank and free

Love Cannot Live with Lordship

XVIII

When lovers marry, the servant becomes the master and love dies, and the lady finds the dice changed against her. The ancients kept company freely without bonds; no one went abroad, for Jason, whose ships later amazed Neptune, had not yet crossed the sea. They found all they needed in their own land and loved loyally, until Fraud, Sin, Pride, Covetousness, Avarice, and Envy came and brought Poverty up from hell.

Pour ce reveit l'en ensement
For this in-turn-sees one likewise
de touz ceus qui prumierement
of all those who at-first
par amour amer s'entreseulent, 9445
by love to-love each-other-are-wont
quant puis espouser s'entreveulent,
when afterward to-espouse each-other-they-wish
enviz peut entr'aus avenir
hardly can between-them happen
que ja s'i puisse amours tenir,
that ever itself-there can love hold

car cil, quant par amour amait,
for he when by love he-loved
sergent a cele se clamait
servant to her himself called
qui sa maistresse soulait estre,
who his mistress was-wont to-be
or se claime seigneur e maistre
now himself calls lord and master
seur li, que sa dame ot clamee
over her whom his lady he-had called
quant ele iert par amour amee.
when she was by love loved
— Amee? — Veire. — En quel maniere?
Loved Truly In what manner
En tele que se senz priere
In such that if without prayer
li comandast: «Amis, sailliez»;
to-him she-commanded Friend leap
ou: «Cete chose me bailliez»,
or This thing me give
tantost li baillast senz faillir,
at-once to-her he-would-give without failing
e saillist s'el mandast saillir;
and would-leap if-she bade to-leap
veire neïs, que qu'el deïst,
indeed even whatever that-she said
saillait il pour qu'el le veïst,
leaped he so that-she him saw

car tout avait mis son desir
for all he-had put his desire
en faire li tout son plaisir.
in doing to-her all her pleasure
Mais quant sont puis entrespousé,
But when they-are afterward espoused-to-each-other
si con ci raconté vous ai,
so as here recounted to-you I-have
lors est tournee la roele,
then is turned the little-wheel
si que cil qui seaut servir cele
so that he who was-wont to-serve her
comande que cele le serve,
commands that she him serve
ausinc con s'ele fust sa serve,
just as if-she were his serf
e la tient courte e li comande
and her holds short and to-her commands
que de ses faiz conte li rende.
that of her deeds account to-him she-render
E sa dame anceis l'apela!
And his lady before her-he-called
Enviz meurt qui apris ne l'a:
Hardly dies who learned not it-has

lors se tient cele a mal baillie
then herself holds she as ill handled
quant se veit ainsinc assaillie
when herself she-sees thus assailed
dou meilleur, dou plus esprouvé
by-the best by-the most proven
qu'ele ait en cet monde trouvé,
that-she have in this world found
qui si la veaut contrarier.
who so her wishes to-thwart
Ne se set mais en cui fier,
Not herself she-knows any-more in whom to-trust
quant sus son col son maistre esgarde,
when over her neck her master she-sees
don onques mais ne se prist garde.
of-which ever more not herself she-took heed
Malement est changiez li vers;
Evilly is changed the verse
or li vient li jeus si divers,
now to-her comes the game so contrary
si felons e si estrangiez,
so cruel and so estranged
quant cil li a les dez changiez,
when he to-her has the dice changed
qu'el ne peut ne n'ose joer:
that-she not can nor not-dares play
coment s'en peut ele loer?
how herself-thereof can she praise

S'el n'obeïst, cil se courrouce
If-she not-obeys he himself angers
e la laidenge, e cele grouce:
and her reviles and she grumbles
estes les vous en ire mis,
behold them you in wrath put
e tantost par l'ire anemis.
and at-once by the-anger enemies
Pour ce, compainz, li ancien,
For this companion the ancients
senz servitute e senz lien,
without servitude and without bond
paisiblement, senz vilenie,
peaceably without villainy
s'entreportaient compaignie,
to-each-other-bore company
n'il ne donassent pas franchise
nor-they not would-give at-all freedom
pour l'or d'Arabe ne de Frise;
for the-gold of-Arabia nor of Frisia
car qui tout l'or en voudrait prendre
for who all the-gold for-it would-wish to-take
ne la pourrait il pas bien vendre.
not it could he at-all well sell
N'estait lors nul pelerinage,
Not-was then any pilgrimage
n'issait nus hors de son rivage
not-went-out anyone out of his shore
pour cerchier estrange contree,
for to-search strange country

n'onques n'avait la mer passee
nor-ever not-had the sea crossed
Jasons, qui primes la passa,
Jason who first it crossed
quant les navies compassa
when the ships he-designed
pour la toison d'or aler querre;
for the fleece of-gold to-go to-seek
bien cuida estre pris de guerre
well thought to-be taken by war
Neptunus, quant les vit nagier;
Neptune when them he-saw sail
Tritons redut vis enragier,
Triton in-turn-was-like alive rage
e Doris e toutes ses filles;
and Doris and all her daughters
pour les merveilleuses semilles,
for the marvelous contrivances
cuidierent tuit estre traï,
thought all to-be betrayed
tant furent forment esbaï
so-much they-were greatly amazed
des nés qui par la mer volaient
by-the ships which over the sea flew
si con li marinier voulaient.
so as the mariners wished
Mais li prumier don je vous conte
But the first of-whom I to-you tell
ne savaient que nagier monte;
not knew what sailing amounts

trestout trouvaient en leur terre
all found in their land
quanque leur semblait bon a querre.
whatever to-them seemed good to seek
Riche estaient tuit egaument,
Rich were all equally
e s'entramaient leiaument.
and each-other-loved loyally
Ainsinc paisiblement vivaient,
Thus peaceably they-lived
car naturelment s'entramaient,
for naturally each-other-they-loved
les simples genz de bone vie.
the simple folk of good life
Lors iert amour senz symonie,
Then was love without simony
l'uns ne demandait riens a l'autre;
the-one not asked anything of the-other
quant Baraz vint lance seur fautre,
when Fraud came lance in rest
e Pechiez e Male aventure,
and Sin and Evil fortune
qui n'ont de Soufisance cure.
who not-have of Sufficiency care
Orgueauz qui desdeigne pareil
Pride who disdains equal
vint avec o grant apareil,
came with-them with great array
e Couveitise e Avarice,
and Covetousness and Avarice

Envie e tuit li autre vice;
Envy and all the other vices
si firent saillir Povreté
so made leap-forth Poverty
d'enfer, ou tant avait esté
from-hell where so-long she-had been
que nus de li riens ne savait,
that any of her anything not knew
n'onques en terre esté n'avait.
nor-ever on earth been not-she-had
Mar fust ele si tost venue,
Woe were she so soon come
car mout i ot pesme venue!
for much there was most-wretched coming

The End of the Golden Age, and the First King

XIX

Poverty brought her son Theft, whom Laverna, goddess of thieves, abandons at the gallows. The devils sowed wars and dug metals out of the earth, and men divided the land with boundaries and fought over it. To guard their goods they elected the biggest churl among them as prince and taxed themselves for his sergeants, the beginning of kings; then they forged arms, built castles, and made private what had been common.

Povreté, qui point d'aise n'a,
Poverty who at-all of-ease not-has
Larrecin son fill amena,
Theft her son brought
qui s'en vait au gibet le cours,
who himself-thence goes to-the gallows the run

pour faire a sa mere secours,
for to-make to his mother succor
e s'i fait aucune feiz pendre,
and himself-there makes some times hang
que sa mere nou peut defendre;
for his mother not-him can defend
non peut ses peres Cueurs failliz,
nor can his father Heart failed
qui de deul en rest mal bailliz;
who for grief thereof is-in-turn ill handled
neïs dameisele Laverne,
even damsel Laverna
qui les larrons guie e gouverne,
who the thieves guides and governs
c'est des larrecins la deesse,
this-is of-the thefts the goddess
qui les pechiez de nuit espesse
who the sins with night thick
e les baraz de nues cueuvre,
and the frauds with clouds covers
qu'il n'aperent dehors par euvre,
that-they not-appear outside by work
jusqu'a tant qu'il i sont trouvé
until such-time that-they there are found
e pris en la fin tuit prouvé,
and taken in the end all proven
n'a pas tant de misericorde,
not-has at-all so-much of mercy
quant l'en li met ou col la corde,
when one to-him puts in-the neck the rope

que ja l'en vueille garantir,
that ever him-therefrom she-wish to-protect
tant se sache bien repentir.
however-much himself he-know well to-repent
Tantost cil doulereus maufé,
At-once those woeful devils
de forsenerie eschaufé,
with madness heated
de deul, de courrouz e d'envie,
with grief with anger and with-envy
quant virent genz mener tel vie,
when they-saw folk lead such life
s'escourserent par toutes terres,
themselves-scattered through all lands
semant descorz, contenz e guerres,
sowing discords quarrels and wars
mesdiz, rancunes e haïnes
slanders rancors and hates
par courrouz e par ataïnes;
by anger and by provocations
e pour ce qu'il orent or chier,
and for this that-they had gold dear
la terre firent escorchier,
the earth they-made flay
e li sachierent des entrailles
and from-it drew from-the entrails
ses ancienes repostailles,
its ancient hidden-things
metauz e pierres precieuses,
metals and stones precious

don genz devindrent envieuses;
whereby folk became envious
car Avarice e Couveitise
for Avarice and Covetousness
ont es cueurs des omes assise
have in-the hearts of-the men set
la grant ardeur d'aveir aquerre.
the great ardor of-wealth to-acquire
L'une l'aquiert, l'autre l'enserre,
The-one it-acquires the-other it-locks-up
ne jamais la lasse chaitive
nor ever the wretched wretch
nou despendra jour qu'ele vive,
not-it will-spend day that-she live
ainz en fera maistres tuteurs
rather thereof will-make masters guardians
ses eirs ou ses executeurs,
her heirs or her executors
s'il ne l'en meschiét autrement.
if-it not to-her-thereof mischances otherwise
E s'ele en vait a dannement,
And if-she thence goes to damnation
ne cuit que ja nus d'aus la plaigne;
not I-think that ever any of-them her lament
mais s'ele a bien fait si le preigne.
but if-she has well done so it let-her-take
Tantost com par cete maisniee
As-soon as by this household
fu la gent mal mise e faisniee,
was the folk ill put and bewitched

la prumiere vie laissierent,
the first life they-left
de mal faire puis ne cessierent,
from evil doing afterward not they-ceased
car faus e tricheeur devindrent.
for false and cheaters they-became
Aus proprietez lors se tindrent,
To-the properties then themselves they-held
la terre meïsmes partirent
the earth itself they-divided
e au partir bones i firent,
and in-the dividing boundaries there they-made
e quant leur bones i metaient
and when their boundaries there they-put
maintes feiz s'entrecombataient,
many times each-other-they-fought
e se tolirent ce qu'il porent:
and themselves took this that-they could
li plus fort les plus granz parz orent.
the most strong the most great parts had
E quant en leur pourchaz couraient,
And when on their pursuit they-ran
li pareceus qui demouraient
the lazy who stayed
s'en entraient en leur cavernes
themselves-thence entered into their caves
e leur emblaient leur espernes:
and from-them stole their savings

lors couvint que l'en esgardast
then it-behooved that one look-out
aucun qui les loges gardast
someone who the huts guarded
e qui les maufaiteurs preïst,
and who the evildoers took
e dreit aus plaintis en feïst,
and right to-the plaintiffs thereof made
ne nus ne l'osast contredire:
nor any not him-would-dare to-gainsay
lors s'assemblerent pour eslire.
then themselves-they-assembled for to-elect
Un grant vilain entr'aus eslurent,
A great churl among-them they-elected
le plus ossu de quanqu'il furent,
the most bony of whatever-they were
le plus corsu e le graigneur,
the most burly and the biggest
si le firent prince e seigneur.
so him they-made prince and lord
Cil jura que dreit leur tendrait
He swore that right to-them he-would-hold
e que leur loges defendrait,
and that their huts he-would-defend
se chascuns endreit sei li livre
if each for himself to-him deliver
des biens don il se puisse vivre.
of-the goods on-which he himself can live

Ainsinc l'ont entr'aus acordé
Thus it-they-have among-themselves agreed
con cil l'a dit e recordé.
as he it-has said and recorded
Cil tint grant piece cel ofice.
He held great while that office
Li robeeur plein de malice
The robbers full of malice
s'assemblerent quant seul le virent
themselves-assembled when alone him they-saw
e par maintes feiz le batirent
and by many times him they-beat
quant les biens venaient embler.
when the goods they-came to-steal
Lors restut le peuple assembler
Then in-turn-behooved the people to-assemble
e chascun endreit sei taillier
and each for himself to-tax
por sergenz au prince baillier.
for sergeants to-the prince to-give
Comunement lors se taillierent,
In-common then themselves they-taxed
treüz e rentes li baillierent
tributes and rents to-him they-gave
e donerent granz tenemenz;
and gave great holdings
de la vint li comencemenz
from there came the beginning
aus reis, aus princes terriens,
of-the kings of-the princes earthly

selonc l'escrit des anciens;
according-to the-writing of-the ancients
car par l'escrit que nous avons
for by the-writing that we have
les faiz des anciens savons,
the deeds of-the ancients we-know
si les en devons mercier
so them thereof we-ought thank
e loer e regracier.
and praise and thank-again
Lors amasserent les tresors
Then they-amassed the treasures
d'argent, des pierres e des ors.
of-silver of-the stones and of-the golds
D'or e d'argent, pour ce qu'il ierent
Of-gold and of-silver for this that-they were
traitable e precieus, forgierent
malleable and precious they-forged
vaisselementes e moneies,
vessels and coins
fermauz, aneaus, noiaus, courreies;
clasps rings buckles straps
dou fer dur forgierent leur armes,
of-the iron hard they-forged their arms
couteaus, espees e jusarmes,
knives swords and halberds
e glaives e cotes ferrees,
and spears and coats iron-shod
pour faire a leur veisins mellees.
for to-make on their neighbors frays

Lors firent tourz e roilleïz
Then they-made towers and palisades
e murs de carreaus tailleïz;
and walls of blocks hewn
chasteaus fermerent e citez,
castles they-fortified and cities
e firent granz palais litez
and made great palaces adorned
cil qui les tresors assemblaient,
those who the treasures assembled
car trestuit de peeur tremblaient,
for all with fear trembled
pour les richeces assemblees,
for the riches assembled
ou qu'eus ne leur fussent emblees,
lest that-they — from-them were stolen
ou par quelque force tolues.
or by some force taken
Bien furent leur douleurs creües
Well were their griefs increased
aus chaitis de mauvais eür,
for-the wretches of evil fortune
qu'onc puis ne furent asseür
for-ever afterward not they-were secure
que ce qui comun iert devant
since that which common was before
come le soleil e le vent
as the sun and the wind
par couveitise aproprierent,
by covetousness they-appropriated

quant aus richeces se lierent,
when to-the riches themselves they-bound
qu'ore en a bien uns plus que vint:
for-now thereof has well one more than twenty
onques ce de bon cueur ne vint.
ever this from good heart not came

How to Keep a Beloved
XX

It is shameful that noble ladies sell themselves. A young man should learn arts and sciences, and if his beloved seeks another he must feign blindness, never read her letters, and let her come and go as she likes. He must never beat her, which is like beating a cat to tame it, and if she beats him he should thank her. If he strikes her, he must make love to her before she leaves, and a poor lover above all must bear everything.

Senz faille, des vilains gloutons
Without fail of-the churls gluttonous
ne donasse je deus boutons;
not would-give I two buttons
combien que bons cueurs leur fausist,
however-much that good hearts them failed
de tel faute ne me chausist;
of such fault not to-me it-would-matter
bien s'entramassent ou haïssent,
well each-other-they-might-love or hate
ou leur amour s'entrevendissent;
or their love each-other-sell

mais c'est granz deaus e granz domages
but this-is great grief and great harm
quant ces dames aus clers visages,
when these ladies with-the clear faces
ces jolies, ces renveisiees,
these pretty-ones these merry-ones
par cui deivent estre preisiees
by whom ought be prized
leiaus amours e defendues,
loyal loves and defended
sont a si grant vilté vendues.
are at so great vileness sold
Trop est laide chose a entendre
Exceedingly is ugly thing to hear
que nobles cors se puisse vendre.
that noble body itself can sell
Mais, coment que la chose preigne,
But however that the thing take
gart li vallez qu'il ne se feigne
let-guard the young-man that-he not himself shirk
d'arz e de sciences aprendre,
of-arts and of sciences to-learn
pour garantir e pour defendre,
for to-protect and for to-defend
se mestiers est, lui e s'amie,
if need is him and his-friend
si qu'el nou deguerpisse mie.
so that-she not-him abandon at-all

Ce peut mout vallet eslever
This can much young-man raise
e si nou puet de riens grever.
and so not-him can in anything grieve
Emprès li redeit souvenir
After to-him in-turn-ought remember
de cet mien conseil retenir:
of this my counsel to-retain
s'il a s'amie ou jenne ou vieille
if-he has his-friend either young or old
e set e pense qu'ele vueille
and knows and thinks that-she wish
autre ami querre, ou a ja quis,
other friend to-seek or has already sought
des a querre ne des aquis
of-the to be-sought nor of-the acquired
ne la deit blasmer ne reprendre,
not her ought blame nor reprove
mais amiablement reprendre,
but amiably take-back
senz reprendre e senz laidengier.
without reproving and without reviling
Encor, pour li meins estrangier,
Still for her less to-estrange
s'il la trouvait neïs en l'euvre,
if-he her found even in the-work
gart que son ueil cele part n'euvre.
let-him-guard that his eye that way not-open
Semblant deit faire d'estre avugles,
Semblance he-ought make of-being blind

ou plus simples que n'est uns bugles,
or more simple than is a buffalo
si qu'el cuide trestout de veir
so that-she think all of truth
qu'il n'en puist riens aperceveir.
that-he not-thereof can anything perceive
E se nus li enveie letre,
And if anyone to-her sends letter
il ne se deit pas entremetre
he not himself ought at-all meddle
dou lire ne dou reverchier,
of-the reading nor of-the rummaging
ne de leur secrez encerchier.
nor of their secrets searching
Ne ja n'ait cueur entalenté
Nor ever not-he-have heart desirous
d'aler contre sa volenté.
of-going against her will
Mais que bien seit ele venue,
But that well be she come
quant el vendra de quelque rue;
when she will-come from some street
e raille quel part qu'el vourra
and let-her-go-again what way that-she will-wish
si con ses vouleirs li tourra,
so as her will to-her will-turn
qu'el n'a cure d'estre tenue.
for-she not-has care to-be held

Si vueil que seit chose seüe
So I-wish that be thing known
ce que ci après vous vueil dire.
that which here after to-you I-wish to-say
En livre le devrait l'en lire:
In book it ought one read
qui de fame veaut aveir grace,
who of woman wishes to-have grace
mete la toujourz en espace;
let-him-put her always in room
jamais en regle ne la tiegne,
ever in rule not her let-him-hold
ainz aille a son vouleir e viegne;
but let-her-go at her will and come
car cil qui la veaut retenir
for he who her wishes to-hold-back
qu'el ne puisse aler ne venir,
that-she not can go nor come
seit sa moillier ou seit sa drue,
be-she his wife or be-she his mistress
tantost en a l'amour perdue.
at-once thereof he-has the-love lost
Ne ja riens contre li ne croie,
Nor ever anything against her not let-him-believe
pour certaineté qu'il en oie,
for certainty that-he thereof hear

mais bien die a ceus ou a celes
but well let-him-say to those or to those-women
qui l'en aporteront nouveles
who to-him-thereof will-bring news
que dou dire folie firent,
that in-the saying folly they-did
qu'onc si preude fame ne virent,
that-ever so worthy woman not they-saw
toujourz a bien fait senz recreire,
always she-has well done without giving-up
pour ce ne la deit nus mescreire.
for this not her ought anyone disbelieve
Ja ses vices ne li reprouche,
Ever her vices not to-her let-him-reproach
ne ne la bate ne ne touche;
nor not her beat nor not touch
car cil qui veaut sa fame batre
for he who wishes his wife to-beat
pour sei meauz en s'amour embatre,
for himself better into her-love to-thrust
quant la veaut après rapaisier,
when her he-wishes after to-appease-again
c'est cil qui pour apriveisier
this-is he who for to-tame
bat son chat e puis le rapele
beats his cat and then it calls-back
pour le lier en sa cordele;
for it to-tie in his cord
mais se li chaz s'en peut saillir,
but if the cat himself-thence can leap

bien peut cil au prendre faillir.
well can he at-the taking fail
Mais s'ele le bat ou laidenge,
But if-she him beats or reviles
gart cil que ses cueurs ne se change;
let-guard he that his heart not itself change
se batre ou laidengier se veit,
if beaten or reviled himself he-sees
neïs se cele le devait
even if she him ought
tout vif aus ongles detrenchier,
all alive with-the nails cut-to-pieces
ne se deit il pas revenchier,
not himself ought he at-all avenge
ainz l'en deit mercier e dire
rather her-thereof ought thank and say
qu'il voudrait bien en tel martire
that-he would-wish well in such martyrdom
vivre touz tens, pour qu'il seüst
to-live all times provided that-he knew
que ses services li pleüst,
that his services to-her pleased
veire ainz neïs tout a delivre
indeed rather even all at liberty
plus lors mourir que senz li vivre.
more then to-die than without her to-live
E s'il avient que il la fiere,
And if-it happens that he her strike

pour ce qu'el li semble trop fiere
for this that-she to-him seems too fierce
e qu'ele l'a trop courroucié,
and that-she him-has too-much angered
tant a forment vers lui groucié,
so-much she-has greatly toward him grumbled
ou le veaut espeir menacier,
or him wishes perhaps to-threaten
tantost, pour sa pais pourchacier,
at-once for his peace to-pursue
gart que le jeu d'Amours li face
let-him-guard that the game of-Love to-her he-do
ainz qu'el se parte de la place;
before that-she herself part from the place
meïsmement li povres on,
especially the poor man
car le povre a po d'achaison
for the poor-man with little of-occasion
pourrait ele tantost laissier,
could she at-once leave
s'el nou voait vers li plaissier.
if-she not-him saw toward her to-bend
Povres deit amer sagement
Poor-man ought love wisely
e deit sofrir mout humblement,
and ought suffer very humbly
senz semblant de courrouz ne d'ire,
without semblance of anger nor of-wrath
quanqu'il li veit ou faire ou dire,
whatever-he her sees either do or say

meïsmement plus que li riches,
especially more than the rich-man
qui ne donrait espeir deus chiches
who not would-give perhaps two chick-peas
en son orgueil n'en son dangier,
in his pride nor-in his disdain
si la pourrait bien laidengier.
so her could well revile

Bearing with Her

XXI

A lover who strays should hide his gifts to a new beloved and never let the two meet, for no boar or lioness is as fierce as a woman who finds a rival. If he is caught, he should deny everything, or if he must confess, say he was forced, swear it will never happen again, and make love to her. He must never boast of a lady, and in her sickness he should serve her and tell her pleasant dreams.

E s'il est teus qu'il ne veaut mie
And if-he is such that-he not wishes at-all
leiauté porter a s'amie,
loyalty to-bear to his-friend
si ne la voudrait il pas perdre,
so not her would-wish he at-all to-lose
mais a autre se veaut aerdre;
but to other himself wishes to-cling
s'il veaut a s'amie nouvele
if-he wishes to his-friend new
doner cueuvrechief ou toele,
to-give kerchief or cloth

chapel, anel, fermail, ceinture,
garland ring clasp belt
ou joel de quelque faiture,
or jewel of some fashioning
gart que l'autre ne les quenoisse,
let-him-guard that the-other not them know
car trop avrait au cueur angoisse
for exceedingly she-would-have at-the heart anguish
quant el les li verrait porter:
when she them on-her would-see to-wear
riens ne l'en pourrait conforter.
anything not her-thereof could comfort
E gart que venir ne la face
And let-him-guard that to-come not her he-make
en icele meïsmes place
in that same place
ou venait a lui la prumiere,
where came to him the first
qui de venir est coustumiere;
who of coming is accustomed
car s'ele i vient, pour qu'el la truisse,
for if-she there comes provided that-she her find
n'est riens qui conseil metre i puisse,
not-is anything which counsel put there can
car nus veauz senglers hericiez,
for any old boar bristled
quant des chiens est bien aticiez,
when by-the dogs is well provoked

n'est si crueus, ne lionesse
not-is so cruel nor lioness
si triste ne si felonesse,
so grim nor so wicked
quant li venierres qui l'assaut
when the hunter who her-assails
li renforce en ce point l'assaut
on-her redoubles at this point the-assault
quant ele alaite ses chaiaus,
when she suckles her whelps
ne nus serpenz si desleiaus,
nor any serpent so disloyal
quant l'en li marche seur la queue,
when one on-it treads on the tail
qui dou marchier pas ne se jeue,
which of-the treading at-all not itself jests
come est fame quant ele treuve
as is woman when she finds
o son ami s'amie neuve:
with her friend his-friend new
el giete par tout feu e flame,
she throws through all fire and flame
preste de perdre cors e ame.
ready to lose body and soul
E s'el n'a pas prise prouvee
And if-she not-has at-all taken proven
d'aus deus ensemble la couvee,
of-them two together the brood
mais bien en chiét en jalousie,
but well thereof falls into jealousy

qu'el set ou cuide estre acoupie,
for-she knows or thinks to-be cuckolded
coment qu'il aut, ou sache ou creie,
however that-it go or she-know or believe
gart sei cil que ja ne recreie
let-guard himself he that ever not he-give-up
de li nier tout pleinement
of to-her denying all plainly
ce qu'ele set certainement,
that which-she knows certainly
e ne seit pas lenz de jurer.
and not be at-all slow of swearing
Tantost li reface endurer
At-once to-her let-him-make-again to-endure
en la place le jeu d'Amours:
in the place the game of-Love
lors iert quites de ses clamours.
then he-will-be quit of her clamors
E se tant l'assaut e angoisse
And if so-much him-she-assails and distresses
qu'il couvient qu'il li requenoisse,
that-it behooves that-he to-her confess
qu'il ne s'en set espeir defendre,
for-he not himself-thence knows perhaps to-defend
a ce deit lores, s'il peut, tendre
to this he-ought then if-he can aim
qu'il li face a force entendant
that-he to-her make by force understanding
qu'il le fist seur sei defendant;
that-he it did in himself defending

car cele si court le tenait
for she so short him held
e si malement le menait
and so evilly him handled
qu'onques eschaper ne li pot
that-ever escape not from-her he-could
jusqu'il orent fait ce tripot,
until-they had done this frolic
n'onc ne li avint feiz fors cete.
nor-ever not to-him befell time except this
Lors jurt e fiance e promete
Then let-him-swear and pledge and promise
que jamais ne li avendra,
that ever not to-him it-will-happen
si leiaument se contendra
so loyally himself he-will-conduct
que, s'ele en ot jamais parole,
that if-she thereof hears ever word
bien veaut qu'el le tut ou afole;
well he-wishes that-she him kill or maim
car meauz voudrait qu'el fust neiee,
for rather he-would-wish that-she were drowned
la desleiaus, la reneiee,
the disloyal-one the renegade
qu'il jamais en place venist
than-he ever into place came
ou cele en tel point le tenist;
where she in such point him held
car s'il avient qu'ele le mant,
for if-it happens that-she him summon

n'ira mais a son mandement,
not-be-will-go more to her summons
n'il ne soferra qu'ele viegne,
nor-he not will-suffer that-she come
s'il peut, en leu ou el le tiegne.
if-he can into place where she him hold
Lors deit cele estreit embracier,
Then he-ought that-one tightly embrace
baisier, blandir e soulacier,
kiss coax and solace
e crier merci dou mesfait,
and cry mercy for-the misdeed
puis qu'il ne sera jamais fait;
since that-it not will-be ever done
qu'il est en vraie repentance,
for-he is in true repentance
prez de faire en tel penitence
ready to do thereof such penance
con cele enjoindre li savra,
as she to-enjoin him will-know
puis que pardoné li avra.
after that pardoned him she-will-have
Lors face d'Amours la besoigne,
Then let-him-do of-Love the business
s'il veaut que ele li pardoigne.
if-he wishes that she him pardon
E gart que de li ne se vante,
And let-him-guard that of her not himself he-boast
qu'ele en pourrait estre dolente.
for-she thereof could be grieved

Si se sont maint vanté de maintes,
So themselves are many boasted of many-women
par paroles fausses e feintes,
by words false and feigned
don les cors aveir ne poaient;
of-whom the bodies have not they-could
les nons a grant tort diffamaient.
the names with great wrong they-defamed
Mais a ceus sont bien cueur faillant;
But in those are well hearts failing
ne sont pas courteis ne vaillant.
not are at-all courteous nor valiant
Vanterie est trop vilains vices.
Boasting is exceedingly churlish vice
Qui s'en vante il fait trop que nices,
Who himself-thereof boasts he does exceedingly as silly
car, ja seit ce que fait l'eüssent,
for even be it that done it-they-had
touteveis celer le deüssent.
nevertheless conceal it they-ought
Amours veaut celer ses joiaus,
Love wishes to-conceal his jewels
se n'est a compaignons loiaus
if not-it-is to companions loyal
qui les vueillent taire e celer:
who them wish to-be-silent-about and to-conceal
la les peut l'en bien reveler.
there them can one well reveal

E s'ele chiét en maladie,
And if-she falls into sickness
dreiz est, s'il peut, qu'il s'estudie
right it-is if-he can that-he himself-strive
en estre li mout serviables
in being to-her very serviceable
pour estre emprès plus agreables.
for to-be afterward more agreeable
Gart que nus enuiz ne le tiegne
Let-him-guard that any trouble not him hold
de la maladie lointiegne;
from the sickness far
lez li le veie demourant,
beside her him let-her-see remaining
e la deit baisier en plourant,
and her ought kiss in weeping
e se deit voer, s'il est sages,
and himself ought vow if-he is wise
en mainz lointiens pelerinages,
to many distant pilgrimages
mais que cele les veuz entende.
provided that she the vows hear
Viande pas ne li defende,
Food at-all not to-her let-him-forbid
chose amere ne li deit tendre
thing bitter not to-her ought offer
ne riens qui ne seit douz e tendre.
nor anything which not be sweet and tender

Si li deit feindre nouveaus songes,
So to-her ought feign new dreams
touz farsiz de plaisanz mençonges:
all stuffed with pleasing lies
que quant vient au seir qu'il se couche
that when it-comes to-the evening that-he himself lies-down
touz seus en sa chambre en sa couche,
all alone in his chamber in his bed
avis li est, quant il someille,
seeming to-him is when he slumbers
car po i dort e mout i veille,
for little there he-sleeps and much there wakes
qu'il l'ait entre ses braz tenue
that-he her-has between his arms held
trestoute nuit trestoute nue,
all night all naked
par soulaz e par druerie,
by solace and by love-making
toute saine e toute guerie,
all sound and all healed
e par jour en leus delitables.
and by day in places delightful
Teus fables li cont ou semblables.
Such fables to-her let-him-tell or similar

Women Will Not Be Corrected

XXII

No woman can be held, any more than an eel held by the tail; Solomon never found a firm woman. Every woman should be told she is beautiful, for each believes it. Women will not be corrected, since they know their trade by nature, as a cat knows its surgery. Friend tells the lover to keep his rose this way once he has it, and the lover answers that it has no equal.

Or vous ai jusque ci chanté
Now to-you I-have up-to here sung
par maladie e par santé
in sickness and in health
coment cil deit fames servir
how he ought women serve
qui veaut leur grace deservir
who wishes their grace to-deserve
e leur amour continuer,
and their love to-continue
qui de legier se veaut muer,
which with ease itself wishes to-change
qui ne voudrait par grant entente
who not would-wish with great attention
faire quanque leur atalente;
to-do whatever them pleases
car ja fame tant ne savra,
for ever woman so-much not will-know
ne ja si ferme cueur n'avra,
nor ever so firm heart not-will-have

ne si leial ne si meür
nor so loyal nor so mature
que ja puist on estre asseür
that ever can one be assured
de li tenir pour nule peine,
of her holding for any pain
ne plus que s'il tenait en Seine
no more than if-be held in Seine
une anguile par mi la queue;
an eel by the-midst-of the tail
qu'il n'a poeir qu'el ne s'esqueue,
that-he not-has power that-she not herself-slip
si qu'ele iert tantost eschapee,
so that-she will-be at-once escaped
ja si fort ne l'avra hapee.
ever so strongly not her-he-will-have grabbed
N'est donc bien privee tel beste
Not-is then well tame such beast
qui de foïr est toujourz preste.
which of fleeing is always ready
Tant est de diverse muance
So-much she-is of diverse changing
que nus n'i deit aveir fiance.
that any not-there ought have trust
Si nou di je pas pour les bones
So not-it say I at-all for the good-ones
qui seur vertuz fondent leur bones,
who on virtues found their boundaries
don encor n'ai nules trouvees,
of-which still not-I-have any found

tant les aie bien esprouvees;
however-much them I-have well tested
nes Salemons nes pot trouver,
not-even Solomon not-them could find
tant les seüst bien esprouver,
however-much them he-knew well to-test
car il meïsmes bien aferme
for he himself well affirms
qu'onques fame ne trouva ferme.
that-ever woman not he-found firm
E se dou querre vous penez,
And if of-the seeking yourself you-trouble
s'ous la trouvez, si la prenez,
if-you her find so her take
s'avreiz lors amie a eslite
so-you-will-have then friend of choice
qui sera vostre toute quite.
who will-be yours all free
S'el n'a poeir de tant tracier
If-she not-has power of so-much tracing
qu'el se puisse ailleurs pourchacier,
that-she herself can elsewhere pursue
ou s'el ne treuve requerant,
or if-she not finds suitor
tel fame a Chasteé se rent.
such woman to Chastity herself gives
Mais encor vueil un brief mot dire
But still I-wish a brief word to-say
ainz que je laisse la matire:
before that I leave the matter

briement, de toutes les puceles,
briefly of all the maidens
queus qu'eus seient, laides ou beles,
whatever that-they be ugly or fair
don cil veaut les amours garder,
of-whom he wishes the loves to-keep
cet mien comant deit regarder;
this my command he-ought regard
de cetui toujourz li souviegne,
of this-one always to-him it-let-remember
e pour mout precieus le tiegne:
and for very precious it let-him-hold
qu'il doint a toutes a entendre
that-he give to all to understand
qu'il ne se peut vers eus defendre,
that-he not himself can toward them defend
tant est esbaïz e seurpris
so-much he-is amazed and surprised
de leur beautez e de leur pris;
by their beauties and by their worth
car il n'est fame, tant seit bone,
for it not-is woman however-much be-she good
vieille, jenne, mondaine ou none,
old young worldly or nun
ne si religieuse dame,
nor so religious lady
tant seit chaste de cors ne d'ame,
however-much be-she chaste of body or of-soul
se l'en va sa beauté loant,
if one goes her beauty praising

qui ne se delit en oant.
who not herself delight in hearing
Combien qu'el seit laide clamee,
However-much that-she be ugly called
jurt qu'ele est plus bele que fee,
let-him-swear that-she is more fair than fairy
e le face seürement,
and it let-him-do surely
qu'el l'en crera legierement,
for-she him-thereof will-believe lightly
car chascune cuide de sei
for each thinks of herself
que tant ait beauté, bien le sai,
that so-much she-have beauty well it I-know
combien qu'el seit laide prouvee,
however-much that-she be ugly proven
que bien est digne d'estre amee.
that well she-is worthy of-being loved
Ainsinc a garder leur amies,
Thus in keeping their beloveds
senz reprendre de leur folies,
without reproving of their follies
deivent tuit estre diligent
ought all be diligent
li bel vallet, li preu, li gent.
the fair young-men the worthy the noble

Fames n'ont cure de chasti,
Women not-have care of correction
ainz ont si leur engin basti
rather have so their wit built
qu'il leur est vis qu'eus n'ont mestier
that-it to-them is opinion that-they not-have need
d'estre aprises de leur mestier;
of-being taught of their trade
ne nus, s'il ne leur veaut desplaire,
nor anyone if-he not them wishes to-displease
ne deslot riens qu'eus vueillent faire.
not dissuade anything which-they wish to-do
Si con li chaz set par nature
So as the cat knows by nature
la science de surgeüre,
the science of surgery
ne n'en peut estre destournez,
nor not-therefrom can be turned-away
qu'il est o tel sen toujourz nez,
for-he is with such sense always born
n'onques n'en fu mis a escole;
nor-ever not-therein was put to school
ausinc set fame, tant est fole,
likewise knows woman so-much she-is foolish
par son naturel juigement,
by her natural judgment
de quanqu'el fait outreement,
of whatever-she does outrageously
seit biens, seit maus, seit torz ou dreiz,
be-it good be-it evil be-it wrong or right

ou de tout quanque vous voudreiz,
or of all whatever you will-wish
qu'el ne fait chose qu'el ne deie;
that-she not does thing that-she not ought
si het quiconques la chasteie,
so she-hates whoever her corrects
n'el ne tient pas ce sen de maistre,
nor-she not holds at-all this sense from master
ainz l'a des lors qu'ele pot naistre,
rather it-she-has from then that-she could be-born
si n'en peut estre destournee;
so not-therefrom can be turned-away
qu'ele est o tel sen toujourz nee
for-she is with such sense always born
que qui chastier la vorrait
that who to-correct her would-wish
jamais de s'amour ne jorrait.
ever of her-love not would-enjoy
Ainsinc, compainz, de vostre rose,
Thus companion of your rose
qui tant est precieuse chose
which so-much is precious thing
que n'en prendriez nul aveir
that not-thereof you-would-take any wealth
se vous la poïez aveir,
if you it could have
quant vous en sereiz en saisine,
when you thereof will-be in possession
si come esperance devine,
so as hope divines

e vostre joie avreiz pleniere,
and your joy you-will-have full
si la gardez en tel maniere
so it keep in such manner
con l'en deit garder tel florete. 9995
as one ought keep such little-flower
Lors si jorrez de l'amourete
Then so you-will-enjoy of the-little-love
a cui nule autre ne comper;
to whom any other not compares
vous ne trouveriez son per
you not would-find its peer
espeir en quatorze citez.
perhaps in fourteen cities
— Certes», fis je, «c'est veritez, 10000
Certainly said I this-is truth
non ou monde, j'en sui seürs,
not in-the world I-thereof am sure
tant est e fu bons ses eürs.»
so-much is and was good its fortune

Friend Leaves, and Wealth at the Path

XXIII

Comforted, and joined by Sweet Thought and Sweet Speech, the lover takes the left-hand way to look for the shortest road. By a fountain he finds Wealth guarding a path, her friend beside her, and asks the way to Too-Much Giving. She refuses him: she lets her friends in to the revels and baths of Foolish Largesse, but Poverty leads them out. Hunger, once Poverty's chambermaid, was made nurse to Theft and suckled him, and lives in a stony field at the end of Scotland.

Ainsinc Amis m'a conforté,
Thus Friend me-has comforted
en cui conseil grant confort ai;
in whose counsel great comfort I-have
e m'est avis, au meins de fait,
and to-me-is seeming at-the least in deed
qu'il set plus que Raison ne fait.
that-he knows more than Reason — does
Mais anceis qu'il eüst finee
But before that-he had finished
sa raison, qui forment m'agree,
his speech which greatly me-pleases
Douz Pensers, Douz Palers revindrent,
Sweet Thought Sweet Speech came-back
qui près de mei des lors se tindrent,
who near of me from then themselves held
n'onc puis guieres ne me laisserent;
nor-ever afterward much not me they-left
mais Douz Regart pas n'amenerent.
but Sweet Looks at-all not-they-brought

Nes blasmai pas quant laissié l'orent,
Not-them I-blamed at-all when left him-they-had
car bien sai qu'amener nou porent.
for well I-know that-to-bring not-him they-could
Congié preing e m'en part a tant.
Leave I-take and myself-thence part at that
Ausinc con touz seus esbatant,
Just as all alone disporting
m'en alai contreval la pree,
myself-thence I-went down the meadow
d'erbe e de fleurs enluminee,
with-grass and with flowers illumined
escoutant ces douz oiselez
listening-to these sweet little-birds
qui chantent ces sons nouvelez;
who sing these sounds new
touz les biens au cueur me faisaient
all the goods at-the heart to-me did
leur douz chant qui tant me plaisaient.
their sweet song which so-much me pleased
Mais d'une chose Amis me grieve,
But of-one thing Friend me grieves
qu'il m'a comandé que j'eschieve
for-he me-has commanded that-I shun
le chastel e que je m'en tour,
the castle and that I myself-thence turn
ne ne m'aille joer entour.
nor not myself-go to-play around

Ne sai se tenir m'en pourrai,
Not I-know if hold myself-thence I-will-be-able
car toujourz aler i vourrai.
for always to-go there I-will-wish
Lors emprès cele departie,
Then after that departure
eschevant la destre partie,
shunning the right side
vers la senestre m'achemin,
toward the left myself-I-set-out
pour querre le plus brief chemin.
for to-seek the most short road
Volentiers ce chemin querraie,
Willingly this road I-would-seek
s'il iert trouvez, je m'i ferraie
if-it were found I myself-there would-thrust
de plein eslais, senz contredit,
at full gallop without gainsaying
se plus forz nou me contredit,
if more strong not-it to-me forbids
pour Bel Acueil de prison traire,
for Fair Welcome from prison to-draw
le franc, le douz, le debonaire.
the frank-one the sweet-one the gracious-one
Des que j'i verrai le chastel
As-soon that I-there will-see the castle
plus feible qu'un ratiz gastel,
more feeble than-a grated cake
e les portes seront ouvertes,
and the gates will-be opened

ne nus nou me defendra, certes
nor any not-it to-me will-forbid certainly
j'avrai bien le deable ou ventre,
I-will-have well the devil in-the belly
se nou preing e se je n'i entre.
if not-it I-take and if I not-there enter
Lors sera Bel Acueil delivres, 10045
Then will-be Fair Welcome delivered
n'en prendraie cent mile livres,
not-thereof I-would-take a-hundred thousand pounds
ce vous puis pour veir afichier,
this to-you I-can for truth affirm
s'en ce chemin me puis fichier.
if-on this road myself I-can thrust
Touteveis dou chastel m'esloing,
Nevertheless from-the castle myself-I-distance
mais ce ne fu pas mout trés loing. 10050
but this not was at-all very very far
Jouste une clere fontenele,
Beside a clear little-fountain
pensant a la rose nouvele,
thinking of the rose new
en un beau leu trop delitable,
in a fair place exceedingly delightful
dame poissant e enourable,
lady powerful and honorable
gente de cors, bele de fourme, 10055
gentle of body fair of form
vi ombreier desouz un ourme,
I-saw resting-in-shade under an elm

e son ami dejouste li.
and her friend beside her
Ne sai pas le non de celi,
Not I-know at-all the name of him
mais la dame avait non Richece,
but the lady had name Wealth
qui mout estait de grant noblece.
who very was of great nobility
D'un senteret gardait l'entree;
Of-a little-path she-guarded the-entrance
mais el n'iert pas dedenz entree.
but she not-was at-all within entered
Des que les vi, vers aus m'enclin,
As-soon that them I-saw toward them myself-I-bow
saluai les le chief enclin;
I-greeted them the head bowed
e il assez tost mon salu
and they quite soon my greeting
m'ont rendu, qui po m'a valu.
me-have returned which little me-has availed
Je leur demandai touteveie
I of-them asked nevertheless
a Trop Doner la dreite veie.
to Too-Much Giving the right way
Richece, qui pala prumiere,
Wealth who spoke first
me dist par parole un po fiere:
to-me said by word a little fierce
«Veiz ci le chemin, je le gart.
See here the road I it guard

— Ha! Dame, que Deus vous regart!
Ah Lady that God you regard
Don vous pri, mais qu'il ne vous poise,
Then you I-pray provided that-it not you grieve
que m'otreiez que par ci voise
that to-me-you-grant that by here I-go
au chastel de nouvel fondé,
to-the castle of new founded
que Jalousie a la fondé.
which Jealousy has there founded
— Vassaus, ce ne sera pas ores,
Vassal this not will-be at-all now
de riens ne vous quenois encores.
in anything not you I-know yet
Vous n'estes pas bien arivez,
You not-are at-all well arrived
puis que vous n'estes mes privez.
since that you not-are my intimates
Non pas espeir jusqu'a dis anz
Not at-all perhaps up-to ten years
ne sereiz vous par mei mis enz.
not will-be you by me put in
Nus n'i entre s'il n'est des miens,
Any not-there enters if-he not-is of-the mine
tant seit de Paris ne d'Amiens.
however-much be-he from Paris or from-Amiens
J'i lais bien mes amis aler,
I-there let well my friends go
queroler, dancier e baler,
carol dance and dance

si ont un po de plaisant vie,
so they-have a little of pleasing life
don nus sages on n'a envie.
of-which any wise man not-has envy
La sont servi d'enveiseries,
There are served with-merriments
de tresches e d'espingueries,
with farandoles and with-capers
e de tabours e de vieles,
and with tabors and with viols
e de rotruenges nouveles,
and with rotrouenges new
de jeus de dez, d'eschés, de tables,
with games of dice of-chess of tables
e d'outrageus mès delitables;
and with-outrageous dishes delightful
la vont vallet e dameiseles,
there go young-men and damsels
conjoint par vieilles maquereles,
joined by old procuresses
cerchant prez e jardins e gauz,
searching meadows and gardens and woods
plus renveisié que papegauz;
more merry than parrots
puis revont entr'aus aus estuves
then they-go-again among-themselves to-the baths
e se baignent ensemble en cuves
and themselves bathe together in tubs
qu'il ont es chambres toutes prestes,
which-they have in-the chambers all ready

les chapelez de fleurs es testes,
the garlands of flowers on-the heads
en l'ostel de Fole Largece,
in the-house of Foolish Largesse
qui si les apovreie e blece
who so them impoverishes and wounds
que puis peuent enviz guerir,
that afterward they-can hardly be-healed
tant leur set chier vendre e merir
so-much to-them she-knows dear to-sell and to-repay
son servise e son ostelage
her service and her lodging
qu'ele en prent si crüel paage
that-she thereof takes so cruel toll
qu'il leur couvient leur terres vendre
that-it to-them behooves their lands to-sell
ainz que tout le li puissent rendre.
before that all it to-her they-can render
Jes i convei a mout grant joie,
I-them there escort with very great joy
mais Povreté les raconvoie,
but Poverty them escorts-back
freide, tremblant, trestoute nue;
cold trembling all naked
j'ai l'entree e ele a l'issue.
I-have the-entrance and she has the-exit
Ja puis d'aus ne m'entremetrai,
Ever afterward with-them not myself-I-will-meddle
tant seient sage ne letré.
however-much be-they wise or lettered

Lors si peuent aler billier,
Then so they-can go play-at-billets
qu'il sont au darrenier millier.
for-they are at-the last thousand
Je ne di pas, se tant faisaient
I not say at-all if so-much they-did
que puis vers mei se rapaisaient,
that afterward toward me themselves they-reconciled
mais fort chose a faire serait,
but hard thing to do would-be
toutes les feiz qu'il leur plairait,
all the times that-it to-them would-please
je ne seraie ja si lasse
I not would-be ever so weary
qu'encor ne les i ramenasse,
that-still not them there I-brought-back
mais sachiez que plus s'en repentent
but know that most themselves-thereof repent
en la fin cil qui plus le hantent,
in the end those who most it frequent
n'il ne m'osent voeir de honte;
nor-they not me-dare to-see for shame
par po que chascuns ne s'effronte,
by little that each — himself-shatters
tant se courroucent e s'engressent.
so-much themselves they-anger and themselves-vex
Si les lais pour ce qu'il me laissent.
So them I-leave for this that-they me leave
Si vous promet bien, senz mentir,
So to-you I-promise well without lying

qu'a tart vendreiz au repentir,
that-too late you-will-come to-the repenting
se vous ja les piez i metez.
if you ever the feet there put
Nus ours, quant il est bien betez,
Any bear when he is well baited
n'est si chaitis ne si alez
not-is so wretched nor so done-for
con vous sereiz s'ous i alez.
as you will-be if-you there go
Se Povreté vous peut baillier,
If Poverty you can handle
el vous fera tant baaillier
she you will-make so-much yawn
seur un po de chaume ou de fein
on a little of straw or of hay
qu'el vous laira mourir de Fain,
that-she you will-let die of Hunger
qui fu jadis sa chamberiere,
who was formerly her chambermaid
e la servi de tel maniere
and her served in such manner
que Povreté pour son servise,
that Poverty for her service
don Fain iert ardanz e esprise,
with-which Hunger was burning and inflamed

li enseigna toute malice
to-her taught all malice
e la fist maistresse e nourrice
and her made mistress and nurse
Larrecin, le valleton lait.
of-Theft the little-young-man ugly
Cete l'alaita de son lait,
This-one him-suckled with her milk
n'ot autre boulie a lui paistre.
nor-had other porridge for him to-feed
E se saveir voulez son estre,
And if to-know you-wish her dwelling
qui n'est ne souples ne terreus,
which not-is neither soft nor earthy
Fain demeure en un champ perreus
Hunger dwells in a field stony
ou ne creist blez, boissons ne broce;
where not grows grain bush nor brushwood
cil chans est en la fin d'Escoce,
this field is at the end of-Scotland
si freiz que pour neient fust marbres.
so cold that for nothing were marble
Fain, qui n'i veit ne blez ne arbres,
Hunger who not-there sees neither grain nor trees
les erbes en arache pures
the herbs thereof pulls-out pure
aus trenchanz ongles, aus denz dures,
with-the sharp nails with-the teeth hard

mais mout les treuve cleres nees
but very them finds sparse born
pour les pierres espès semees;
for the stones thickly sown
e se la voulaie descrivre,
and if her I-wished to-describe
tost en pourraie estre delivre.
soon thereof I-could be delivered

Hunger, and the Lover's Double Service

XXIV

Wealth describes the starved body of Hunger, whom Ceres never visits, and says idleness leads to Poverty by another road. She will never let the lover in, for lovers despise her goods and he ignored Reason. He leaves her, wanders pensive through the garden, and serves Wicked Tongue and the other guards as Friend advised, doing one thing while thinking another.

Longue est e maigre, lasse e vaine,
Long she-is and thin weary and empty
grant soufraite a de pain d'aveine,
great want she-has of bread of-oats
les cheveus a touz hericiez,
the hair she-has all bristling
les eauz crues, en parfont gliciez,
the eyes hollow in deep sunk
vis pale e baulevres sechiees,
face pale and lips dried
joes de roïlle entechiees;
cheeks with rust stained

par sa pel dure qui vourrait
through her skin hard who would-wish
ses entrailles voeir pourrait.
her entrails see could
Li os par les illiers li saillent
The bones through the loins on-her stand-out
ou trestoutes humeurs defaillent,
where all humors fail
n'el n'a, ce semble, point dou ventre
nor-she not-has this seems at-all of-the belly
fors le leu, qui si parfont entre
except the place which so deep goes-in
que touz li piz a la meschine
that all the breast to the wretched-girl
pent a la claie de l'eschine.
hangs on the hurdle of the-spine
Ses deiz li a creüz maigrece,
Her fingers to-her has lengthened thinness
des genouz li pert la rondece.
of-the knees on-her appears the roundness
Talons a hauz, aguz, paranz,
Heels she-has high sharp appearing
n'apert qu'il ait point de char enz,
not-appears that-it have at-all of flesh therein
tant la tient maigrece e compresse.
so-much her holds thinness and compresses
La planteüreuse deesse,
The bountiful goddess
Cerès, qui fait les blez venir,
Ceres who makes the grains come

ne set la le chemin tenir;
not knows there the road to-hold
ne cil qui ses dragons aveie,
nor he who her dragons drives
Tritolemus, n'i set la veie.
Triptolemus not-there knows the way
Destinees les en esloignent,
Destinies them thence distance
qui n'ont cure que s'entrejoignent
who not-have care that themselves-join-each-other
la deesse planteüreuse
the goddess bountiful
e Fain la lasse doulereuse.
and Hunger the weary woeful-one
Mais assez tost vous i menra
But quite soon you there will-lead
Povreté quant el vous tenra,
Poverty when she you will-hold
se cele part aler voulez,
if that way to-go you-wish
pour estre oiseus con vous soulez;
for to-be idle as you are-wont
car a Povreté touteveie
for to Poverty nevertheless
tourne l'en bien par autre veie
turns one well by other way
que par cele que je ci garde;
than by that-one which I here guard

car par vie oiseuse e faitarde
for by life idle and lazy
peut l'en a Povreté venir.
can one to Poverty come
E s'il vous plaisait a tenir
And if-it to-you pleased to hold
cele veie que j'ai ci dite
that way which I-have here said
vers Povreté lasse e despite,
toward Poverty weary and despised
pour le fort chastel assaillir,
for the strong castle to-assail
bien pourreiz au prendre faillir.
well you-could at-the taking fail
Mais de Fain cuit estre certaine
But of Hunger I-think to-be certain
qu'el vous iert veisine e prouchaine;
that-she to-you will-be neighbor and near
car Povreté set le chemin
for Poverty knows the road
meauz par cueur que par parchemin.
better by heart than by parchment
Si sachiez que Fain la chaitive
So know that Hunger the wretch
est encore si ententive
is still so attentive
envers sa dame e si courteise,
toward her lady and so courteous
si ne l'aime el point ne ne preise,
so not her-loves she at-all nor not prizes

s'est ele par li soutenue,
and-is she by her sustained
combien qu'ele seit lasse e nue,
however-much that-she be weary and naked
qu'el la vient toute jour voeir,
that-she her comes all day to-see
e se vet avec li soeir,
and herself goes with her to-sit
e la tient au bec e la baise
and her holds by-the beak and her kisses
par desconfort e par mesaise;
for discomfort and for distress
puis prent Larrecin par l'oreille,
then takes Theft by the-ear
quant le veit dormir, e l'esveille,
when him she-sees sleep and him-wakes
e par destrece a lui s'encline,
and for distress to him herself-bows
si le conseille e endoctrine
so him counsels and instructs
coment il les deit procurer,
how he them ought provide
combien qu'il leur deie durer.
however-much that-it to-them ought last
E Cueurs Failliz a aus s'acorde,
And Heart Failed with them himself-accords

qui songe touteveis la corde
who dreams nevertheless the rope
qui li fait hericier e tendre
which to-him makes bristle and stretch
tout le peil qu'il ne veie pendre
all the hair that-he — see hang
Larrecin son fill, le tremblant,
Theft his son the trembling-one
se l'en le peut baillier emblant.
if one him can catch stealing
Mais ja par ci n'i enterreiz,
But ever by here not-there you-will-enter
ailleurs vostre chemin querreiz,
elsewhere your road you-will-seek
car ne m'avez pas tant servie
for not me-you-have at-all so-much served
que m'amour aiez deservie.
that my-love you-have deserved
— Dame, par Deu, se je peüsse,
Lady by God if I could
volentiers vostre grace eüsse;
willingly your grace I-would-have
des que lors ou sentier entrasse,
as-soon that then in-the path I-entered
Bel Acueil de prison ostasse,
Fair Welcome from prison I-would-remove
qui laienz est emprisonez.
who within is imprisoned
Cet don, s'il vous plaist, me donez.
This gift if-it to-you please me give

— Bien vous ai», dist ele, «entendu,
Well you I-have said she understood
e sai que n'avez pas vendu
and I-know that not-you-have at-all sold
tout vostre bois, gros e menu:
all your wood big and small
un fou en avez retenu,
a fool thereof you-have kept
car senz fou ne peut nus on vivre
for without fool not can any man live
tant come il vueille Amours ensivre,
as-long as he wish Love to-follow
si cuident il estre mout sage
so think they to-be very wise
tant come il vivent en tel rage.
as-long as they live in such rage
Vivent! Certes non font, ainz meurent
Live-they Certainly not they-do rather they-die
tant come en tel torment demeurent,
as-long as in such torment they-remain
qu'en ne deit pas apeler vie
for-one not ought at-all call life
tel rage ne tel desverie.
such rage nor such madness
Bien le vous sot Raison noter,
Well it to-you knew Reason to-note
mais ne vous pot desassoter.
but not you she-could un-besot

Sachiez quant vous ne la creüstes
Know when you not her believed
crueusement vous deceüstes,
cruelly yourself you-deceived
veire ainz que Raison i venist,
indeed before that Reason there came
n'estait il riens qui vous tenist,
not-was it anything that you held
n'onques puis riens ne me prisastes
nor-ever afterward in-anything not me you-prized
des lors que par amour amastes;
from then that by love you-loved
qu'amant ne me veulent prisier,
for-lovers not me wish to-prize
ainz s'efforcent d'apetisier
rather themselves-strive of-diminishing
mes biens quant je les leur depart,
my goods when I them to-them share
e les regietent d'autre part.
and them throw-away on-other side
Ou deables pourrait l'en prendre
Where devil could one take
quanqu'uns amanz vourrait despendre?
whatever-a lover would-wish to-spend
Fuiez de ci, laissiez m'ester.»
Flee from here let me-be
Je, qui n'i poi riens conquester,
I who not-there could anything conquer
d'ileuc me parti senz demeure.
from-there myself departed without delay

La bele o son ami demeure,
The fair-one with her friend remains
qui bien iert vestuz e parez.
who well was clothed and adorned
Pensis m'en vois e esgarez
Pensive myself-thence I-go and distraught
par le jardin delicieus,
through the garden delicious
qui tant iert beaus e precieus
which so-much was fair and precious
con vous avez devant oï;
as you have before heard
mais de ce mout po m'esjoï,
but in this very little myself-I-rejoiced
qu'ailleurs ai mis tout mon pensé.
for-elsewhere I-have put all my thought
En touz tens, en touz leus pensai
In all times in all places I-thought
en quel maniere, senz feintise,
in what manner without feigning
je feraie meauz mon servise,
I would-do better my service
car mout volentiers le feïsse
for very willingly it I-would-do
si que de riens n'i mespreïsse,
so that in anything not-there I-misdid
car n'en creüst de riens mes pris
for not-thereof would-have-grown in anything my worth
se j'i eüsse point mespris.
if I-there had at-all misdone

Mout se tint mes cueurs e veilla
Much itself held my heart and watched
a ce qu'Amis me conseilla:
to this that-Friend me counseled
Male Bouche adès enouraie
Wicked Tongue always I-honored
en touz les leus ou jou trouvaie;
in all the places where I-him found
de touz mes autres anemis
of all my other enemies
enourer forment m'entremis,
to-honor greatly myself-I-undertook
e de mon poeir les servi.
and with my power them served
Ne sai se leur gré deservi,
Not I-know if their favor I-deserved
mais trop me tenaie pour pris
but exceedingly myself I-held for taken
don je n'osaie le pourpris
for I not-dared the enclosure
aprouchier si con je soulaie,
to-approach so as I was-wont
car toujourz aler i voulaie.
for always to-go there I-wished

Si fis ainsinc ma penitence
So I-did thus my penance
lonc tens a tele conscience
long time with such conscience
come Deus set, car je faisaie
as God knows for I did
une chose e autre pensaie;
one thing and another thought
ainsinc m'entencion double oi,
thus my-intention double I-had
n'onc mais nul jour ne la doubloi;
nor-ever more any day not it I-doubled
traïson me couvint tracier
treason me it-behooved to-trace
pour ma besoigne pourchacier;
for my business to-pursue
onc traïtres n'avaie esté,
ever traitor not-I-had been
n'encor ne m'en a nus reté.
nor-yet not me-thereof has anyone accused

Love Hears the Lover's Confession

XXV

Love appears and reproaches the lover for wavering toward Reason. The lover confesses, vows never to follow Reason again, and asks to die in Venus's work; Love pardons him and has him recite his commandments. Sweet Looks has failed him, he says, but Hope remains, and Fair Welcome is in prison. Love promises to summon his barons and besiege the castle.

Quant Amours m'ot bien esprouvé
When Love me-had well tested
e vit qu'il m'ot leial trouvé,
and saw that-he me-had loyal found
de tel leiauté touteveie
of such loyalty nevertheless
come vers lui porter devaie,
as toward him bear I-ought
si s'aparut e seur le chief,
so himself-appeared and on the head
en souriant de mon meschief,
in smiling at my mischief
me mist sa main, e demanda
me put his hand and asked
se j'ai fait quanqu'il comanda;
if I-have done whatever-he commanded
coment il m'est e qu'il me semble
how it to-me-is and what-it to-me seems
de la rose qui mon cueur emble;
of the rose which my heart steals
si savait il bien tout mon fait,
so knew he well all my doing

car Deus set tout quanque on fait:
for God knows all whatever one does
«Sont fait», dist il, «tuit li comant
Are done said he all the commands
que je aus fins amanz comant,
which I to-the true lovers command
qu'ailleurs nes vueil je departir,
for-elsewhere not-them wish I to-share
n'il n'en deivent ja departir?
nor-they not-thence ought ever depart
— Ne sai, sire, mais faiz les ai
Not I-know lord but done them I-have
au plus leiaument que je sai.
at-the most loyally that I know
— Veire, mais trop par iés muables,
Truly but exceedingly much art-thou changeable
tes cueurs n'est mie bien estables,
thy heart not-is at-all well stable
ainz est malement pleins de doute,
rather is-it evilly full of doubt
bien en sai la verité toute:
well thereof I-know the truth whole
l'autre jour laissier me vousis,
the-other day to-leave me thou-wished
par po que tu ne me tousis
by little that thou — from-me took
mon omage, e feïs d'Oiseuse
my homage and made of-Idleness
e de mei plainte doulereuse;
and of me complaint woeful

e redisaies d'Esperance
and said-again of-Hope
qu'el n'iert pas certaine en science,
that-she not-was at-all certain in knowledge
e pour fos neïs te tenaies
and for fool even thyself thou-held
don en mon servise venaies,
for-that into my service thou-came
e t'acordaies a Raison:
and thyself-accorded with Reason
n'estaies tu bien mauvais on?
not-wert thou well wicked man
— Sire, merci, confès en fui,
Lord mercy confessed thereof I-was
si savez que pas ne m'en fui,
so you-know that at-all not myself-thence I-fled
e fis mon lais, bien m'en souvient,
and made my bequest well me-thereof it-remembers
si come faire le couvient
so as to-do it it-behooves
a ceus qui sont en vostre omage.
for those who are in your homage
Ne m'en tint pas senz faille a sage,
Not me-thereof held at-all without fail as wise
ainz m'en reprist mout malement
rather me-thereof reproved very evilly
e me sarmona longuement,
and me preached long

qui bien cuida par preeschier
who well thought by preaching
vostre servise empeeschier,
your service to-hinder
Raison, quant a mei fu venue;
Reason when to me she-was come
si ne l'en ai je pas creüe,
so not her-thereof have I at-all believed
tant i seüst metre s'entente,
however-much there she-knew to-put her-attention
mais, senz faille, que je ne mente,
but without fail that I not lie
douter m'en fist, plus n'i a; mais
to-doubt me-thereof she-made more not-there has but
Raison ne m'esmouvra jamais
Reason not me-will-move ever
a chose qui contre vous aille,
to thing which against you go
ne contre autre, qui guieres vaille,
nor against other who much be-worth
se Deu plaist, quei qu'il m'en avienge,
if God please whatever that-it to-me-thereof happen
tant com mes cueurs a vous se tiegne,
as-long as my heart to you itself hold
qui bien s'i tendra, ce sachiez,
which well itself-there will-hold this know
s'il ne m'est dou cors arachiez.
if-it not from-me-is from-the body torn

Forment neïs mal gré m'en sai
Greatly even ill will to-myself-thereof I-bear
de tant qu'onques le me pensai
for so-much as-ever it to-myself I-thought
e qu'audience li donai;
and that-hearing to-her I-gave
si pri qu'il me seit pardoné,
so I-pray that-it to-me be pardoned
car je, pour ma vie amender,
for I for my life to-amend
si con vous plut a comander,
so as to-you it-pleased to command
vueil, senz jamais Raison ensivre,
I-wish without ever Reason to-follow
en vostre lei mourir e vivre.
in your law to-die and to-live
N'est riens qui de mon cueur l'efface,
Not-is anything which from my heart it-efface
ne ja, pour chose que je face,
nor ever for thing that I do
Atropos mourir ne me doigne
Atropos to-die not to-me let-her-give
fors en faisant vostre besoigne;
except in doing your business
ainz me preigne en meïsmes l'euvre
rather me let-her-take in same the-work
don Venus plus volentiers euvre,
in-which Venus most willingly works
car nus n'a, ce ne dout je point,
for any not-has this not doubt I at-all

tant de delit come en ce point;
so-much of delight as in this point
e cil qui plourer me devront,
and those who weep me will-have-to
quant ainsinc mort m'apercevront,
when thus dead me-they-will-perceive
puissent dire: «Beaus douz amis,
they-may say Fair sweet friend
tu qui t'iés en ce point la mis,
thou who thyself-art in this point there put
or est il veirs, senz point de fable,
now is it true without at-all of fable
bien iert cete mort couvenable
well will-be this death fitting
a la vie que tu menaies
to the life that thou leddest
quant l'ame avec ce cors tenaies.
when the-soul with this body thou-heldest
— Par mon chief, or diz tu que sages;
By my head now sayest thou as wise
or vei je bien que mes omages
now see I well that my homage
est en tei mout bien empleiez;
is in thee very well employed
tu n'iés pas des faus reneiez,
thou not-art at-all of-the false renegades
des larrons qui le me reneient
of-the thieves who it to-me deny
quant il ont fait ce qu'il queraient;
when they have done this that-they sought

mout est enterins tes courages,
very is entire thy heart
ta nef vendra, quant si bien nages,
thy ship will-come since so well thou-sailest
a bon port, e jou te pardon
to good port and I thee pardon
plus par priere que par don,
more by prayer than by gift
car je n'en vueil argent ne or;
for I not-thereof wish silver nor gold
mais, en leu de confiteor,
but in place of confiteor
vueil, ainz que tu vers mei t'acordes,
I-wish before that thou toward me thyself-reconcile
que touz mes comanz me recordes,
that all my commands to-me thou-recall
car dis en tendra tes romanz
for ten thereof will-hold thy romance
entre defenses e comanz;
between prohibitions and commands
e se bien retenuz les as,
and if well retained them thou-hast
tu n'as pas gité ambesas.
thou not-hast at-all thrown double-ace
Di les. — Volentiers: Vilenie
Say them Willingly Villainy
dei foïr; e que ne mesdie;
I-ought to-flee and that not I-slander
saluz dei tost doner e rendre;
greetings I-ought soon give and return

a dire ordure ne dei tendre;
to say filth not I-ought aim
a toutes fames enourer
to all women honor
m'esteut en touz tenz labourer;
me-behooves in all times to-labor
orgueil fuie; cointes me tiegne;
pride let-me-flee elegant myself let-me-hold
jolis e renveisiez deviegne;
merry and gay let-me-become
a larges estre m'abandoigne;
to generous being myself-let-me-give-over
en un seul leu tout mon cueur doigne.
in one single place all my heart let-me-give
— Par fei tu sez bien ta leçon,
By faith thou knowest well thy lesson
je n'en sui mais en soupeçon.
I not-thereof am more in suspicion
Coment t'est il? — A douleur vif,
How to-thee-is it In grief I-live
près que je n'ai pas le cueur vif.
nearly that I not-have at-all the heart alive
— N'as tu mais treis conforz? — Nenin.
Not-hast thou more three comforts No
Douz Regarz faut, qui le venin
Sweet Looks fails who the venom
me seaut oster de ma douleur
from-me is-wont to-remove from my grief
par sa trés doucereuse ouleur.
by his very sweet smell

Tuit trei s'en foïrent, mais d'eus
All three themselves-thence fled but of-them
m'en sont arriers venu les deus.
to-me-thence are back come the two
— N'as tu Esperance? — Oïl, sire,
Not-hast thou Hope Yes lord
cele ne me lait desconfire,
she not me lets be-discomfited
car lonc tens est après tenue
for long time is after held
esperance une feiz creüe.
hope one time believed
— Bel Acueil, qu'est il devenuz?
Fair Welcome what-is he become
— Il est en prison retenuz,
He is in prison held-back
li frans, li douz, que tant amaie.
the frank-one the sweet-one whom so-much I-loved
— Or ne te chaut, or ne t'esmaie,
Now not to-thee matter now not thyself-dismay
qu'encor l'avras plus, par mes eauz!
for-still him-thou-wilt-have more by my eyes
A ton vouleir que tu ne seauz.
At thy will than thou not art-wont
Des que tu serz si leiaument,
Since that thou servest so loyally
mes genz vueil mander erraument
my folk I-wish to-summon at-once
pour le fort chastel assegier.
for the strong castle to-besiege

Li baron sont fort e legier;
The barons are strong and light
ainz que nous partons mais dou siege
before that we depart more from-the siege
iert Bel Acueil mis hors de piege.»
will-be Fair Welcome put out of trap

Love's Barons, and the Two Poets

XXVI

Love summons his barons, among them Idleness, Wealth, Courtesy, and Largesse, and Constrained Abstinence brings False Seeming, son of Fraud and Hypocrisy, whom Love accepts. Love laments Tibullus, Gallus, Catullus, and Ovid, and says Guillaume de Lorris, his servant, will break off his romance where Fair Welcome lies in prison. Jean Chopinel, born at Meun, will continue it more than forty years after Guillaume's death and finish it.

Li deus d'Amours, senz terme metre
The god of-Love without term putting
de leu ne de tens en sa letre,
of place nor of time in his letter
toute sa baronie mande,
all his baronage summons
les uns prie, aus autres comande
the ones he-begs to-the others he-commands
qu'il viegnent a son palement.
that-they come to his parliament
Tuit sont venu senz contremant,
All are come without countermand
prest d'acomplir ce qu'il vourra,
ready to-accomplish this that-he will-wish

selonc ce que chascuns pourra.
according-to what that each will-be-able
Briement les nomerai senz ordre,
Briefly them I-will-name without order
pour plus tost a ma rime mordre.
for more soon to my rhyme to-bite
Dame Oiseuse, la jardiniere,
Lady Idleness the gardener
i vint o la plus grant baniere;
there came with the most great banner
Noblece de cueur e Richece,
Nobility of heart and Wealth
Franchise, Pitiez e Largece,
Franchise Pity and Largesse
Hardemenz, Eneur, Courteisie,
Boldness Honor Courtesy
Deliz, Simplece e Compaignie,
Delight Simplicity and Company
Seürtez, Deduiz e Leece,
Security Mirth and Gladness
Jolietez, Beautez, Jennece,
Merriment Beauty Youth
Humilitez e Pacience,
Humility and Patience
Bien Celers, Contrainte Astenance,
Well Concealing Constrained Abstinence
qui Faus Semblant o li ameine;
who False Seeming with her brings
senz li i venist ele a peine.
without him there would-come she with difficulty

Cist i sont o toute leur gent;
These there are with all their folk
chascuns d'aus ot mout le cueur gent,
each of-them had very the heart noble
ne mais Astenance Contrainte
nor but Abstinence Constrained
e Faus Samblanz a chiere feinte:
and False Seeming with face feigned
quelque semblant que dehors facent,
whatever semblance that outside they-make
barat en leur pensee embracent.
fraud in their thought they-embrace
Baraz engendra Faus Semblant,
Fraud begot False Seeming
qui va les cueurs des genz emblant;
who goes the hearts of-the folk stealing
sa mere ot non Ypocrisie,
his mother had name Hypocrisy
la larronesse, la honie,
the thief the shamed-one
cete l'alaita e nourri,
she him-suckled and nourished
l'ort ypocrite au cueur pourri,
the-filthy hypocrite with-the heart rotten
qui traïst mainte region
who betrayed many-a region
par abit de religion.
by habit of religion

Quant li deus d'Amours l'a veü,
When the god of-Love him-has seen
tout le cueur en ot esmeü:
all the heart thereof he-had stirred
«Qu'est ce?» dist il, «ai je songié?
What-is this said he have I dreamed
Di, Faus Samblanz, par cui congié
Say False Seeming by whose leave
iés tu venuz en ma presence?»
art thou come into my presence
Atant saut Contrainte Astenance,
Thereupon leaps Constrained Abstinence
si prist Faus Semblant par la main:
so took False Seeming by the hand
«Sire», dist ele, «o mei l'amein,
Lord said she with me him-I-bring
si vous pri qu'il ne vous desplaise,
so you I-pray that-it not you displease
mainte eneur m'a fait e mainte aise,
many-an honor me-has he-done and many-an ease
cist me soustient, cist me conforte,
this-one me sustains this-one me comforts
s'il ne fust de fain fusse morte,
if-he not were from hunger I-would-be dead
si m'en devriez meins blasmer.
so me-thereof you-ought less blame
Tout ne vueille il les genz amer,
Even-if not wish he the folk to-love

s'ai je mestier qu'il seit amez
yet-have I need that-he be loved
e preudon e sainz on clamez.
and worthy-man and holy man called
Mes amis est e je s'amie,
My friend he-is and I his-friend
si vient o mei par compaignie.
so he-comes with me by company
— Or seit», dist il. Adonc parole
Now be-it said he Then he-speaks
a touz une brieve parole:
to all a brief word
«Pour Jalousie desconfire,
For Jealousy to-overthrow
qui noz amanz met a martire,
who our lovers puts to martyrdom
vous ai», dist il, «ci fait venir,
you I-have said he here made come
qui contre mei bee a tenir
who against me aims to hold
ce fort chastel qu'ele a drecié,
this strong castle which-she has raised
don j'ai griement le cueur blecié.
whereby I-have grievously the heart wounded
Tant l'a fait fierement hourder
So-much it-has she-made fiercely to-fortify
mout i couvendra behourder
much there it-will-behoove to-joust
ainz que par nous puisse estre pris.
before that by us it-can be taken

Si sui dolenz e entrepris
So I-am sorrowful and dismayed
de Bel Acueil qu'ele i a mis,
for Fair Welcome whom-she there has put
qui tant avançait noz amis.
who so-much advanced our friends
S'il n'en ist, je sui maubailliz,
If-he not-thence goes-out I am ill-handled
puis que Tibullus m'est failliz,
since that Tibullus to-me-is failed
qui quenoissait si bien mes teches,
who knew so well my qualities
pour cui mort je brisai mes fleches,
for whose death I broke my arrows
cassai mes ars, e mes cuiriees
broke my bows and my quivers
traïnai toutes desciriees,
dragged all torn
don tant oi d'angoisses e teles
whereby so-many I-had of-anguishes and such
qu'a son tomblel mes lasses d'eles
that-at his tomb my weary-ones of-wings
traïnai toutes desrompues,
I-dragged all broken
tant les oi de deul debatues;
so-much them I-had with grief beaten
pour cui mort ma mere ploura
for whose death my mother wept
tant que près qu'el ne s'acoura;
so-much that near that-she — herself-killed

n'est nus cui pitié n'en preïst
not-is anyone whom pity not-thereof took
qui pour lui plourer nous veïst:
who for him weeping us saw
en noz pleurs n'ot ne freins ne brides.
in our tears not-there-was neither curbs nor bridles
Gallus, Catillus e Ovides,
Gallus Catullus and Ovid
qui bien sorent d'amours traitier,
who well knew of-love to-treat
nous reüssent or bien mestier;
to-us would-have-again now well use
mais chascuns d'aus gist morz pourriz.
but each of-them lies dead rotten
Vez ci Guillaume de Lorriz,
Behold here Guillaume de Lorris
cui Jalousie, sa contraire,
to-whom Jealousy his adversary
fait tant d'angoisse e de deul traire
makes so-much of-anguish and of grief to-draw
qu'il est en perill de mourir
that-he is in peril of dying
se je ne pens dou secourir.
if I not think of-the helping
Cist m'en conseillast volentiers,
He me-thereof would-counsel willingly
con cil qui miens est touz entiers,
as he who mine is all entire

e dreiz fust, car pour lui meïsmes
and right it-would-be for for him himself
en cete peine nous meïsmes
in this pain we put-ourselves
de touz nos barons assembler,
of all our barons to-assemble
pour Bel Acueil toudre ou embler;
for Fair Welcome to-take or to-steal
mais il n'est pas, ce dit, si sages;
but he not-is at-all this he-says so wise
si serait ce mout granz domages
so would-be this very great harm
se si leial serjent perdaie,
if so loyal servant I-lost
con secourre le puisse ou deie,
as succor him I-can or ought
qu'il m'a si leiaument servi
for-he me-has so loyally served
qu'il a bien vers mei deservi
that-he has well toward me deserved
que je saille e que je m'atour
that I leap and that I myself-equip
de rompre les murs e la tour,
for breaking the walls and the tower
e dou fort chastel assoeir
and of-the strong castle to-besiege
a tout quanque j'ai de poeir;
with all whatever I-have of power
e plus encor me deit servir,
and more still me he-ought serve

car, pour ma grace deservir,
for for my grace to-deserve
deit il comencier le romant
ought he begin the romance
ou seront mis tuit mi comant,
where will-be put all my commands
e jusque la le fournira
and up-to there it will-carry-on
ou il a Bel Acueil dira,
where he to Fair Welcome will-say
qui languist ore en la prison
who languishes now in the prison
par douleur e par mesprison:
by grief and by wrong
«Mout sui durement esmaiez
Very I-am harshly dismayed
que entroublié ne m'aiez,
that forgotten — me-you-have
si en ai deul e desconfort,
so thereof I-have grief and discomfort
jamais n'iert riens qui me confort
ever not-will-be anything which me comfort
se je pers vostre bienveillance,
if I lose your good-will
car je n'ai mais ailleurs fiance.»
for I not-have more elsewhere trust
Ci se reposera Guillaumes,
Here himself will-rest Guillaume
li cui tombleaus seit pleins de baumes,
the whose tomb be full of balms

d'encens, de mirre e d'aloé,
of-incense of myrrh and of-aloe
tant m'a servi, tant m'a loé!
so-much me-be-has served so-much me-be-has praised
Puis vendra Johans Chopinel
Then will-come John Chopinel
au cueur joli, au cors inel,
with-the heart merry with-the body quick
qui naistra seur Leire a Meün,
who will-be-born on Loire at Meun
qui a saoul e a jeün
who in fullness and in fasting
me servira toute sa vie,
me will-serve all his life
senz avarice e senz envie,
without avarice and without envy
e sera si trés sages on
and will-be so very wise man
qu'il n'avra cure de Raison,
that-he not-will-have care of Reason
qui mes oignemenz het e blasme,
who my ointments hates and blames
qui plus flairent soef que basme.
which more smell sweet than balm
E s'il avient, coment qu'il aille,
And if-it happens however that-it go
qu'il en aucune chose faille,
that-he in any thing fail
car il n'est pas on qui ne peche,
for it not-is at-all man who not sins

toujourz a chascuns quelque teche,
always has each some fault
le cueur vers mei tant avra fin
the heart toward me so-much he-will-have true
que toujourz, au meins en la fin,
that always at-the least in the end
quant en courpe se sentira,
when in fault himself he-will-feel
dou forfait se repentira,
of-the misdeed himself will-repent
ne me voudra pas lors trichier.
nor me he-will-wish at-all then to-cheat
Cist avra le romanz si chier
He will-have the romance so dear
qu'il le voudra tout parfenir,
that-he it will-wish all to-complete
se tens e leus l'en peut venir,
if time and place him-thereof can come
car, quant Guillaumes cessera,
for when Guillaume will-cease
Johans le continuera,
John it will-continue
emprès sa mort, que je ne mente,
after his death that I not lie
anz trespassez plus de quarante,
years passed more than forty
e dira pour la mescheance,
and will-say for the mischance

par peeur de desesperance
for fear of despair
qu'il n'ait de Bel Acueil perdue
that-he not-have of Fair Welcome lost
la bienveillance avant eüe:
the good-will before had
«E si l'ai je perdue, espeir,
And yet it-have I lost perhaps
a po que ne m'en desespeir»;
at little that — myself-thereof I-despair
e toutes les autres paroles,
and all the other words
queus qu'eus seient, sages ou foles,
whatever that-they be wise or foolish
jusqu'a tant qu'il avra coillie
until such-time that-he will-have plucked
seur la branche vert e foillie
on the branch green and leafy
la trés bele rose vermeille,
the very fair rose red
e qu'il seit jourz e qu'il s'esveille.
and that-it be day and that-he himself-wake
Puis voudra si la chose espondre
Then he-will-wish so the thing to-expound
que riens ne s'i pourra repondre.
that anything not itself-there will-be-able hide
Se cist conseil metre i peüssent,
If these counsel put there could
tantost conseillié m'en eüssent;
at-once counseled me-thereof they-would-have

mais par cetui ne peut or estre,
but by this-one not can now be
ne par celui qui est a naistre,
nor by that-one who is to be-born
car il n'est mie ci presenz.
for he not-is at-all here present
Si rest la chose si pesanz
So is-in-turn the thing so heavy
que certes quant il sera nez,
that certainly when he will-be born
se je n'i vieng touz empanez,
if I not-there come all winged
pour lire lui vostre sentence,
for to-read to-him your sentence
si tost come il istra d'enfance,
as soon as he will-go-out from-childhood
ce vous os jurer e plevir
this to-you I-dare swear and pledge
qu'il n'en pourrait jamais chevir.
that-he not-thereof could ever manage

Jean's Book, and Wealth Refuses

XXVII

Love prays Lucina for Jean's safe birth and promises to teach him so that his book will be called the Mirror for Lovers, if Reason is not believed. He asks the barons' counsel, and they agree on a plan, all but Wealth, who refuses to attack because the lover is poor and once asked her for the road of Too-Much Giving.

E pour ce que bien pourrait estre
And for this that well could be
que cil Johans qui est a naistre
that this John who is to be-born
serait, espeir, empeeschiez,
would-be perhaps hindered
si serait ce deaus e pechiez
so would-be this grief and sin
e domages aus amoureus,
and harm to-the lovers
qu'il fera mout de biens pour eus,
for-he will-do much of goods for them
pri je Lucina, la deesse
pray I Lucina the goddess
d'enfantement, qu'el doint qu'il naisse
of-childbirth that-she grant that-he be-born
senz mal e senz encombrement,
without hurt and without encumbrance
si qu'il puist vivre longuement.
so that-he can live long

E quant emprès a ce vendra
And when afterward to this he-will-come
que Jupiter vif le tendra
that Jupiter alive him will-hold
e qu'il devra estre abevrez,
and that-he will-have be watered
des ainz neïs qu'il seit sevrez,
from before even that-he be weaned
des toneaus qu'il a toujourz doubles,
from-the casks which-he has always double
don l'uns est clers, li autres troubles,
of-which the-one is clear the other cloudy
li uns douz, li autres amers
the one sweet the other bitter
plus que n'est suie ne la mers,
more than is soot or the sea
e qu'il ou berceul sera mis,
and that-he in-the cradle will-be put
pour ce qu'il iert tant mes amis,
for this that-he will-be so-much my friend
je l'afublerai de mes eles
I him-will-cloak with my wings
e li chanterai notes teles
and to-him will-sing notes such
que puis qu'il sera hors d'enfance,
that after that-he will-be out-of childhood
endoctrinez de ma science,
instructed in my knowledge

si fleütera noz paroles
so he-will-pipe our words
par carrefours e par escoles,
through crossroads and through schools
selonc le langage de France,
according-to the language of France
par tout le regne, en audience,
through all the kingdom in hearing
que jamais cil qui les orront
that ever those who them will-hear
des douz maus d'amer ne morront,
of-the sweet ills of-loving not will-die
pour qu'il le creient seulement;
provided that-they it believe only
car tant en lira proprement
for so-much thereof he-will-read properly
que trestuit cil qui ont a vivre
that all those who have to live
devraient apeler ce livre
ought call this book
le Mirouer aus Amoureus,
the Mirror for-the Lovers
tant i verront de bien pour eus,
so-much there they-will-see of good for them
mais que Raison n'i seit creüe,
provided that Reason not-there be believed
la chaitive, la recreüe.
the wretched-one the recreant-one
Pour ce m'en vueil ci conseillier,
For this myself-thereof I-wish here to-counsel

car tuit estes mi conseillier;
for all you-are my counselors
si vous cri merci jointes paumes
so you I-cry mercy joined palms
que cist las doulereus Guillaumes,
that this wretched woeful Guillaume
qui si bien s'est vers mei portez,
who so well himself-has toward me borne
seit secouruz e confortez.
be succored and comforted
E se pour lui ne vous priaie,
And if for him not you I-prayed
certes prier vous en devraie
certainly pray you thereof I-ought
au meins pour Johan alegier,
at-the least for John to-relieve
qu'il escrive plus de legier,
that-he write more with ease
que cet avantage li faites,
that this advantage to-him you-make
car il naistra, j'en sui prophetes;
for he will-be-born I-thereof am prophet
e pour les autres qui vendront,
and for the others who will-come
qui devotement entendront
who devoutly will-attend
a mes comandemenz ensivre,
to my commandments following
qu'il trouveront escriz ou livre,
which-they will-find written in-the book

si qu'il puissent de Jalousie
so that-they can of Jealousy
seurmonter l'engaigne e l'envie,
overcome the-trickery and the-envy
e touz les chasteaus depecier
and all the castles break-to-pieces
qu'ele osera jamais drecier.
which-she will-dare ever to-raise
Conseilliez m'en quel la feron,
Counsel me-thereof what there we-will-do
coment nostre ost ordoneron,
how our host we-will-order
par quel part meauz leur pourron nuire,
by what side best them we-will-be-able harm
pour plus tost leur chastel destruire.»
for more soon their castle to-destroy
Ainsinc Amours a ceus parole
Thus Love to those speaks
qui bien reçurent sa parole.
who well received his speech
Quant il ot sa raison fenie,
When he had his discourse ended
conseilla sei la baronie;
took-counsel itself the baronage
en pluseurs sentences se mistrent,
in several opinions themselves they-put
divers diverses choses distrent,
diverse-ones diverse things said
mais puis divers descorz s'acordent,
but then diverse discords themselves-accord

au deu d'Amours l'acort recordent:
to-the god of-Love the-accord they-report
«Sire», font il, «acordé somes
Lord say they agreed we-are
par l'acort de trestouz noz omes,
by the-accord of all our men
fors de Richece seulement,
except of Wealth only
qui a juré son sairement
who has sworn her oath
que ja cet chastel n'asserra
that ever this castle not-she-will-besiege
ne ja, ce dit, cop ni ferra
nor ever this she-says blow not-there will-strike
de dart, de lance ne de hache,
with dart with lance nor with axe
pour ome qui parler en sache,
for man who to-speak thereof know
ne de nule autre arme qui seit,
nor with any other arm that be
e nostre emprise despisait,
and our enterprise despised
e s'est de nostre ost departie,
and herself-has from our host departed
au meins quant a cete partie,
at-the least as to this part
tant a ce vallet en despit;
so-much she-has this young-man in contempt

e pour ce le blasme e despit
and for this him blames and despises
qu'onques, ce dit, cil ne l'ot chiere,
for-ever this she-says he not her-held dear
pour ce li fait ele tel chiere;
for this to-him makes she such face
si le het e harra des or
so him she-hates and will-hate from now
puis qu'il ne veaut faire tresor.
since that-he not wishes to-make treasure
Onc ne li fist autre forfait,
Ever not to-her he-did other misdeed
vez ci quanqu'il li a forfait:
behold here whatever-he to-her has misdone
bien dit, senz faille, qu'avant ier
well she-says without fail that-day-before yesterday
la requist d'entrer ou sentier
her he-asked of-entering into-the path
qui Trop Doner est apelez,
which Too-Much Giving is called
e la flatait ileuc delez,
and her flattered there beside
mais povres iert quant l'en pria,
but poor he-was when her-thereof begged
pour ce l'entree li nia.
for this the-entrance to-him she-denied

N'encor n'a pas puis tant ouvré
Nor-yet not-he-has at-all since so-much worked
qu'un seul denier ait recouvré
that-a single penny he-have recovered
qui quites demourez li seit,
which quit remained to-him be
si con Richece nous disait:
so as Wealth to-us said
e quant ce nous ot recordé,
and when this to-us she-had reported
senz li nous somes acordé.
without her we are agreed

The Barons' Plan

XXVIII

False Seeming and Abstinence will attack Wicked Tongue's gate, Courtesy and Largesse the old woman, Delight and Well Concealing Shame, Boldness and Security Fear, and Franchise and Pity Danger; the barons ask for Venus too. Love reveres his mother but will not trouble her now, and says love bought is a bad bargain, worse than buying a horse. He swears to punish the rich, whom women will pluck, and to help the poor who serve him.

Si trouvons en nostre acordance
So we-find in our agreement
que Faus Semblanz e Astenance
that False Seeming and Abstinence
avec touz ceus de leur banieres
with all those of their banners
assaudront la porte darrieres,
will-assail the gate behind

que Male Bouche tient en garde
which Wicked Tongue holds in guard
o ses Normanz, que maus feus arde!
with his Normans whom evil fire burn
O aus Courteisie e Largece,
With them Courtesy and Largesse
qui remouterront leur proece
who will-show-again their prowess
contre la vieille qui maistrie
against the old-woman who masters
Bel Acueil par dure maistrie.
Fair Welcome by hard mastery
Emprès Deliz e Bien Celer
Then Delight and Well Concealing
iront pour Honte escerveler;
will-go for Shame to-brain
seur li leur ost assembleront
on her their host they-will-assemble
e cele porte assegeront.
and that gate will-besiege
Contre Peeur ont ahurté
Against Fear have attacked
Hardement avec Seürté;
Boldness with Security
l'asserront o toute leur suite
her-they-will-besiege with all their following
qui ne sot onques riens de fuite.
which not knew ever anything of flight

Franchise e Pitié s'offerront
Franchise and Pity themselves-will-offer
contre Dangier e l'asserront.
against Danger and him-will-besiege
Donc iert l'ost ordenee assez;
Then will-be the-host ordered plenty
par ceus iert li chasteaus cassez
by these will-be the castle broken
se chascuns i met bien s'entente,
if each there puts well his-attention
pour quei Venus i seit presente,
provided that Venus there be present
vostre mere, qui mout est sage,
your mother who very is wise
qu'ele set trop de cet usage;
for-she knows much of this usage
ne senz li n'iert ce ja parfait
nor without her not-will-be this ever accomplished
ne par parole ne par fait:
neither by word nor by deed
si fust bon que l'en la mandast,
so it-would-be good that one her summoned
car la besoigne en amendast.
for the business thereby would-mend
— Seigneur, ma mere la deesse,
Lords my mother the goddess
qui ma dame est e ma maistresse,
who my lady is and my mistress
n'est pas dou tout a mon desir,
not-is at-all in-the whole at my desire

n'en faz pas quanque je desir;
not-thereof I-do at-all whatever I desire
si seaut ele mout bien acourre
so is-wont she very well to-run-up
quant il li plaist pour mei secourre
when it to-her pleases for me to-succor
a mes besoignes achever,
to my businesses to-achieve
mais ne la vueil or pas grever:
but not her I-wish now at-all to-trouble
ma mere est, si la craing d'enfance,
my mother she-is so her I-fear from-childhood
je li port mout grant reverence,
I to-her bear very great reverence
qu'enfes qui ne craint pere e mere
for-child who not fears father and mother
ne peut estre qu'il nou compere;
not can be that-he not-it pay-for
e nepourquant bien la savrons
and nevertheless well her we-will-know
mander quant mestier en avrons.
to-summon when need thereof we-will-have
S'el fust ci près tost i venist,
If-she were here near soon there she-would-come
que riens, ce crei, ne la tenist.
for anything this I-believe not her would-hold
Ma mere est de mout grant proece,
My mother is of very great prowess

ele a pris mainte forterece
she has taken many-a fortress
qui coustait plus de mil besanz,
which cost more than a-thousand bezants
ou je ne fusse ja presenz;
where I not were ever present
si le me metait l'en asseure;
so it to-me put one upon
mais ja n'i entrasse nule eure,
but ever not-there I-would-enter at-any hour
ne ne me plut onques tel prise
nor not me pleased ever such taking
de forterece senz mei prise;
of fortress without me taken
car il me semble, que qu'en die,
for it to-me seems whatever that-one say
que ce n'est fors marcheandie.
that this not-is except trade
Qui achete un destrier cent livres,
Who buys a war-horse a-hundred pounds
pait les, si en sera delivres;
pays them so thereof will-be delivered
n'en deit plus riens au marcheant,
not-thereof owes more anything to-the merchant
ne cil ne l'en redeit neant.
nor be not to-him-thereof owes-in-turn nothing
Je n'apele pas vente don:
I not-call at-all sale gift
vente ne deit nul guerredon,
sale not owes any recompense

n'i afiert graces ne merites,
not-there belongs thanks nor merits
l'uns de l'autre se part touz quites.
the-one from the-other himself parts all quit
Si n'est ce pas vente semblable,
So not-is this at-all sale similar
car, quant cil a mis en l'estable
for when he has put in the-stable
son destrier, il le peut revendre,
his war-horse he it can resell
e chatel ou gaaing reprendre;
and capital or gain take-back
au meins ne peut il pas tout perdre;
at-the least not can he at-all all lose
s'il se devait au cuir aerdre,
if-he himself ought to-the hide cling
li cuirs au meins li demourrait,
the hide at-the least to-him would-remain
don quelque chose aveir pourrait;
from-which some thing have he-could
ou, s'il a si le chevau chier
or if-he has so the horse dear
qu'il le gart pour son chevauchier,
that-he it keep for his riding
toujourz iert il dou chevau sires.
always will-be he of-the horse lord
Mais trop par est li marchiez pires
But exceedingly much is the bargain worse
don Venus se seaut entremetre;
in-which Venus herself is-wont to-meddle

car nus n'i savra ja tant metre
for any not-there will-know ever so-much to-put
qu'il n'i perde tout le cheté
that-he not-there lose all the purchase
e tout quanqu'il a acheté:
and all whatever-he has bought
l'aveir, le pris a li vendierres
the-wealth the price has the seller
si que tout pert li achetierres;
so that all loses the buyer
car ja tant n'i metra d'aveir
for ever so-much not-there he-will-put of-wealth
qu'il en puist seignourie aveir,
that-he thereof can lordship have
ne que ja puisse empeeschier,
nor that ever he-can hinder
pour doner ne pour preeschier,
for to-give nor for to-preach
que maugré sien autant n'en ait
that in-spite-of his as-much not-thereof have
uns estranges, s'il i venait,
a stranger if-he there came
pour doner tant, ou plus ou meins,
for giving so-much or more or less
fust Bretons, Engleis ou Roumains;
he-were Breton English or Roman
veire, espeir, trestout pour neient,
indeed perhaps all for nothing
tant peut il aler fableiant.
so-much can he go storytelling

Sont donc sage tel marcheant?
Are then wise such merchants
Mais fol e chaitif mescheant,
But foolish and wretched unlucky
quant chose a escient achetent
when thing with knowledge they-buy
ou tout perdent quanqu'il i metent,
where all they-lose whatever-they there put
ne si ne leur peut demourer,
nor so not to-them can it-remain
ja tant n'i savront labourer.
ever so-much not-there they-will-know to-labor
Nepourquant, je nou quier neier,
Nevertheless I not-it seek to-deny
ma mere n'en seaut riens paier;
my mother not-thereof is-wont anything to-pay
n'est pas si fole ne si nice
not-she-is at-all so foolish nor so silly
qu'el s'entremeïst de tel vice;
that-she herself-meddled with such vice
mais bien sachiez que teus la paie
but well know that such-a-one her pays
qui puis se repent de la paie,
who afterward himself repents of the payment
quant Povreté l'a en destrece,
when Poverty him-has in distress
tout fust il deciples Richece,
all were he disciple of-Wealth

qui pour mei rest en grant esveil
who for me is-in-turn in great wakefulness
quant ele veaut ce que je vueil.
when she wishes what that I wish
Mais par sainte Venus ma mere
But by holy Venus my mother
e par Saturnus son vieil pere,
and by Saturn her old father
qui ja l'engendra jeune touse,
who formerly her-begot young girl
mais non pas de sa fame espouse;
but not at-all of his wife espoused
encor le vous vueil plus jurer,
still it to-you I-wish more to-swear
pour meauz la chose asseürer,
for better the thing to-assure
par la fei que dei touz mes freres,
by the faith that I-owe all my brothers
don nus ne set nomer les peres,
of-whom any not knows to-name the fathers
tant sont divers, tant en i a,
so-much they-are diverse so-many thereof there has
que touz ma mere a sei lia;
that all my mother to herself bound
encor vous en jur e tesmoing
still to-you thereof I-swear and I-call-to-witness
la palu d'enfer a tesmoing;
the marsh of-hell as witness

or ne bevrai je de piment
now not will-drink I of spiced-wine
devant un an se je ci ment,
before a year if I here lie
car des deus savez la coustume:
for of-the gods you-know the custom
qui a parjurer l'acoustume
who to perjure himself-accustoms
n'en beit jusque l'anz seit passez.
not-thereof drinks until the-year be passed
Or en ai je juré assez,
Now thereof have I sworn enough
mal bailliz sui se m'en parjur,
ill handled I-am if myself-thereof I-perjure
mais ja ne m'en verreiz parjur;
but ever not me-thereof you-will-see perjured
puis que Richece ci me faut,
since that Wealth here me fails
chier li cuit vendre cet defaut.
dear to-her I-think to-sell this failing
El le comparra s'el ne s'arme
She it will-pay-for if-she not herself-arms
au meins d'espee ou de jusarme,
at-the least with-sword or with halberd
e puis qu'el ne m'ot pas ui chier,
and since that-she not me-had at-all today dear
des lors qu'el sot que trebuichier
from then that-she knew that to-throw-down
la forterece e la tour dui,
the fortress and the tower I-ought

mar vit ajourner le jour d'ui:
woe she-saw dawn the day of-today
se je puis riche ome baillier,
if I can rich man catch
vous le me verreiz si taillier
you it me will-see so cut
qu'il n'avra ja tant mars ne livres
that-he not-will-have ever so-many marks nor pounds
qu'il n'en seit en brief tens delivres.
that-he not-thereof be in short time delivered
Voler ferai touz ses deniers
Fly I-will-make all his pence
s'il ne lui sourdent en greniers;
if-they not to-him spring in granaries
si le plumeront noz puceles
so him will-pluck our maidens
qu'il li faudra plumes nouveles,
that-it to-him will-need feathers new
e le metront a terre vendre
and him will-put to land sell
s'il ne s'en set mout bien defendre.
if-he not himself-thence knows very well to-defend
Povre ome ont fait de mei leur maistre;
Poor men have made of me their master
tout ne m'aient il de quei paistre,
even-if not me-have they of what to-feed
ne les ai je pas en despit.
not them have I at-all in contempt
N'est pas preudon qui les despit.
Not-is at-all worthy-man who them despises

Mout est Richece enfrune e gloute,
Very is Wealth greedy and gluttonous
qui les viteie e chace e boute.
who them vilifies and chases and pushes
Meauz aiment que ne font li riche,
Better they-love than — do the rich
li aver, li tenant, li chiche,
the misers the hoarders the stingy
e sont, fei que dei mon aial,
and are by-faith that I-owe my grandfather
plus serviable e plus leial,
more serviceable and more loyal
si me soufist a grant plenté
so to-me suffices in great plenty
leur bons cueurs e leur volenté;
their good hearts and their will
mis ont en mei tout leur penser,
put they-have in me all their thought
a force m'esteut d'aus penser.
by force me-behooves of-them to-think
Tost les meïsse en granz hauteces
Soon them I-would-put into great heights
se je fusse deus des richeces
if I were god of-the riches
ausinc con je sui deus d'amours,
just as I am god of-love
tel pitié me font leur clamours:
such pity to-me make their clamors

si couvient que cetui secueure
so it-behooves that this-one I-succor
qui tant en mei servir labeure,
who so-much in me serving labors
car, s'il des maus d'amer mourait,
for if-he of-the ills of-love died
n'apert qu'en mei point d'amour ait.
not-appears that-in me at-all of-love there-be

False Seeming Received

XXIX

The barons agree that rich men will pay for their love. They ask Love to pardon False Seeming, and Love makes him king of the rascals on condition that he help Love's friends and harm his enemies. Love then orders him to tell where he can be found; False Seeming hesitates, since his companions would hate him for the truth, but agrees.

— Sire», font il, «c'est veritez
Lord say they this-is truth
trestout quanque vous recitez;
all whatever you recite
bien rest li sairemenz tenables,
well is-in-turn the oath tenable
com bons e fins e couvenables,
as good and true and fitting
que fait avez des riches omes,
which made you-have about-the rich men
ainsinc iert il, certain en somes:
thus will-be it certain thereof we-are

se riche ome vous font omage,
if rich men to-you do homage
il ne feront mie que sage,
they not will-do at-all except wise
car ja ne vous en parjurreiz,
for ever not yourselves thereby will-perjure
ja la peine n'en endurreiz
ever the penalty not-thereof you-will-endure
que piment en laissiez a beivre.
that spiced-wine thereof you-leave to drink
Dames leur breieront tel peivre,
Ladies for-them will-grind such pepper
s'il peuent en leur laz choeir,
if-they can into their snares fall
qu'il leur en devra meschoeir;
that-it to-them thereof will-need-to befall-ill
dames si courteises seront
ladies so courteous will-be
que bien vous en aquiteront;
that well you thereof will-acquit
ja n'i querrez autres vicaires,
ever not-there you-will-seek other vicars
car tant des blanches e des neires
for so-many of-the white and of-the black
leur diront, ne vous esmaiez,
to-them they-will-tell not yourself dismay
que vous en tendreiz a paiez.
that you thereof will-hold-yourself as paid
Ja ne vous en mellez seur eles:
Ever not yourself thereof meddle over them

tant leur conteront de nouveles
so-many to-them they-will-tell of news
e tant leur mouvront de requestes
and so-many to-them they-will-move of requests
par flateries desonestes,
by flatteries dishonest
e leur donront si granz colees
and to-them will-give so great blows
de baiseries, d'acolees,
of kissings of-embraces
s'il les creient, certainement
if-they them believe certainly
ne leur demourra tenement
not to-them will-remain holding
qui ne vueille le meuble ensivre
which not wish the chattels to-follow
don il seront primes delivre.
of-which they will-be first delivered
Or comandez quanque voudreiz,
Now command whatever you-will-wish
nous le feron, seit torz ou dreiz.
we it will-do be-it wrong or right
Mais Faus Semblanz de cete chose
But False Seeming of this thing
pour vous entremetre ne s'ose,
for you to-meddle not himself-dares
car il dit que vous le haez,
for he says that you him hate
ne set s'a honir le baez,
nor knows if-to shaming him you-aim

si vos prions trestuit, beaus sire,
so you we-pray all fair lord
que vous li pardoigniez vostre ire,
that you to-him pardon your wrath
e seit de vostre baronie
and let-him-be of your baronage
avec Astenance s'amie.
with Abstinence his-friend
C'est nostre acort, c'est nostre otrei.
This-is our accord this-is our grant
— Par fei», dist Amours, «je l'otrei.
By faith said Love I it-grant
Des or vueil qu'il seit a ma court,
From now I-wish that-he be at my court
ça, viegne avant». E cil acourt:
here let-him-come forward And he runs-up
«Faus Semblanz, par tel couvenant
False Seeming by such covenant
seras a mei tout maintenant
thou-wilt-be to me all at-once
que touz noz amis aideras
that all our friends thou-wilt-aid
e que ja nul n'en greveras,
and that ever any not-thereof thou-wilt-grieve
ainz penseras d'aus eslever,
but thou-wilt-think of-them to-raise
mais de noz anemis grever.
but of our enemies to-grieve
Tiens seit li poeirs e li bauz,
Thine be the power and the mastery

tu me seras reis des ribauz,
thou to-me wilt-be king of-the rascals
qu'ainsinc le veaut nostre chapitres.
for-thus it wishes our chapter
Senz faille, tu iés maus traïtres
Without fail thou art evil traitor
e lierres trop desmesurez;
and thief exceedingly measureless
cent mile feiz t'iés parjurez,
a-hundred thousand times thyself-art perjured
mais touteveis en audience,
but nevertheless in hearing
pour noz genz oster de doutance,
for our folk to-remove from doubt
comant je que tu leur enseignes,
command I that thou to-them teach
au meins par generaus enseignes,
at-the least by general signs
en quel leu meauz te trouveraient,
in what place best thee they-would-find
se dou trouver mestier avaient,
if of-the finding need they-had
e coment l'en te quenoistra,
and how one thee will-know
car grant sen en tei quenoistre a.
for great sense in thee knowing has
Di nous en queus leus tu converses.
Tell us in what places thou dwellest
— Sire, j'ai mansions diverses,
Lord I-have mansions diverse

que ja ne vous quier reciter,
which ever not to-you I-seek to-recount
s'il vous plaist a m'en respiter;
if-it to-you please to me-thereof spare
car, se le veir vous en raconte,
for if the truth to-you thereof I-tell
j'i puis aveir domage e honte;
I-there can have harm and shame
se mi compaignon le savaient,
if my companions it knew
certainement il m'en harraient
certainly they me-thereof would-hate
e m'en procurraient enui,
and me-thereof would-procure trouble
s'onques leur cruauté quenui;
if-ever their cruelty I-knew
car il veulent en touz leus taire
for they wish in all places to-silence
verité qui leur est contraire,
truth which to-them is contrary
ja ne la querraient oïr;
ever not it they-would-seek to-hear
trop en pourraie mal joïr
exceedingly thereof I-could ill enjoy
se je disaie d'aus parole
if I said of-them word
qui ne leur fust plaisant e mole;
which not to-them were pleasing and soft

car la parole qui les point
for the word which them pricks
ne leur abelist onques point,
not to-them pleases ever at-all
se c'estait neïs l'evangile
if this-were even the-gospel
qui les repreïst de leur guile, 10970
which them reproved of their guile
car trop sont cruel malement;
for exceedingly they-are cruel evilly
si sai je bien certainement,
so know I well certainly
se je vous en di nule chose,
if I to-you thereof say any thing
ja si bien n'iert vostre court close
ever so well not-will-be your court closed
qu'il nou sachent, combien qu'il tarde. 10975
that-they not-it know however-much that-it tarry
Des preudes omes n'ai je garde,
Of-the worthy men not-have I care
car ja seur aus riens n'en prendront
for ever upon themselves anything not-thereof will-take
preudome quant il m'entendront;
worthy-men when they me-will-hear

mais cil qui seur lui le prendra
but he who upon himself it will-take
pour soupeçoneus se rendra
for suspect himself will-render
qu'il ne vueille mener la vie
that-he not wish to-lead the life
de Barat e d'Ypocrisie,
of Fraud and of-Hypocrisy
qui m'engendrerent e nourrirent.
who me-begot and nourished
— Mout bone engendreüre i firent»,
Very good begetting there they-made
dist Amours, «e mout profitable,
said Love and very profitable
qu'il engendrerent le deable.
for-they begot the devil
Mais touteveis, coment qu'il aille,
But nevertheless however that-it go
couvient il», dist Amours, «senz faille,
behooves it said Love without fail
que ci tes mansions nous nomes
that here thy mansions to-us thou-name
tantost oanz trestouz noz omes,
at-once hearing all our men
e que ta vie nous espoignes;
and that thy life to-us thou-expound
n'est pas bon que plus la repoignes,
not-is at-all good that more it thou-hide
tout couvient que tu nous descueuvres,
all behooves that thou to-us uncover

coment tu serz e de queus euvres,
how thou servest and of what works
puis que çaienz t'iés embatuz;
since that in-here thyself-art thrust
e se pour veir dire iés batuz,
and if for truth telling thou-art beaten
si n'en iés tu pas coustumiers;
so not-thereof art thou at-all accustomed
tu ne seras pas li prumiers.
thou not wilt-be at-all the first
— Sire, quant vous vient a plaisir,
Lord when to-you comes to pleasure
se j'en devaie morz gesir,
if I-thereof should dead to-lie
je ferai vostre volenté,
I will-do your will
car dou faire grant talent ai.»
for of-the doing great desire I-have

False Seeming: Where He Dwells

xxx

False Seeming dwells in the world and in the cloister, among the proud false religious and not the humble true ones. The robe does not make the monk, and whatever habit he wears he hunts only fraud, as Tibert the cat hunts mice. Love asks whether religion can live in secular dress; False Seeming answers that many saints wore worldly clothes, and that a wolf in sheep's wool still devours the sheep.

Faus Semblanz, qui plus n'i atent,
False Seeming who more not-there waits
comence son sarmon atant,
begins his sermon thereupon
e dit a touz en audience:
and says to all in hearing
«Baron, entendez ma sentence:
Barons hear my opinion
qui Faus Semblant voudra quenoistre,
who False Seeming will-wish to-know
si le quiere au siecle ou en cloistre.
so him let-him-seek in-the world or in cloister
Nul leu, fors en ces deus, ne mains,
Any place except in these two not I-dwell
mais en l'un plus, en l'autre meins;
but in the-one more in the-other less
briement je me vois osteler
briefly I myself go to-lodge
la ou je me cuit meauz celer;
there where I myself think best to-conceal

s'est la celee plus seüre
so-is the hiding more secure
souz la plus umble vesteüre.
under the most humble clothing
Religieus sont mout couvert,
Religious are very covert
seculer sont plus aouvert.
secular are more open
Si ne vueil je mie blasmer
So not wish I at-all to-blame
religion ne diffamer,
religion nor to-defame
en quelque abit que l'en la truisse;
in whatever habit that one her find
ja religion, que je puisse,
ever religion that I can
umble e leial ne blasmerai,
humble and loyal not I-will-blame
nepourquant ja ne l'amerai.
nevertheless ever not her-I-will-love
J'entens des faus religieus,
I-mean of-the false religious
des felons, des malicieus,
of-the wicked of-the malicious
qui l'abit en veulent vestir
who the-habit thereof wish to-wear
e ne veulent leur cuers mestir.
and not wish their hearts to-subdue
Religieus sont tuit piteus,
Religious are all piteous

ja n'en verreiz un despiteus;
ever not-thereof you-will-see one spiteful
il n'ont cure d'orgueil ensivre,
they not-have care of-pride to-follow
tuit se veulent umblement vivre.
all themselves wish humbly to-live
Avec teus genz ja ne maindrai,
With such folk ever not I-will-dwell
e se j'i mains, je m'i feindrai;
and if I-there dwell I myself-there will-feign
leur abit pourrai je bien prendre,
their habit will-be-able I well take
mais ainz me laisseraie pendre
but rather myself I-would-let hang
que ja de mon propos ississe,
than ever from my purpose I-went-out
quelque chiere que j'i feïsse.
whatever face that I-there made
Je mains avec les orguilleus,
I dwell with the proud
les veziez, les artilleus,
the wily the artful
qui mondaines eneurs couveitent
who worldly honors covet
e les granz besoignes espleitent,
and the great businesses carry-out

e vont traçant les granz pitances
and go tracking the great pittances
e pourchaçant les acointances
and pursuing the acquaintances
des poissanz omes e les sivent;
of-the powerful men and them follow
e se font povre, e il se vivent
and themselves make poor and they themselves live
des bons morseaus delicieus
on-the good morsels delicious
e beivent les vins precieus;
and drink the wines precious
e la povreté vous preeschent,
and the poverty to-you they-preach
e les granz richeces peeschent
and the great riches they-fish
aus saïmes e aus tramaus.
with-the seines and with-the trammels
Par mon chief, il en istra maus.
By my head it thereof will-go-out evil
Ne sont religieus ne monde;
Not they-are religious nor pure
il font un argument au monde
they make an argument to-the world
ou conclusion a honteuse:
where conclusion has shameful
cist a robe religieuse,
this-one has robe religious
donques est il religieus.
then is he religious

Cist argumenz est touz fieus,
This argument is all false
il ne vaut pas un coutel troine:
it not is-worth at-all a knife of-privet
la robe ne fait pas le moine.
the robe not makes at-all the monk
Nepourquant nus n'i set respondre,
Nevertheless any not-there knows to-answer
tant face haut sa teste tondre,
however-much let-him-make high his head shave
veire rere au rasoir d'elenches,
indeed shave with-the razor of-elenchi
qui barat trenche en treze branches;
which fraud cuts into thirteen branches
nus ne set si bien distinter
any not knows so well to-distinguish
qu'il en ose un seul mot tinter.
that-he thereof dare a single word to-tinkle
Mais en quelque leu que je viegne
But in whatever place that I come
ne coment que je m'i contiegne,
nor however that I myself-there conduct
nule rien fors barat n'i chaz;
any thing except fraud not-there I-hunt
ne plus que dans Tiberz li chaz
no more than sir Tibert the cat
n'entent qu'a souriz e a raz,
not-attends except-to mice and to rats
n'entens je a riens fors a baraz.
not-attend I to anything except to frauds

Ne ja certes par mon abit
Nor ever certainly by my habit
ne savreiz o queus genz j'abit;
not you-will-know with what folk I-dwell
non fereiz vous veir aus paroles,
no you-will-do you truly by-the words
ja tant n'ierent simples ne moles.
ever so not-they-will-be simple nor soft
Les euvres regarder devez,
The works regard you-ought
se vous n'avez les eauz crevez;
if you not-have the eyes put-out
car, s'il font el que il ne dient,
for if-they do other than they — say
certainement il vous conchient,
certainly they you befoul
quelconques robes que il aient,
whatever robes that they have
de quelconques estat qu'il seient,
of whatever estate that-they be
seit clers, seit lais, seit on, seit fame,
be-it cleric be-it lay be-it man be-it woman
sires, sergenz, baiasse ou dame.»
lord servant maidservant or lady
Quanqu'ainsinc Faus Semblanz sarmone,
While-thus False Seeming preaches
Amours de rechief l'araisone
Love of again him-addresses
e dit, en rompant sa parole,
and says in breaking his speech

ausinc con s'el fust fausse ou fole:
just as if-it were false or foolish
«Qu'est ce, diable, iés tu effrontez?
What-is this devil art thou shameless
Queus genz nous as tu ci contez?
What folk to-us hast thou here recounted
Peut l'en trouver religion
Can one find religion
en seculiere mansion?
in secular mansion
— Oïl, sire: il ne s'ensuit mie
Yes lord it not itself-follows at-all
que cil meinent mauvaise vie,
that those lead wicked life
ne que pour ce leur ames perdent,
nor that for this their souls they-lose
qui aus dras dou siecle s'aerdent,
who to-the cloths of-the world themselves-cling
car se serait trop granz douleurs.
for this would-be too great grief
Bien peut en robes de couleurs
Well can in robes of colors
sainte religion flourir.
holy religion flourish
Mainz sainz a l'en veü mourir
Many saints has one seen die
e maintes saintes glorieuses,
and many saints glorious
devotes e religieuses,
devout and religious

qui dras comuns toujourz vestirent,
who cloths common always wore
n'onques pour ce meins n'en saintirent.
nor-ever for this less not-thereof were-holy
E je vous en nomasse maintes;
And I to-you thereof would-name many
mais près que trestoutes les saintes
but nearly that all the saints
qui par iglises sont priees,
who through churches are prayed
vierges chastes, e mariees
virgins chaste and married
qui mainz beauz enfanz enfanterent,
who many fair children bore
les robes dou siecle porterent
the robes of-the world wore
e en ceus meïsmes moururent,
and in those same died
qui saintes sont, seront e furent.
who saints are will-be and were
Neïs les onze mile vierges,
Even the eleven thousand virgins
qui devant Deu tienent leur cierges,
who before God hold their candles
don l'en fait feste par iglises,
of-whom one makes feast through churches
furent es dras dou siecle prises
were in-the cloths of-the world taken
quant eus reçurent leur martires;
when they received their martyrdoms

n'encor n'en sont eus mie pires.
nor-yet not-thereof are they at-all worse
Bons cueurs fait la pensee bone,
Good heart makes the thought good
la robe n'i tost ne ne done;
the robe not-there takes nor not gives
e la bone pensee l'euvre,
and the good thought the-work
qui la religion descueuvre.
which the religion uncovers
Ileuc gist la religion
There lies the religion
selonc la dreite entencion.
according-to the right intention
Qui de la toison dam Belin,
Who with the fleece of-sir Belin
en leu de mantel sebelin,
in place of mantle sable
sire Isengrin afublerait,
sir Isengrim would-cloak
li lous, qui mouton semblerait,
the wolf who sheep would-seem
pour qu'o les berbiz demourast,
provided that-with the ewes he-remained
cuidiez vous qu'il nes devourast?
think you that-he not-them would-devour
Ja de leur sanc meins ne bevrait,
Ever of their blood less not he-would-drink
mais plus tost les en decevrait,
but more soon them thereby would-deceive

car, puis qu'eus ne le quenoistraient,
for since that-they not him would-know
s'il voulait fuire, eus le sivraient.
if-he wished to-flee they him would-follow

False Seeming: A Proteus of Habits

XXXI

The Church is in danger if the knights of its own table besiege it. False Seeming admits he is a traitor, thief, and perjurer, changing habits like Proteus: knight, monk, prelate, priest, Robert or Robin, Franciscan or Dominican. At Love's request he explains that he preaches abstinence and poverty but feasts, despises the poor, and visits only rich usurers on their sickbeds.

S'il a guieres de teus louveaus
If-there has much of such wolf-cubs
entre tes apostres nouveaus,
among thy apostles new
iglise, tu iés mal baillie;
church thou art ill handled
se ta citez est assaillie
if thy city is assailed
par les chevaliers de ta table,
by the knights of thy table
ta seignourie est mout endable.
thy lordship is very feeble
Se cil s'efforcent de la prendre
If those strive to it take
cui tu la bailles a defendre,
to-whom thou it givest to defend

qui la peut vers aus garantir?
who it can toward them protect
Prise sera senz cop sentir
Taken it-will-be without blow feeling
de mangonel ne de perriere,
of mangonel nor of catapult
senz despleier au vent baniere;
without unfurling to-the wind banner
e se d'aus ne la veauz rescourre,
and if from-them not it thou-wishest to-rescue
anceis les laisses par tout courre;
rather them thou-lettest through all run
laisses! mais se tu leur comandes,
thou-lettest but if thou to-them commandest
donc n'i a fors que tu te rendes,
then not-there has except that thou thyself yield
ou leur tributaire deviegnes
or their tributary become
par pais faisant e d'aus la tiegnes,
by peace making and from-them it hold
se meschief ne t'en vient graigneur
if mischance not to-thee-thereof comes greater
qu'il en seient dou tout seigneur.
than-they thereof be of-the all lord
Bien te sevent ore escharnir:
Well thee they-know now to-mock
par jour cueurent les murs garnir,
by day they-run the walls to-man
par nuit nes cessent de miner.
by night not-them cease of mining

Pense d'ailleurs enraciner
Think elsewhere to-root
les entes ou tu veauz fruit prendre;
the grafts where thou wishest fruit to-take
la ne te deiz tu pas atendre.
there not thyself oughtest thou at-all to-wait
Mais atant pais, ci m'en retour,
But thereupon peace here myself-thence I-turn-back
n'en vueil or plus dire a ce tour, 11160
not-thereof I-wish now more to-say at this turn
se je m'en puis atant passer,
if I myself-thence can thereupon pass
car trop vous pourraie lasser.
for too-much you I-could weary
Mais bien vous vueil couvenancier
But well you I-wish to-covenant
de touz voz amis avancier,
of all your friends to-advance
pour quei ma compaignie vueillent; 11165
provided that my company they-wish
si sont il mort s'il ne m'acueillent;
so are they dead if-they not me-welcome
e m'amie ausinc serviront,
and my-friend likewise they-will-serve
ou ja, par Deu! ne cheviront.
or ever by God not they-will-manage
Senz faille traïtres sui gié,
Without fail traitor am I
e pour larron m'a Deus juigié; 11170
and for thief me-has God judged

parjurs sui, mais ce que j'afin
perjured I-am but what that I-finish
set l'en enviz devant la fin,
knows one hardly before the end
car pluseur par mei mort reçurent
for several by me death received
qui onc mon barat n'aperçurent,
who ever my fraud not-perceived
e receivent e recevront
and receive and will-receive
qui jamais ne l'apercevront.
who ever not it-will-perceive
Qui l'apercevra, s'il est sages,
Who it-will-perceive if-he is wise
gart s'en, ou c'iert ses granz domages;
let-him-guard himself-thereof or this-will-be his great harm
mais tant est fort la decevance
but so-much is strong the deception
que trop est grief l'apercevance;
that exceedingly is grievous the-perceiving
car Protheüs, qui se soulait
for Proteus who himself was-wont
muer en tout quanqu'il voulait,
to-change into all whatever-he wished
ne sot onc tant barat ne guile
not knew ever so-much fraud nor guile
con je faz, car onques en vile
as I do for ever into town
n'entrai ou fusse queneüz,
not-I-did-enter where I-were known

tant i fusse oïz ne veüz.
however-much there I-were heard or seen
Trop sai bien mes abiz changier,
Exceedingly I-know well my habits to-change
prendre l'un e l'autre estrangier:
to-take the-one and the-other to-cast-off
or sui chevaliers, or sui moines,
now I-am knight now I-am monk
or sui prelaz, or sui chanoines,
now I-am prelate now I-am canon
or sui clers, autre eure sui prestres,
now I-am cleric other hour I-am priest
or sui deciples, or sui maistres,
now I-am disciple now I-am master
or chastelains, or forestiers;
now castellan now forester
briement je sui de touz mestiers.
briefly I am of all trades
Or resui princes, or sui pages,
Now in-turn-am-I prince now I-am page
e sai par cueur trestouz langages,
and I-know by heart all languages
autre eure sui veauz e chenuz,
other hour I-am old and white-haired
or resui jennes devenuz;
now in-turn-am-I young become
or sui Roberz, or sui Robins,
now I-am Robert now I-am Robin
or cordeliers, or jacobins,
now franciscan now dominican

si preing pour sivre ma compaigne,
so I-take for to-follow my companion
qui me soulace e m'acompaigne,
who me solaces and me-accompanies
c'est dame Astenance Contrainte,
this-is lady Abstinence Constrained
autre desguiseüre mainte,
other disguise many-a
si come il li vient a plaisir,
so as it to-her comes to pleasure
pour acomplir li son desir.
for to-accomplish to-her her desire
Autre eure vest robe de fame:
Other hour I-wear robe of woman
or sui dameisele, or sui dame,
now I-am damsel now I-am lady
autre eure sui religieuse,
other hour I-am religious
or sui rendue, or sui prieuse,
now I-am lay-sister now I-am prioress
or sui none, or sui abaesse,
now I-am nun now I-am abbess
or sui novice, or sui professe,
now I-am novice now I-am professed
e vois par toutes regions
and I-go through all regions
cerchant toutes religions;
searching all religions
mais de religion, senz faille,
but of religion without fail

j'en lais le grain e preing la paille;
I-thereof leave the grain and take the chaff
pour genz embacler i abit,
for folk to-dupe there I-dwell
je n'en quier, senz plus, que l'abit.
I not-thereof I-seek without more than the-habit
Que vous diraie? En tele guise
What to-you would-I-say In such guise
come il me plaist je me desguise.
as it me pleases I myself disguise
Mout est en mei muez li vers,
Much is in me changed the verse
mout sont li fait aus diz divers.»
very are the deeds from-the sayings diverse
Ci se vost taire Faus Semblant,
Here himself wished to-be-silent False Seeming
mais Amours ne fait pas semblant
but Love not makes at-all semblance
qu'il seit enuiez de l'oïr,
that-he be wearied of him-to-hear
ainz li dit pour aus resjoïr:
rather to-him says for them to-cheer
«Di nous plus especiaument
Tell us more especially
coment tu serz desleiaument,
how thou servest disloyally
ne n'aies pas dou dire honte,
nor not-have at-all of-the telling shame
car, si con tes abiz nous conte,
for so as thy habit to-us tells

tu sembles estre uns sainz ermites.
thou seemest to-be a holy hermit
— C'est veirs, mais je sui ypocrites.
This-is true but I am hypocrite
— Tu vas preeschant astenance.
Thou goest preaching abstinence
— Veire veir, mais j'emple ma pance
Truly truly but I-fill my paunch
de trés bons morseaus e de vins
with very good morsels and with wines
teus come il afiert a devins.
such as it befits to divines
— Tu vas preeschant povreté.
Thou goest preaching poverty
— Veire, riches a poeté.
Truly rich in plenty
Mais, combien que povres me feigne,
But however-much that poor myself I-feign
nul povre je ne contredeigne.
any poor-man I not deign-to-regard
J'ameraie meauz l'acointance
I-would-love better the-acquaintance
cent mile tanz dou rei de France
a-hundred thousand times of-the king of France
que d'un povre, par nostre dame!
than of-a poor-man by our lady
Tout eüst il ausinc bone ame.
Even-if had he just-as good soul

Quant je vei touz nuz ces truanz
When I see all naked these beggars
trembler sus ces fumiers puanz
tremble on these dunghills stinking
de freit, de fain crier e braire,
with cold with hunger cry and bray
ne m'entremet de leur afaire.
not myself-I-meddle in their affair
S'il sont a l'Ostel Deu porté,
If-they are to the-House of-God carried
ja n'ierent par mei conforté,
ever not-will-they-be by me comforted
car d'une aumosne toute seule
for with-an alms all single
ne me paistraient il la gueule,
not me would-feed they the throat
qu'il n'ont pas vaillant une seche:
for-they not-have at-all worth a cuttlefish
que donra qui son coutel leche?
what will-give who his knife licks
Mais dou riche usurier malade
But of-the rich usurer sick
la visitance est bone e sade;
the visit is good and savory
celui vois je reconforter,
him go I to-comfort
car j'en cuit deniers aporter;
for I-thereof think pence to-bring
e se la male mort l'enosse,
and if the evil death him-chokes

bien le convei jusqu'a la fosse.
well him I-escort up-to the grave
E s'aucuns vient qui me repreigne
And if-anyone comes who me reproves
pour quei dou povre me restreigne,
for why from-the poor-man myself I-restrain
savez vous coment j'en eschape?
know you how I-thereof escape
Je faz entendant par ma chape
I make understand by my cope
que li riches est entechiez
that the rich-man is stained
plus que li povres de pechiez,
more than the poor-man with sins
s'a greigneur mestier de conseil,
so-he-has greater need of counsel
pour c'i vois, pour ce le conseil.
for this-there I-go for this him I-counsel

False Seeming: Beggars and Laborers

XXXII

Great wealth and great beggary both harm the soul, and Solomon prayed to be spared both. Christ and his apostles never begged, and after his death they worked with their hands; an able man must earn his bread by labor, however religious he is. Justinian forbade the able-bodied to beg, and Saint Paul worked and refused gifts.

Nepourquant autresinc grant perte
Nevertheless likewise great loss
receit l'ame en trop grant poverte
receives the-soul in too great poverty
come el fait en trop grant richece;
as she does in too great wealth
l'une e l'autre egaument la blece,
the-one and the-other equally her wounds
car ce sont deus estremitez
for these are two extremities
que richece e mendicitez;
that-is wealth and beggary
li meiens a non soufisance:
the mean has name sufficiency
la gist des vertuz l'abondance;
there lies of-the virtues the-abundance
car Salemons tout a delivre
for Solomon all at liberty
nous a escrit en un sien livre
to-us has written in a his book
de Paraboles, c'est le titre,
of Proverbs this-is the title

tout droit ou trentieme chapitre:
all straight in-the thirtieth chapter
garde mei, Deus, par ta poissance,
guard me God by thy power
de richece e de mendiance;
from wealth and from beggary
car riches on, quant il s'adrece
for rich man when he himself-directs
a trop penser a sa richece,
to too-much thinking of his wealth
tant met son cueur en la folie
so-much puts his heart in the folly
que son createur en oublie.
that his creator thereby he-forgets
Cil que mendicitez guerreie,
He whom beggary wars-upon
de pechié coment le guerraie?
from sin how him would-I-protect
Enviz avient qu'il ne seit lierres
Hardly happens-it that-he not be thief
e parjurs, ou Deus est mentierres,
and perjurer or God is liar
se Salemons dist de par lui
if Solomon said on behalf-of him
la lettre que ci vous parlui.
the letter that here to-you I-spoke
Si puis bien jurer senz delai
So I-can well swear without delay
qu'il n'est escrit en nule lei,
that-it not-is written in any law

au meins n'est il pas en la nostre, 11295
at-the least not-is it at-all in the ours
que Jesus Criz ne si apostre,
that Jesus Christ nor his apostles
tant come il alerent par terre,
as-long as they went over earth
fussent onques veü pain querre,
were ever seen bread to-seek
car mendier pas ne voulaient.
for to-beg at-all not they-wished
Ainsinc preeschier le soulaient 11300
Thus to-preach it were-wont
jadis par Paris la cité
formerly through Paris the city
li maistre de divinité.
the masters of divinity
Si poïssent il demander
So could they ask
de plein poeir senz truander,
with full power without begging
car de par Deu pasteur estaient 11305
for on behalf-of God shepherds they-were
e des ames la cure avaient.
and of-the souls the cure they-had
Neïs, emprès la mort leur maistre,
Even after the death of-their master
recomencierent il a estre
began-again they to be
tantost laboureeur de mains.
at-once laborers with hands

De leur labeur, ne plus ne mains,
From their labor neither more nor less
retenaient leur soutenance
they-retained their sustenance
e vivaient en pacience;
and lived in patience
e se remenant en avaient,
and if surplus thereof they-had
aus autres povres le donaient;
to-the other poor it they-gave
n'en fondaient palais ne sales,
not-thereof they-founded palaces nor halls
ainz gisaient en maisons sales.
rather they-lay in houses dirty
Poissanz on deit, bien le recors,
Powerful man ought well it I-recall
aus propres mains, au propre cors,
with-the own hands with-the own body
en labourant querre son vivre,
in laboring to-seek his living
s'il n'a don il se puisse vivre,
if-he not-has whereby he himself can live
combien qu'il seit religieus,
however-much that-he be religious
ne de servir Deu curieus;
or of serving God careful
ainsinc faire le li couvient,
thus to-do it to-him behooves
fors es cas don il me souvient,
except in-the cases of-which it to-me remembers

que bien raconter vous savrai
which well to-recount to-you I-will-know
quant tens dou raconter avrai.
when time for-the recounting I-will-have
E encor devrait il tout vendre
And still ought he all sell
e dou labeur sa vie prendre,
and from-the labor his life take
s'il iert bien parfaiz en bonté,
if-he were well perfect in goodness
ce m'a l'escriture conté;
this me-has the-scripture told
car qui oiseus hante autrui table
for who idle frequents others' table
lobierres est e sert de fable.
flatterer he-is and serves as fable
N'il n'est pas, ce sachiez, raisons
Nor-it not-is at-all this know reason
d'escuser sei par oraisons;
of-excusing oneself by prayers
qu'il escouvient en toute guise
for-it behooves in every guise
entrelaissier le Deu servise
to-leave-off the God's service
pour ses autres necessitez:
for his other necessities
mangier esteut, c'est veritez,
to-eat one-must this-is truth
e dormir e faire autre chose;
and to-sleep and to-do other thing

nostre oraison lors se repose;
our prayer then itself rests
ausinc se couvient il retraire
likewise oneself behooves it to-withdraw
d'oraison pour son labeur faire,
from-prayer for one's labor to-do
car l'escriture s'i acorde
for the-scripture itself-there accords
qui la verité nous recorde.
which the truth to-us recalls
E si defent Justiniens,
And so forbids Justinian
qui fist noz livres anciens,
who made our books ancient
que nus on, en nule maniere,
that any man in any manner
poissanz de cors, son pain ne quiere,
powerful of body his bread not seek
pour qu'il le truisse ou gaaignier;
provided that-he it find where to-earn
l'en le devrait meauz mahaignier,
one him ought rather maim
ou faire en aperte joustice
or do on-him open justice
que soutenir en tel malice.
than to-sustain in such malice
Ne font pas ce que faire deivent
Not do at-all what that do they-ought
cil qui teus aumosnes receivent,
those who such alms receive

s'il n'en ont espeir priviliege
if-they not-thereof have perhaps privilege
qui de la peine les aliege;
which from the penalty them relieves
mais ne cuit pas qu'il seit eüz,
but not I-think at-all that-it be had
se li princes n'est deceüz;
if the prince not-is deceived
ne si ne recuit pas saveir
nor so not in-turn-think-I at-all to-know
qu'il le puissent par dreit aveir.
that-they it can by right have
Si ne faz je pas terminance
So not make I at-all determination
dou prince ne de sa poissance,
of-the prince nor of his power
ne par mon dit ne vueil comprendre
nor by my saying not wish-I to-include
s'el se peut en tel cas estendre;
if-it itself can in such case extend
de ce ne me dei entremetre.
in this not myself I-ought meddle
Mais je crei que, selonc la letre,
But I believe that according-to the letter
les aumosnes qui sont deües
the alms which are owed
aus lasses genz povres e nues,
to-the weary folk poor and naked
feibles e veauz e mahaigniez,
feeble and old and maimed

par cui pains n'iert mais gaaigniez
by whom bread not-will-be more earned
pour ce qu'il n'en ont la poissance,
for this that-they not-thereof have the power
qui les manjue en leur grevance,
who them eats to their grievance
il manjue son dannement,
he eats his damnation
se cil qui fist Adan ne ment.
if he who made Adam not lies
E sachiez la ou Deus comande
And know there where God commands
que li preudon quanqu'il a vende
that the worthy-man whatever-he has sell
e doint aus povres e le sive,
and give to-the poor and him follow
pour ce ne veaut il pas qu'il vive
for this not wishes he at-all that-he live
de lui servir, en mendiance;
of him serving in beggary
ce ne fu onques sa sentence;
this not was ever his sentence
ainz entent que de ses mains euvre
rather he-means that with his hands he-work
e qu'il le sive par bone euvre;
and that-he him follow by good work

car sainz Pos comandait ouvrer
for saint Paul commanded to-work
aus apostres pour recouvrer
to-the apostles for to-recover
leur necessitez e leur vies,
their necessities and their lives
e leur defendait truandies,
and to-them forbade beggings
e disait: «De voz mains ouvrez,
and said With your hands work
ja seur autrui ne recouvrez.»
ever upon others not recover
Ne voulait que riens demandassent,
Not he-wished that anything they-asked
a queus que genz qu'il preeschassent,
of whatever that folk that-they preached
ne que l'evangile vendissent;
nor that the-gospel they-sold
ainz doutait que, s'il requeïssent,
rather he-feared that if-they asked
qu'il ne tousissent en requerre;
that-they not took in asking
qu'il sont maint doneeur en terre
for-there are many givers on earth
qui pour ce donent, au veir dire,
who for this give at-the truth telling
qu'il ont honte de l'escondire;
that-they have shame of him-to-refuse
ou li requeranz leur enuie,
or the asker to-them annoys

si donent pour ce qu'il s'en fuie.
so they-give for this that-he himself-thence flee
E savez que ce leur profite?
And know-you what this to-them profits
Le don perdent e la merite.
The gift they-lose and the merit
Quant les bones genz qui oaient
When the good folk who heard
le sarmon saint Pol li priaient
the sermon of-saint Paul him begged
pour Deu qu'il vousist dou leur prendre,
for God that-he wished of-the theirs to-take
n'i vousist il ja la main tendre;
not-there would-wish he ever the hand to-stretch
mais dou labeur des mains prenait
but from-the labor of-the hands he-took
ce don sa vie soutenait.
that by-which his life he-sustained

False Seeming: When a Man May Beg

XXXIII

A strong man who has sold all may live by prayer alone only in an endowed abbey. Otherwise he may beg if he has no trade, is sick, old, or a child, was raised too delicately, finds no work, earns too little, or defends the faith. So William of Saint-Amour taught, whom Hypocrisy, False Seeming's mother, had exiled. False Seeming would rather pray before people than labor, and he tells Love he does not fear God.

— Di mei donques coment peut vivre
Tell me then how can live
forz on de cors qui Deu veaut sivre,
strong man of body who God wishes to-follow
puis qu'il a tout le sien vendu
after that-he has all the his sold
e aus povres Deu despendu,
and to-the poor of-God spent
e veaut tant seulement ourer,
and wishes so only to-pray
senz jamais de mains labourer.
without ever with hands laboring
Le peut il faire? — Oïl. — Coment?
It can he do Yes How
— S'il entrait, selonc le comant
If-he entered according-to the command
de l'escriture, en abaïe
of the-scripture into abbey
qui fust de propre bien garnie,
which were with own goods provided

si con sont ore cil blanc moine,
so as are now those white monks
cil neir e cil reglier chanoine,
those black and those regular canons
cil de l'Ospital, cil dou Temple,
those of the-Hospital those of-the Temple
car j'en repuis bien faire essemple,
for I-thereof in-turn-can well make example
e i preïst sa soutenance,
and there took his sustenance
car la n'a point de mendiance.
for there not-has at-all of beggary
Nepourquant maint moine labeurent
Nevertheless many monks labor
e puis au Deu servise cueurent.
and then to-the God's service run
E pour ce qu'il fu grant descorde
And for this that-it was great discord
en un tens don je me recorde
in a time of-which I myself remember
seur l'estat de mendicité,
over the-state of mendicancy
briement vous iert ci recité
briefly to-you will-be here recounted
coment peut on mendianz estre
how can one mendicant be
qui n'a don il se puisse paistre.
who not-has whereby he himself can feed

Les cas en orreiz tire a tire
The cases thereof you-will-hear rank by rank
si qu'il n'i avra que redire,
so that-it not-there will-have what to-say-again
maugré les felonesses jangles,
in-spite-of the wicked chatterings
car veritez n'a cure d'angles,
for truth not-has care of-corners
si pourrai je bien comparer
so will-be-able I well pay-dearly
quant onc osai tel champ arer.
when ever I-dared such field to-plow
Vez ci les cas especiaus:
See here the cases special
se li on est si bestiaus
if the man is so beastly
qu'il n'ait de nul mestier science,
that-he not-have of any trade knowledge
ne n'en desierre l'ignorance,
nor not-thereof desire the-ignorance
a mendiance se peut traire
to beggary himself can draw
jusqu'il sache aucun mestier faire
until-he know some trade to-do
don il puisse senz truandie
by-which he can without begging
leiaument gaaignier sa vie;
loyally earn his life

ou s'il labourer ne peüst,
or if-he labor not could
pour maladie qu'il eüst,
for sickness that-he had
ou pour vieillece, ou pour enfance,
or for old-age or for childhood
tourner se peut a mendiance;
turn himself can to beggary
ou s'il a trop par aventure
or if-he has too by chance
d'acoustumee nourreture
by-accustomed upbringing
vescu delicieusement,
lived delicately
les bones genz comunement
the good folk commonly
en deivent lors aveir pitié
thereof ought then have pity
e soufrir le par amitié
and allow him by friendship
mendier e son pain querir,
to-beg and his bread to-seek
non pas laissier de fain perir;
not at-all let from hunger perish
ou s'il a d'ouvrer la science
or if-he has of-working the knowledge
e le vouleir e la poissance,
and the will and the power
prez de labourer bonement,
ready to labor well

mais ne treuve pas prestement
but not finds at-all readily
qui labourer faire li vueille
who labor to-do to-him wish
pour riens que faire puisse ou sueille,
for anything that do he-can or is-wont
bien peut lors en mendicité
well he-can then in mendicancy
pourchacier sa necessité;
pursue his necessity
ou s'il a son labeur gaaigne,
or if-he has his labor gained
mais il ne peut de sa gaaigne
but he not can from his gain
soufisaument vivre seur terre,
sufficiently live on earth
bien se peut lors metre a pain querre,
well himself he-can then put to bread seeking
e d'uis en uis par tout tracier
and from-door to door through all to-roam
pour le remenant pourchacier;
for the remainder to-pursue
ou, s'il veaut, pour la fei defendre,
or if-he wishes for the faith to-defend
quelque chevalerie emprendre,
some knighthood to-undertake
seit d'armes, ou de letreüre,
be-it of-arms or of learning
ou d'autre couvenable cure,
or of-other fitting care

se povreté le va grevant,
if poverty him goes grieving
bien peut, si con j'ai dit devant,
well he-can so as I-have said before
mendier tant qu'il puisse ouvrer
beg until that-he can work
pour ses estouveirs recouvrer.
for his necessities to-recover
Mais qu'il euvre des mains iteus:
But that-he work with-the hands such
non pas des mains esperiteus,
not at-all with-the hands spiritual
mais des mains dou cors proprement,
but with-the hands of-the body properly
senz metre i double entendement.
without putting there double understanding
En touz ces cas e en semblables,
In all these cases and in similar
se plus en trouvez raisonables
if more thereof you-find reasonable
seur ceus que ci presenz vous livre,
beyond those that here present to-you I-deliver
qui de mendicité veaut vivre
who by mendicancy wishes to-live
faire le peut, non autrement,
do it he-can not otherwise
se cil de Saint Amour ne ment,
if he of Saint Amour not lies

qui desputer soulait e lire
who to-dispute was-wont and to-lecture
e preeschier cete matire
and to-preach this matter
a Paris avec les devins.
at Paris with the divines
Ja ne m'aïst ne pains ne vins
Ever not me-help neither bread nor wine
s'il n'avait en sa verité
if-he not-had in his truth
l'acort de l'Université
the-accord of the-University
e dou peuple comunement
and of-the people commonly
qui oait son preeschement.
who heard his preaching
Nus preudon de ce refuser
Any worthy-man of this refusing
vers Deu ne se peut escuser;
toward God not himself can excuse
qui groucier en voudra si grouce,
who to-grumble thereat will-wish so let-him-grumble
ou courroucier, si s'en courrouce,
or to-be-angry so himself-thereat let-him-anger
car je ne m'en tairaie mie
for I not myself-thereof would-keep-silent at-all
se j'en devaie perdre vie,
if I-thereby ought lose life
ou estre mis contre dreiture,
or be put against justice

come Sainz Pos, en chartre ocure,
as Saint Paul in prison dark
ou estre baniz dou reiaume
or be banished from-the kingdom
a tort, con fu maistre Guillaume
at wrong as was master William
de Saint Amour, qu'Ypocrisie
of Saint Amour whom-Hypocrisy
fist esseillier par grant envie.
made exile by great envy
Ma mere en essill le chaça,
My mother into exile him chased
le vaillant ome, tant braça,
the valiant man so-much she-plotted
pour verité qu'il soutenait.
for truth that-he upheld
Vers ma mere trop mesprenait,
Toward my mother exceedingly he-misdid
pour ce qu'il fist un nouvel livre
for this that-he made a new book
ou sa vie fist toute escrivre,
where her life he-made all to-write
e voulait que je reneiasse
and wished that I renounced
mendicité e labourasse,
mendicancy and labored
se je n'avaie de quei vivre.
if I not-had of what to-live

Bien me voulait tenir pour ivre.
Well me he-wished to-hold for drunk
Car labourer ne me peut plaire;
For laboring not me can please
de labourer n'ai je que faire:
of laboring not-have I what to-do
trop a grant peine en labourer.
exceedingly there-is great pain in laboring
J'aim meauz devant les genz ourer
I-love better before the folk to-pray
e afubler ma renardie
and to-cloak my foxery
dou mantel de papelardie.
with-the mantle of hypocrisy
— Qu'est ce? diable! quel sont ti dit?
What-is this devil what are thy sayings
Qu'est ce que tu as ici dit?
What-is this that thou hast here said
— Quei? — Granz desleiautez apertes.
What Great disloyalties open
Don ne crains tu pas Deu? — Non, certes,
Then not fearest thou at-all God No certainly
qu'enviz peut a grant chose ataindre
for-hardly can to great thing attain
en cet siecle qui Deu veaut craindre,
in this world who God wishes to-fear

car li bon qui le mal eschivent,
for the good who the evil shun
e leiaument dou leur se vivent,
and loyally from-the theirs themselves live
e qui selonc Deu se maintienent,
and who according-to God themselves maintain
enviz de pain a autre vienent.
hardly from bread to other come
Teus genz beivent trop de mesaise:
Such folk drink too-much of distress
n'est vie qui tant me desplaise.
not-is life which so-much me displease

False Seeming: The Seat of Moses

XXXIV

Usurers, bailiffs, and provosts prey on the poor, and False Seeming robs the robbers. He will confess emperors and countesses but not the poor, and he gathers the secrets of households. Like the scribes and Pharisees on the seat of Moses, his kind preach what they do not do; they band together to hate a rival and defame him in secret.

Mais esgardez que de deniers
But look what of pence
ont usurier en leur greniers,
have usurers in their granaries
faussonier e termeieeur;
forgers and term-lenders
baillif, bedel, prevost, maieur,
bailiffs beadles provosts mayors

tuit vivent près que de rapine;
all live nearly that by plunder
li menuz peuples les encline,
the little people them bows-to
e cil come lou les deveurent.
and they like wolves them devour
Trestuit seur les povres genz cueurent,
All on the poor folk run
n'est nus qui despoillier nes vueille,
not-is anyone who to-strip not-them wish
tuit s'afublent de leur despueille,
all themselves-cloak with their spoil
trestuit de leur sustance hument,
all of their substance suck
senz eschauder touz vis les plument.
without scalding all alive them they-pluck
Li plus forz le plus feible robe.
The most strong the most feeble robs
Mais je, qui vest ma simple robe,
But I who wear my simple robe
lobant lobez e lobeeurs,
fooling fooled and foolers
robe robez e robeeurs.
rob robbed and robbers
Par ma lobe entas e amasse
By my fooling I-heap and amass
grant tresor en tas e en masse,
great treasure in heap and in mass
qui ne peut pour riens afonder;
which not can for anything sink

car, se j'en faz palais fonder,
for if I-thereof make palace found
e acomplis touz mes deliz
and accomplish all my delights
de compaignies ou de liz,
of companies or of beds
de tables pleines d'entremès,
of tables full of-side-dishes
car ne vueil autre vie mais,
for not I-wish other life more
recreist mes argenz e mes ors;
grows-again my silvers and my golds
car ainz que seit vuiz mes tresors
for before that be empty my treasure
denier me vienent a resours.
pence to-me come in rebound
Ne faz je bien tomber mes ours?
Not make I well tumble my bears
En aquerre est toute m'entente,
In acquiring is all my-attention
meauz vaut mes pourchaz que ma rente.
better is-worth my gain than my rent
S'en me devait tuer ou batre,
If-one me ought kill or beat
si me vueil je par tout embatre;
so myself wish I through all to-thrust
si ne querraie ja cessier
so not would-seek-I ever to-cease
ou d'empereeurs confessier,
either of-emperors to-confess

ou reis, ou dus, ou bers, ou contes.
or kings or dukes or barons or counts
Mais de povres genz est ce hontes:
But of poor folk is this shame
je n'aim pas tel confession;
I not-love at-all such confession
se n'est pour autre occasion,
if not-it-is for other occasion
je n'ai cure de povres genz:
I not-have care of poor folk
leur estaz n'est ne beaus ne genz.
their estate not-is neither fair nor noble
Ces empereriz, ces duchesses,
These empresses these duchesses
ces reïnes e ces contesses,
these queens and these countesses
ces hautes dames palatines,
these high ladies palatine
ces abaesses, ces beguines,
these abbesses these beguines
ces baillives, ces chevalieres,
these bailiffs'-wives these knights'-wives
ces bourgeises cointes e fieres,
these burgher-women elegant and proud
ces nonains e ces dameiseles,
these nuns and these damsels
pour qu'eus seient riches ou beles,
provided that-they be rich or fair

seient nues ou bien parees,
be-they naked or well adorned
ja ne s'en iront esgarees.
ever not themselves-thence they-will-go bewildered
E pour le sauvement des ames,
And for the salvation of-the souls
j'enquier des seigneurs e des dames,
I-inquire of-the lords and of-the ladies
e de trestoutes leur maisnies
and of all their households
les proprietez e les vies,
the properties and the lives
e leur faz creire e met es testes
and to-them make believe and put in-the heads
que leur prestre curé sont bestes
that their priests curates are beasts
envers mei e mes compaignons,
toward me and my companions
don j'ai mout de mauvais gaignons,
of-whom I-have much of wicked mastiffs
a cui je sueil, senz riens celer,
to whom I am-wont without anything concealing
les secrez aus genz reveler;
the secrets of-the folk to-reveal
e il ausinc tout me revelent,
and they likewise all to-me reveal
que riens dou monde ne me celent.
that anything of-the world not from-me they-conceal

E pour les felons aperceivre,
And for the wicked to-perceive
qui ne cessent des genz deceivre,
who not cease from-the folk deceiving
paroles vous dirai ja ci
words to-you I-will-tell now here
que nous lisons de saint Maci,
which we read of saint Matthew
c'est a saveir l'evangelistre,
that-is to know the-evangelist
ou vint e treisieme chapitre:
in-the twenty and third chapter
seur la chaiere Moïsi,
on the chair of-Moses
car la glose l'espont issi,
for the gloss it-expounds thus
c'est le Testament Ancien,
that-is the Testament Old
sistrent scribe e pharisien,
sat scribes and pharisees
ce sont les fausses genz maudites,
these are the false folk accursed
que la letre apele ypocrites.
whom the letter calls hypocrites
Faites ce qu'il sarmoneront,
Do this that-they will-preach
ne faites pas ce qu'il feront:
not do at-all this that-they will-do
dou bien dire n'ierent ja lent,
of-the well saying not-they-will-be ever slow

mais il n'ont dou faire talent.
but they not-have of-the doing desire
Il lient aus genz decevables
They bind on-the folk deceivable
griés fais qui ne sont pas portables,
heavy burdens which not are at-all bearable
e seur les espaules leur posent,
and on the shoulders to-them put
mais a leur dei mouveir nes osent.
but with their finger move not-them dare
— Pour quei non? — Par fei, qu'il ne veulent,
For why not By faith for-they not wish
car les espaules souvent seulent
for the shoulders often are-wont
aus porteeurs des fais douleir,
of-the bearers of-the burdens to-ache
pour ce fuient cil tel vouleir.
for this flee they such wish
S'il font euvres qui bones seient,
If-they do works which good be
c'est pour ce que les genz les veient.
this-is for this that the folk them see
Leur philateres eslargissent,
Their phylacteries they-broaden
e leur fimbries agrandissent,
and their fringes enlarge
e des sieges aiment aus tables
and of-the seats they-love at-the tables
les plus hauz, les plus enourables,
the most high the most honorable

e les prumiers des sinagogues,
and the first of-the synagogues
con fiers e orguilleus e rogues;
as proud and haughty and arrogant
e aiment que l'en les salue
and love that one them greet
quant il trespassent par la rue;
when they pass through the street
e veulent estre apelé maistre,
and wish to-be called master
ce qu'il ne devraient pas estre,
that which-they not ought at-all be
car l'evangile vait encontre,
for the-gospel goes against
qui leur desleiauté demontre.
which their disloyalty shows
Une autre coustume ravons
An other custom in-turn-we-have
seur ceus que contre nous savons:
toward those whom against us we-know
trop les voulons forment haïr
too-much them we-wish greatly to-hate
e tuit par acort envaïr.
and all by accord to-attack
Ce que l'uns het, li autre heent,
What that the-one hates the others hate
trestuit a confondre le beent;
all at confounding him aim

se nous veons qu'il puist conquerre
if we see that-he can conquer
par queusque genz eneur en terre,
by whatever folk honor on earth
provendes ou possessions,
prebends or possessions
a saveir nous estudions
to know we study
par quel eschiele il peut monter,
by what ladder he can mount
e, pour lui meauz prendre e donter,
and for him better to-take and to-tame
par traïson le diffamons
by treason him we-defame
vers ceus, puis que nous ne l'amons.
toward those since that we not him-love
De s'eschiele les eschillons
From his-ladder them we-un-rung
ainsinc copons, e le pillons
thus we-chop and him we-pillage
de ses amis, qu'il ne savra
of his friends that-he not will-know
ja mot que perduz les avra;
ever word that lost them he-will-have
car, s'en apert le grevions,
for if-in open him we-grieved
espeir blasmé en serions,
perhaps blamed thereby we-would-be
e si faudrions a nostre esme;
and so we-would-fail in our aim

car, se nostre entencion pesme
for if our intention most-wicked
savait cil, il s'en defendrait,
knew he he himself-thence would-defend
si que l'en nous en reprendrait.
so that one us thereof would-reprove

False Seeming: The Servants of Antichrist

XXXV

When one of them does a good deed, they all claim a share of it; they obtain letters praising them, meddle in brokerage and marriages, and never accept correction. They have left the hermitages for palaces and are the servants of Antichrist, lambs outside and wolves within. They accuse heretics, usurers, and lechers, and spare only those who bribe them with fish, pastries, and capons.

Grant bien se l'uns de nous a fait,
Great good if the-one of us has done
par nous touz le tenons a fait;
by us all it we-hold as done
veire, par Deu, s'il le feignait,
indeed by God if-he it feigned
ou, senz plus, vanter s'en deignait
or without more to-boast himself-thereof deigned
d'aveir avancié queusques omes,
of-having advanced whatever men
tuit dou fait parçonier nous somes,
all of-the deed partners we are
e disons, bien saveir devez,
and we-say well know you-ought

que teus est par nous eslevez.
that such-one is by us raised
E pour aveir des genz loenges,
And for to-have from-the folk praises
des riches omes, par losenges,
from-the rich men by flatteries
empetrons que letres nous doignent
we-obtain that letters to-us they-give
qui la bonté de nous tesmoignent,
which the goodness of us witness
si que l'en creie par le monde
so that one believe through the world
que vertu toute en nous abonde.
that virtue all in us abounds
E toujourz povres nous feignons,
And always poor ourselves we-feign
mais, coment que nous nous plaignons,
but however that we ourselves complain
nous somes, ce vous faz saveir,
we are this to-you I-make to-know
cil qui tout ont senz riens aveir.
those who all have without anything having
Si m'entremet de courretages,
So myself-I-meddle in brokerages
je faz pais, je joing mariages,
I make peace I join marriages
seur mei preing execucions
upon myself I-take executions
e vois en procuracions;
and I-go on procurations

messagiers sui e faz enquestes,
messenger I-am and I-make inquests
si ne me sont eus pas onestes;
so not to-me are they at-all honest
les autrui besoignes traitier
the others' businesses to-handle
ce m'est un trop plaisant mestier.
this to-me-is an exceedingly pleasing trade
E se vous avez riens a faire
And if you have anything to do
vers ceus entour cui je repaire,
toward those around whom I haunt
dites le mei, c'est chose faite
tell it to-me this-is thing done
si tost con la m'avreiz retraite;
as soon as it to-me-you-will-have related
pour quei vous m'aiez bien servi,
provided that you me-have well served
mon servise avez deservi.
my service you-have deserved
Mais qui chastier me voudrait
But who to-correct me would-wish
tantost ma grace se toudrait:
at-once my grace himself would-take-away
je n'aim pas ome ne ne pris
I not-love at-all man nor not prize
par cui je sui de riens repris.
by whom I am in anything reproved
Les autres vueil je touz reprendre,
The others wish I all to-reprove

mais ne vueil leur reprise entendre,
but not I-wish their reproof to-hear
car je, qui les autres chasti,
for I who the others correct
n'ai mestier d'estrange chasti.
not-have need of-strange correction
Si n'ai mais cure d'ermitages;
So not-I-have more care of-hermitages
j'ai laissié deserz e boschages,
I-have left deserts and woods
e quit a saint Johan Baptiste
and I-quitclaim to saint John Baptist
dou desert e maneir e giste.
of-the desert both dwelling and lodging
Trop par estaie loinz gitez;
Exceedingly much I-was far thrown
es bours, es chasteaus, es citez
in-the boroughs in-the castles in-the cities
faz mes sales e mes palais,
I-make my halls and my palaces
ou l'en peut courre a plein alais;
where one can run at full gallop
e di que je sui hors dou monde,
and I-say that I am out of-the world
mais je m'i plonge e m'i afonde,
but I myself-there plunge and myself-there sink
e m'i aaise e baigne e noe
and myself-there ease and bathe and swim
meauz que nus poissons de sa noe.
better than any fish in its pool

Je sui des vallez Antecrit,
I am of-the servants of-Antichrist
des larrons don il est escrit
of-the thieves of-whom it is written
qu'il ont abit de sainteé
that-they have habit of holiness
e vivent en tel feinteé;
and live in such feigning
dehors semblons aigneaus pitables,
outside we-seem lambs pitiable
dedenz somes lous ravissables.
within we-are wolves ravening
Si avironons mer e terre;
So we-encircle sea and land
a tout le monde avons pris guerre,
with all the world we-have taken war
e voulons dou tout ordener
and wish in-the whole to-ordain
quel vie l'en i deit mener.
what life one there ought lead
S'il i a chastel ne cité
If-it there has castle or city
ou bougre seient recité,
where heretics be reported
neïs s'il ierent de Melan,
even if-they were from Milan
car ausinc les en blasme l'en,
for likewise them thereof blames one

ou se nus on outre mesure
or if any man beyond measure
vent a terme ou preste a usure,
sells on term or lends at usury
tant est d'aquerre curieus,
so-much he-is of-acquiring eager
ou s'il est trop luxurieus,
or if-he is too lecherous
ou lierres ou symoniaus,
or thief or simoniac
seit prevoz, seit oficiaus,
be-he provost be-he official
ou prelaz de jolie vie,
or prelate of merry life
ou prestres qui tiegne s'amie,
or priest who keep his-mistress
ou vieilles putains ostelieres,
or old whores innkeepers
ou maquerel, ou bordelieres,
or pimp or brothel-keepers
ou repris de quelconques vice
or convicted of whatever vice
don l'en deie faire joustice;
for-which one ought do justice
par trestouz les sainz que l'en preie!
by all the saints whom one prays
S'il ne se defent de lampreie,
If-he not himself defends with lamprey
de luz, de saumon ou d'anguile,
with pike with salmon or with-eel

s'en le peut trouver en la vile,
if-one it can find in the town
ou de tartes, ou de flaons,
or with tarts or with flans
ou de fourmages en glaons,
or with cheeses in baskets
qu'ausinc est ce mout bel joel
for-likewise is this very fair jewel
o la peire de cailloel,
with the pear of cailloel
ou d'oisons gras, ou de chapons,
or with-goslings fat or with capons
don par les gueules nous frapons;
with-which through the throats ourselves we-strike
ou s'il ne fait venir en haste
or if-he not makes come in haste
chevreaus, conins, lardez en haste,
kids rabbits larded on spit
ou de porc au meins une longe,
or of pork at-the least a loin
il avra de corde une longe
he will-have of rope a length
a quei l'en le menra bruler,
with which one him will-lead to-burn
si que l'en l'orrait bien uler
so that one him-would-hear well howl
d'une grant live tout entour;
for-a great league all around
ou sera pris e mis en tour,
or will-be taken and put in tower

pour estre a toujourz enmurez,
for to-be for always walled-up
s'il ne nous a bien procurez;
if-he not us has well provided
ou sera puniz dou mesfait,
or will-be punished for-the misdeed
plus, espeir, qu'il n'avra mesfait.
more perhaps than-he will-have misdone
Mais s'il, se tant d'engin avait,
But if-he if so-much of-wit had
une grant tour faire savait,
a great tower to-make knew
ne li chausist ja de quel pierre,
not to-him would-matter ever of what stone
fust senz compas ou senz esquierre,
it-were without compass or without square
neïs de motes ou de fust,
even of clods or of wood
ou d'autre rien que que ce fust,
or of-other thing whatever that it were
mais qu'il eüst laienz assez
provided that-he had within plenty
des biens temporeus amassez,
of-the goods temporal amassed
e dreçast sus une perriere
and raised up a catapult
qui lançast devant e derriere,
which hurled before and behind
e des deus costez ensement,
and on-the two sides likewise

encontre nous espessement
against us thickly
teus chaillous con m'oez nomer,
such pebbles as me-you-hear name
pour sei faire bien renomer,
for himself to-make well renowned
e gitast en granz mangoneaus
and threw in great mangonels
vins en bariz ou en toneaus,
wines in kegs or in casks
ou granz sas de centaine livre,
or great sacks of hundred pounds
tost se pourrait voeir delivre.
soon himself could see delivered
E s'il ne treuve teus pitances,
And if-he not finds such pittances
estudit en equipolences
let-him-study in equivalences
e laist ester leus e fallaces,
and let-him-leave be topics and fallacies
s'il n'en cuide aquerre noz graces,
if-he not-thereby thinks to-acquire our graces
ou tel tesmoing li porteron
or such witness against-him we-will-bear
que tout vif ardeir le feron,
that all alive to-burn him we-will-make
ou li donron tel penitence
or to-him we-will-give such penance
qui vaudra pis que la pitance.
which will-be-worth worse than the pittance

The Robes, and the Eternal Gospel

XXXVI

Such men are known by their deeds, not their robes. In 1255 a devil's book, the Eternal Gospel, was set out before Notre-Dame, claiming to surpass the four Gospels, and the University roused itself against it until its authors hid it. They will await Antichrist; Peter in the book means the pope and the secular clergy, and John the preachers.

Ja ne les quenoistreiz aus robes,
Ever not them you-will-know by-the robes
les faus traïteurs pleins de lobes;
the false traitors full of tricks
leur faiz vous esteut regarder,
their deeds you it-behooves to-regard
se vous voulez bien d'aus garder.
if you wish well from-them to-guard
E se ne fust la bone garde
And if not were the good guard
de l'Université qui garde
of the-University which guards
la clef de la crestienté,
the key of the Christendom
tout eüst esté tourmenté,
all would-have been tormented
quant par mauvaise entencion,
when by wicked intention
en l'an de l'incarnacion
in the-year of the-incarnation
mil e deus cenz cinc e cinquante,
thousand and two hundred five and fifty

n'est on vivanz qui m'en desmente,
not-is man living who me-thereof give-the-lie
fu bailliez, c'est bien chose veire,
was given this-is well thing true
pour prendre comun essemplaire,
for to-take common copy
uns livres de par le deable,
a book on behalf-of the devil
c'est l'Evangile pardurable,
this-is the-Gospel everlasting
que li Sainz Esperiz menistre,
which the Holy Spirit ministers
si come il apareist au titre;
so as it appears in-the title
ainsinc est il entitulez;
thus is it entitled
bien est dignes d'estre brulez.
well it-is worthy of-being burned
A Paris n'ot ome ne fame,
At Paris not-there-was man nor woman
ou parvis devant Nostre Dame,
in-the parvis before Our Lady
qui lors aveir ne le peüst,
who then have not it could
a transcrivre s'il l'i pleüst.
to transcribe if-it to-him-there pleased
La trouvast par granz mespreisons
There he-would-find by great misprisions
maintes teles comparaisons:
many such comparisons

autant com par sa grant valeur,
as-much as by its great worth
seit de clarté, seit de chaleur,
be-it of brightness be-it of heat
seurmonte li solauz la lune,
surpasses the sun the moon
qui trop est plus trouble e plus brune,
which far is more dim and more dark
e li noiaus des noiz la coque,
and the kernel of-the nuts the shell
ne cuidiez pas que je vous moque,
not think at-all that I you mock
seur m'ame le vous di senz guile,
on my-soul it to-you I-say without guile
tant seurmonte cete evangile
so-much surpasses this gospel
ceus que li quatre evangelistre
those which the four evangelists
Jesu Crit firent a leur titre.
of-Jesus Christ made under their title
De teus comparaisons grant masse
Of such comparisons great mass
i trouvast l'en, que je trespasse.
there would-find one which I pass-over
L'Université, qui lors iere
The-University which then was
endormie, leva la chiere;
asleep raised the face
dou bruit dou livre s'esveilla,
at-the noise of-the book itself-awoke

n'onc puis guieres ne someilla,
nor-ever afterward much not slumbered
ainz s'arma pour aler encontre,
rather herself-armed for to-go against
quant el vit cele orrible montre,
when she saw that horrible monster
toute preste de bataillier,
all ready to battle
e dou livre aus juiges baillier.
and the book to-the judges to-give
Mais cil qui la le livre mistrent
But those who there the book put
saillirent sus e le repristrent,
leaped up and it took-back
e se hasterent dou repondre;
and themselves hastened in-the hiding
car il ne savaient respondre
for they not knew to-answer
par espondre ne par gloser
by expounding nor by glossing
a ce qu'en voulait oposer
to this that-one wished to-object
contre les paroles maudites
against the words accursed
qui en ce livre sont escrites.
which in this book are written
Or ne sai qu'il en avendra,
Now not I-know what-it thereof will-become
ne quel chief cil livres tendra;
nor what end this book will-hold

mais encor leur couvient atendre
but still them behooves to-wait
tant qu'il le puissent meauz defendre.
until that-they it can better defend
Ainsinc Antecrit atendron,
Thus Antichrist we-will-await
tuit ensemble a lui nous tendron.
all together to him ourselves we-will-hold
Cil qui ne s'i vourront aerdre,
Those who not themselves-there will-wish to-cling
la vie leur couvendra perdre.
the life them will-behoove to-lose
Les gens encontre aus esmouvrons
The folk against them we-will-stir
par les baraz que nous couvrons,
by the frauds which we cover
e les feron deglavier,
and them we-will-make to-put-to-the-sword
ou par autre mort devier,
or by other death to-die
puis qu'il ne nous vourront ensivre,
since that-they not us will-wish to-follow
qu'il est ainsinc escrit ou livre,
for-it is thus written in-the book
qui ce raconte e senefie:
which this recounts and signifies
tant com Pierres ait seignourie
as-long as Peter has lordship
ne peut Johans montrer sa force.
not can John show his force

Or vous ai dit dou sen l'escorce,
Now to-you I-have told of-the sense the-bark
qui fait l'entencion repondre,
which makes the-intention hide
or en vueil la moële espondre:
now thereof I-wish the marrow to-expound
par Pierre veaut le pape entendre
by Peter it-wishes the pope to-mean
e les clers seculers comprendre,
and the clerics secular to-comprehend
qui la lei Jesu Crit tendront
who the law of-Jesus Christ will-hold
e garderont e defendront
and will-keep and will-defend
contre touz empeescheeurs;
against all hinderers
par Johan, les preescheeurs,
by John the preachers
qui diront qu'il n'est lei tenable
who will-say that-it not-is law tenable
fors l'Evangile pardurable,
except the-Gospel everlasting
que li Sainz Esperiz enveie
which the Holy Spirit sends
pour metre genz en bone veie.
for to-put folk in good way

Par la force Johan entent
By the force of-John it-means
la grace don se va vantant
the grace of-which himself he-goes boasting
qu'il veaut pecheeurs convertir
that-he wishes sinners to-convert
pour les faire a Deu revertir.
for them to-make to God return
Mout i a d'autres deablies
Much there has of-other devilries
comandees e establies
commanded and established
en ce livre que je vous nome
in this book which I to-you name
qui sont contre la lei de Rome
which are against the law of Rome
e se tienent a Antecrit,
and themselves hold to Antichrist
si con je truis ou livre escrit.
so as I find in-the book written
Lors comanderont a ocierre
Then they-will-command to kill
tous ceus de la partie Pierre,
all those of the party of-Peter
mais ja n'avront poeir d'abatre,
but ever not-they-will-have power to-fell
ne pour ocierre ne pour batre,
neither for to-kill nor for to-beat
la lei Pierre, ce vous plevis,
the law of-Peter this to-you I-pledge

qu'il n'en demeurt assez de vis,
that-it not-thereof remain plenty of living
qui toujourz si la maintendront
who always so it will-maintain
que tuit en la fin i vendront,
that all in the end there will-come
e sera la lei confondue
and will-be the law confounded
qui par Johan est entendue.
which by John is meant
Mais ne vous en vueil or plus dire,
But not to-you thereof I-wish now more to-say
car trop a ci longue matire;
for too has-there here long matter
mais, se cist livres fust passez,
but if this book had passed
en graigneur estat fusse assez;
in greater estate I-would-be much
s'ai je ja de mout granz amis
so-have I already of very great friends
qui en grant estat m'ont ja mis.
who in great estate me-have already put

False Seeming's Empire

XXXVII

Fraud and Hypocrisy rule the world, and their kind are honored for their appearance. False Seeming prefers beguins in great hoods to fine knights, though a humble habit is not to be despised where no pride lies under it. Love's barons laugh at his candor, and Love asks whether he will keep faith; False Seeming swears he will, then admits no pledge could make Love surer, but Love accepts him, and he kneels in thanks.

De tout le monde est empereres
Of all the world is emperor
Baraz, mes sires e mes peres;
Fraud my lord and my father
ma mere en est empereriz.
my mother thereof is empress
Maugré qu'en ait Sainz Esperiz,
In-spite that-thereof have Holy Spirit
nostre poissanz lignages reine.
our powerful lineage reigns
Nous reinons ore en chascun reine,
We reign now in each realm
e bien est dreiz que nous reinons
and well is right that we reign
qui trestout le monde faisnons,
who all the world bewitch
e savons si les genz deceivre
and know so the folk to-deceive
que nus ne s'en set aperceivre,
that any not himself-thereof knows to-perceive

ou qui le set aperceveir
or who it knows to-perceive
n'en ose il descouvrir le veir.
not-thereof dares he to-uncover the truth
Mais cist en l'ire Deu se boute,
But this-one into the-wrath of-God himself thrusts
quant plus que Deu mes freres doute;
when more than God my brothers he-fears
n'est pas en fei bons champions
not-is at-all in faith good champion
qui craint teus simulacions,
who fears such simulations
ne qui veaut peine refuser
nor who wishes pain to-refuse
qui puist venir d'aus encuser.
which can come from-them accusing
Teus on ne veaut entendre a veir
Such man not wishes to-attend to truth
ne Deu devant ses eauz aveir,
nor God before his eyes to-have
si l'en punira Deus, senz faille;
so him-thereof will-punish God without fail
mais ne m'en chaut coment qu'il aille
but not to-me-thereof matters however that-it go
puis que l'eneur avons des omes.
since that the-honor we-have of-the men

Pour si bones genz tenu somes
For so good folk held we-are
que de reprendre avons le pris
that of reproving we-have the prize
senz estre d'ome nul repris.
without being by-man any reproved
Queus genz deit l'en donc enourer
What folk ought one then honor
fors nous qui ne cessons d'ourer
except us who not cease of-praying
devant les genz apertement,
before the folk openly
tout seit il darriers autrement?
all be it behind otherwise
Est il graindre forsenerie
Is it greater madness
que d'essaucier chevalerie
than of-exalting knighthood
e d'amer genz nobles e cointes
and of-loving folk noble and elegant
qui robes ont gentes e jointes?
who robes have comely and fitted
S'il sont teus genz come il aperent,
If-they are such folk as they appear
si net con netement se perent,
as clean as cleanly themselves they-adorn
que leur diz s'acort a leur faiz,
that their sayings itself-accord with their deeds
n'est ce granz deaus e granz seurfaiz?
not-is this great grief and great outrage

S'il ne veulent estre ypocrite,
If-they not wish to-be hypocrites
tel gent puisse estre la maudite!
such folk may be the accursed
Ja certes teus genz n'amerons,
Ever certainly such folk not-we-will-love
mais beguins aus granz chaperons,
but beguins with-the great hoods
aus chieres pales e alises,
with-the faces pale and smooth
qui ont ces larges robes grises,
who have these wide robes gray
toutes fretelees de crotes,
all spattered with dirt
houseaus fronciez e larges botes,
gaiters wrinkled and wide boots
qui resemblent bourse a caillier.
which resemble purse for quail
A ceus deivent prince baillier
To those ought princes give
a gouverner aus e leur terres,
to govern them and their lands
ou seit par pais ou seit par guerres,
either be-it by peace or be-it by wars
a ceus se deit princes tenir
to those himself ought prince hold
qui veaut a grant eneur venir.
who wishes to great honor to-come
E s'il sont autre qu'il ne semblent,
And if-they are other than-they not seem

qu'ainsinc la grace dou monde emblent,
for-thus the grace of-the world they-steal
la me vueil embatre e fichier,
there myself I-wish to-thrust and to-fix
pour deceveir e pour trichier.
for to-deceive and for to-cheat
Si ne vueil je pas pour ce dire
So not wish I at-all for this to-say
que l'en deie umble abit despire,
that one ought humble habit despise
pour quei desouz orgueauz n'abit.
provided that beneath pride not-dwell
Nus ne deit haïr pour l'abit
Any not ought hate for the-habit
le povre qui s'en est vestuz,
the poor-man who himself-therein is clothed
mais Deus ne prise deus festuz
but God not prizes two straws
s'il dit qu'il a laissié le monde
if-he says that-he has left the world
e de gloire mondaine abonde,
and in glory worldly abounds
e de delices veaut user.
and of delights wishes to-use
Qui peut tel beguin escuser?
Who can such beguin excuse

Teus papelarz, quant il se rent
Such hypocrite when he himself gives
puis va mondains deliz querant
then goes worldly delights seeking
e dit que touz les a laissiez,
and says that all them he-has left
s'il en veaut puis estre engraissiez,
if-he thereof wishes afterward to-be fattened
c'est li mastins qui gloutement
this-is the mastiff who gluttonously
retourne a son vomissement.
returns to his vomit
Mais a vous n'ose je mentir;
But to you not-dare I to-lie
mais se je peüsse sentir
but if I could feel
que vous ne l'aperceüssiez,
that you not it-perceived
la mençonge ou poing eüssiez;
the lie in-the fist you-would-have
certainement je vous boulasse,
certainly I you would-trick
ja pour pechié ne le laissasse;
ever for sin not it I-would-leave
si vous pourrai je bien faillir
so you will-be-able I well fail
s'ous m'en deviez mal baillir.»
if-you me-thereof ought ill handle

Li deus sourit de la merveille,
The god smiles at the marvel
chascuns s'en rit e s'en merveille,
each himself-thereat laughs and himself-thereat marvels
e dient: «Ci a beau sergent,
and they-say Here has fair servant
ou bien se deivent fier gent!»
in-whom well themselves ought trust folk
«Faus Semblanz», dist Amours, «di mei,
False Seeming said Love tell me
puis que de mei tant t'aprimai
since that of me so-much thee-I-drew-near
qu'en ma court si grant poeir as
that-in my court so great power thou-hast
que reis des ribauz i seras,
that king of-the rascals there thou-wilt-be
me tendras tu ma couvenance?
to-me wilt-hold thou my covenant
— Oïl, jou vous jur e fiance;
Yes I you swear and pledge
n'onc n'orent sergenz plus leiaus
nor-ever not-had servants more loyal
vostre peres ne vostre aiaus.
your father nor your grandfather
— Coment! C'est contre ta nature.
How This-is against thy nature
— Metez vous en en aventure,
Put yourself thereof in chance
car, se pleges en requerez,
for if pledges thereof you-require

ja plus asseür n'en serez,
ever more assured not-thereof you-will-be
non veir se j'en baillaie ostages,
no truly if I-thereof gave hostages
ou letres, ou tesmoinz, ou gages;
or letters or witnesses or gages
car, a tesmoing vous en apel,
for as witness you thereof I-call
l'en ne peut oster de sa pel
one not can remove from his skin
le lou tant qu'il seit escorchiez,
the wolf until that-he be flayed
ja tant n'iert batuz ne torchiez.
ever so-much not-he-will-be beaten nor curried
Cuidiez que je ne triche e lobe
Think-you that I not cheat and trick
pour ce se je vest simple robe,
for this if I wear simple robe
souz cui j'ai maint grant mal ouvré?
under which I-have many-a great evil worked
Ja, par Deu! mon cueur n'en mouvrai;
Ever by God my heart not-thereof I-will-move
e se j'ai chiere simple e queie,
and if I-have face simple and quiet
que de mal faire me recreie?
that from evil doing myself I-give-over
M'amie Contrainte Astenance
My-friend Constrained Abstinence
a mestier de ma pourveance;
has need of my providing

pieç'a fust morte e mal baillie
long-ago she-would-be dead and ill handled
s'el ne m'eüst en sa baillie;
if-she not me-had in her keeping
laissiez nous, mei e li, chevir.
let us me and her manage
— Or seit, je t'en crei senz plevir.»
Now be-it I thee-thereof believe without pledging
E li lierres enz en la place,
And the thief there in the place
qui de traïson ot la face,
who of treason had the face
blanche dehors, dedenz nercie,
white outside within blackened
si s'agenoille e l'en mercie.
so himself-kneels and him-thereof thanks

False Seeming and Abstinence Set Out

XXXVIII

The barons arm and divide into four battalions for the four gates. Abstinence dresses as a beguine, pale as the horse of the Apocalypse, and False Seeming as a friar with a Bible, a crutch of treason, and a razor from the forge Cut-Throat. Wicked Tongue, sitting at his gate, recognizes Abstinence but not the constraint behind her, and takes False Seeming for a holy man.

Donc n'i a fors de l'atourner.
Then not-there has except of the-equipping
«Or a l'assaut senz sejourner»,
Now to-the assault without delay
ce dist Amours apertement.
this said Love openly
Donc s'arment tuit comunement
Then themselves-arm all in-common
de teus armes come armer durent.
with such arms as arm-themselves they-ought
Armé sont, e quant armé furent,
Armed they-are and when armed they-were
si saillent sus tuit abrivé.
so they-leap up all eager
Au fort chastel sont arivé,
At-the strong castle they-are arrived
don ja ne beent a partir
whence ever not they-aim to depart
tant que tuit i seient martir,
until that all there be martyrs
ou qu'il seit pris ainz qu'il s'en partent.
or that-it be taken before that-they themselves-thence part

Leur batailles en quatre partent;
Their battalions in four they-divide
si s'en vont en quatre parties,
so themselves-thence they-go in four parts
si con leur genz orent parties,
so as their folk they-had divided
pour assaillir les quatre portes,
for to-assail the four gates
don les gardes n'ierent pas mortes
of-which the guards not-were at-all dead
ne malades ne pareceuses,
nor sick nor lazy
ainz ierent forz e viguereuses.
rather they-were strong and vigorous
Or vous dirai la contenance
Now to-you I-will-tell the conduct
de Faus Semblant e d'Astenance,
of False Seeming and of-Abstinence
qui contre Male Bouche vindrent.
who against Wicked Tongue came
Entr'aus deus un palement tindrent
Between-them two a parliament they-held
coment contenir se devraient:
how conduct themselves they-ought
ou se quenoistre se feraient,
or if known themselves they-would-make
ou s'il iraient desguisé.
or if-they would-go disguised

Si ont par acort devisé
So they-have by accord devised
qu'il s'en iront en tapinage
that-they themselves-thence will-go in stealth
ausinc come en pelerinage,
just as on pilgrimage
com bone gent piteuse e sainte.
as good folk piteous and holy
Tantost Astenance Contrainte
At-once Abstinence Constrained
vest une robe cameline
wears a robe of-camlet
e s'atourne come beguine,
and herself-equips like beguine
e ot d'un large cueuvrechief
and had with-a wide kerchief
e d'un blanc drap couvert le chief.
and with-a white cloth covered the head
Son sautier mie n'oublia;
Her psalter at-all not-she-forgot
unes paternostres i a,
some paternosters there has
a un blanc laz de fil pendues,
on a white lace of thread hung
qui ne li furent pas vendues:
which not to-her were at-all sold
donees les li ot uns freres,
given them to-her had a friar
qu'el disait qu'il estait ses peres,
whom-she said that-he was her father

e le visitait mout souvent,
and him visited very often
plus que nul autre dou couvent;
more than any other of-the convent
e il souvent la visitait,
and he often her visited
maint beau sarmon li recitait.
many-a fair sermon to-her recited
Ja pour Faus Semblant nou laissast
Ever for False Seeming not-it he-would-leave
que souvent ne la confessast,
that often not her he-confessed
e par si grant devocion
and with so great devotion
faisaient leur confession
they-made their confession
que deus testes avait ensemble
that two heads it-had together
en un chaperon, ce me semble.
in one hood this to-me seems
De bele taille la devis,
Of fair shape her I-describe
mais un po fu pale de vis;
but a little she-was pale of face
el resemblait, la pute lisse,
she resembled the whore bitch
le cheval de l'Apocalisse,
the horse of the-Apocalypse
qui senefie la gent male,
which signifies the folk wicked

d'ypocrisie teinte e pale;
with-hypocrisy tinged and pale
car cil chevaus seur sei ne porte
for that horse upon itself not bears
nule couleur, fors pale e morte;
any color except pale and dead
d'itel couleur enlangouree
of-such color languishing
iert Astenance coulouree.
was Abstinence colored
De son estat se repentait,
Of her state herself she-repented
si con ses vouz representait.
so as her vows represented
De larrecin ot un bourdon,
Of theft she-had a pilgrim-staff
qu'el reçut de Barat pour don,
which-she received from Fraud as gift
de triste fumee roussi;
with sad smoke reddened
escharpe ot pleine de soussi.
scrip she-had full of care
Quant el fu preste, si s'en tourne.
When she was ready so herself-thence turns
Faus Semblanz, qui bien se ratourne,
False Seeming who well himself equips
ot, ausinc com pour essaier,
had just as for to-try
vestuz les dras frere Seier.
worn the cloths of-brother Seier

La chiere ot mout simple e piteuse,
The face he-had very simple and piteous
ne regardeüre orguilleuse
nor gaze proud
n'ot il pas, mais douce e paisible.
not-had he at-all but sweet and peaceful
A son col portait une bible.
On his neck he-carried a bible
Emprès s'en va senz escuier,
After himself-thence goes without squire
e, pour ses membres apuier,
and for his limbs to-support
ot, ausinc com par impotence,
had just as from impotence
de traïson une potence;
of treason a crutch
e fist en sa manche glacier
and made in his sleeve to-slip
un bien trenchant rasoir d'acier,
a very sharp razor of-steel
qu'il fist forgier en une forge
which-he made forge in a forge
que l'en apele Cope Gorge.
which one calls Cut Throat
Tant va chascuns e tant s'aprouche
So-much goes each and so-much himself-approaches
qu'il sont venu a Male Bouche,
that-they are come to Wicked Tongue
qui a sa porte se soait.
who at his gate himself sat

Trestouz les trespassanz voait:
All the passers-by he-saw
les pelerins choisist qui vienent,
the pilgrims he-spies who come
qui mout umblement se contienent.
who very humbly themselves conduct
Encliné l'ont mout umblement.
Bowed him-they-have very humbly
Astenance prumierement
Abstinence first
le salue e de lui va près,
him greets and to him goes near
Faus Semblanz le salue après,
False Seeming him greets after
e cil aus, mais onc ne se mut,
and he to-them but ever not himself stirred
qu'il nes douta ne ne cremut,
for-he not-them doubted nor not feared
car, quant veüz les ot u vis,
for when seen them he-had in-the face
bien les quenut, ce li fu vis,
well them he-knew this to-him was seeming
qu'il quenoissait bien Astenance,
for-he knew well Abstinence
mais n'i sot point de contraignance;
but not-there knew at-all of constraint
ne savait pas que fust contrainte
nor knew at-all that were constrained
sa larronesse vie feinte,
her thievish life feigned

ainz cuidait qu'el venist de gré,
rather he-thought that-she came of will
mais el venait d'autre degré;
but she came from-other degree
e s'ele de gré començа,
and if-she of will began
failli li grez des lors en ça.
failed to-her the-will from then on hither
Semblant ravait il mout veü,
Seeming in-turn-had he much seen
mais faus ne l'ot pas queneü;
but false not him-he-had at-all known
faus iert il, mais de fausseté
false was he but of falsity
ne l'eüst il jamais reté;
not him-would-have he ever accused
car li semblanz si fort ouvrait
for the seeming so strongly worked
que la fausseté li couvrait;
that the falsity from-him covered
mais s'avant le queneüssiez
but if-before him you-had-known
qu'en ces dras veü l'eüssiez,
that-in these cloths seen him-you-had
bien jurissiez le rei celestre
well you-would-swear (by-)the king celestial
que cil, qui devant soulait estre
that he who before was-wont to-be
de la dance li beaus Robins,
of the dance the fair Robin

or est devenuz jacobins.
now is become dominican
Mais, senz faille, c'en est la some,
But without fail this-thereof is the sum
li jacobin sont tuit preudome.
the dominicans are all worthy-men
Mauvaisement l'ordre tendraient,
Wickedly the-order they-would-hold
se tel menesterel estaient.
if such minstrels they-were
Si sont cordelier e barré,
So are franciscans and carmelites
tout seient il gros e carré,
all be they fat and square
e sac e tuit li autre frere:
and sack and all the other friars
n'i a nul qui preudon n'apere.
not-there has any who worthy-man not-appear
Mais ja ne verreiz d'aparence
But ever not you-will-see from-appearance
conclure bone consequence
conclude good consequence
en nul argument que l'en face,
in any argument that one make
se defauz existence efface;
if defect existence effaces
toujourz i trouvereiz sofime,
always there you-will-find sophism
qui la consequence envenime,
which the consequence poisons

se vous avez soutilité
if you have subtlety
d'entendre la duplicité.
of-understanding the duplicity

The Pilgrims and Wicked Tongue

XXXIX

The two pilgrims ask Wicked Tongue for lodging and offer a short sermon. Abstinence preaches that the first virtue is a restrained tongue and accuses him of lying about the young man, whom he drove away though he meant no harm. Wicked Tongue rages, calls them enchanters, and swears that he was told of the kiss and will trumpet it to all the neighbors.

Quant li pelerin venu furent
When the pilgrims come were
a Male Bouche ou venir durent,
to Wicked Tongue where come they-were-to
tout leur harneis mout près d'aus mistrent,
all their gear very near them they-put
delez Male Bouche s'assistrent,
beside Wicked Tongue themselves-sat
qui leur ot dit: «Or ça, venez,
who to-them had said Now here come
de voz nouveles m'aprenez,
of your news me-teach
e me dites quel achaison
and to-me tell what occasion
vous ameine en cete maison.
you brings into this house

— Sire», dist Contrainte Astenance,
Lord said Constrained Abstinence
«pour faire nostre penitence
for to-do our penance
de fin cueur net e enterin
with true heart clean and entire
somes ci venu pelerin.
we-are here come pilgrims
Près que toujourz a pié alons,
Nearly that always on foot we-go
mout avons poudreus les talons;
very we-have dusty the heels
si somes andui enveié
so we-are both sent
par mi cet monde desveié
through midst this world gone-astray
doner essemple e preeschier
to-give example and to-preach
pour les pecheeurs peeschier,
for the sinners to-fish
qu'autre peschaille ne voulons;
for-other fishing not we-wish
e, pour Deu, si con nous soulons,
and for God so as we are-wont
l'ostel vous venons demander;
the-lodging of-you we-come to-ask
e pour vostre vie amender,
and for your life to-amend
mais qu'il ne vous deüst desplaire,
provided that-it not you should displease

nous vous voudrions ci retraire
we to-you would-wish here to-relate
un bon sarmon a brief parole.»
a good sermon with brief word
Atant Male Bouche parole:
Thereupon Wicked Tongue speaks
«L'ostel», dist il, «tel con veez,
The-lodging said he such as you-see
prenez, ja ne vous iert veez,
take ever not to-you it-will-be refused
e dites quanqu'il vous plaira;
and say whatever-it to-you will-please
j'escouterai que ce sera.
I-will-listen what this will-be
— Granz merciz, sire.» Adonc comence
Great thanks lord Then begins
prumierement dame Astenance:
first lady Abstinence
«Sire, la vertu prumeraine,
Lord the virtue first
la plus grant, la plus souveraine
the most great the most sovereign
que nus morteus on puisse aveir
that any mortal man can have
par science ne par aveir,
by knowledge or by wealth
c'est de sa langue refrener:
this-is of his tongue to-restrain
a ce se deit chascuns pener;
to this himself ought each take-pains

qu'adès vient il meauz qu'en se taise
for-always comes it better that-one himself be-silent
que dire parole mauvaise;
than to-say word wicked
e cil qui volentiers l'escoute
and he who willingly it-listens-to
n'est pas preudon ne Deu ne doute.
not-is at-all worthy-man nor God not fears
Sire, seur touz autres pechiez
Lord above all other sins
de cetui estes entechiez:
with this-one you-are stained
une trufle pieç'a deïstes,
a trifle long-ago you-said
don trop malement mespreïstes,
whereby exceedingly evilly you-misdid
d'un vallet qui ci repairait;
of-a young-man who here haunted
vous deïstes qu'il ne querait
you said that-he not sought
fors que Bel Acueil deceveir;
except that Fair Welcome to-deceive
ne deïstes pas de ce veir,
not you-said at-all of this truth
ainz en mentistes, se devient;
rather thereof you-lied if it-happens
n'il ne va mais ci ne ne vient,
nor-he not goes more here nor not comes
n'espeir jamais ne l'i verrez.
nor-perhaps ever not him-there you-will-see

Bel Acueil en rest enserrez,
Fair Welcome thereby is-in-turn shut-in
qui avec vous ci se joait
who with you here himself played
des plus beaus jeus que il poait
with-the most fair games that he could
le plus des jourz de la semaine,
the most of-the days of the week
senz nule pensee vilaine;
without any thought churlish
or n'i s'ose mais soulacier.
now not-there himself-dares any-more to-solace
Le vallet avez fait chacier,
The young-man you-have made chase
qui se venait ici deduire:
who himself came here to-disport
qui vous esmut a tant li nuire,
who you moved to so-much him to-harm
fors que vostre male pensee,
except that your evil thought
qui mainte mençonge a pensee?
which many-a lie has thought
Ce mut vostre fole loquence,
This moved your foolish eloquence
qui brait e crie e noise e tence,
which brays and cries and quarrels and scolds

e les blasmes aus genz eslieve
and the blames on-the folk raises
e les deseneure e les grieve
and them dishonors and them grieves
pour chose qui n'a point de preuve,
for thing which not-has at-all of proof
fors d'aparence ou de contreuve.
except of-appearance or of invention
Dire vous os tout en apert
Tell you I-dare all in open
qu'il n'est pas veirs quanqu'il apert;
that-it not-is at-all true whatever-it appears
si rest pechiez de controuver
so is-in-turn sin of inventing
chose qui fait a reprouver;
thing which is to reproach
vous meïsmes bien le savez,
you yourself well it know
par quei plus grant tort en avez.
by which more great wrong thereof you-have
E nepourquant il n'i fait force,
And nevertheless he not-there makes force
il n'i donrait pas une escorce
he not-there would-give at-all a bark
de chesne, coment qu'il en seit.
of oak however that-it thereof be
Sachiez qu'a nul mal n'i pensait,
Know that-to any evil not-there he-thought
car il i alast e venist,
for he there would-go and come

nule essoine nou detenist:
any excuse not-him would-detain
or n'i vient mais n'il n'en a cure,
now not-there he-comes more nor-he not-thereof has care
se n'est par aucune aventure,
if not-it-is by some chance
en trespassant, meins que li autre.
in passing less than the others
E vous gaitiez, lance seur fautre,
And you watch lance in rest
a cete porte, senz sejour.
at this gate without respite
La muse musarz toute jour.
There gapes the-gaper all day
Par nuit e par jour i veilliez;
By night and by day there you-watch
pour dreit neient i traveilliez:
for right nothing there you-toil
Jalousie, qui s'en atent
Jealousy who herself-thereof relies
a vous, ne vous vaudra ja tant.
on you not to-you will-avail ever so-much
Si rest de Bel Acueil domages,
So is-in-turn of Fair Welcome harm
qui senz riens acreire est en gages;
who without anything borrowing is in pawn
senz forfait en prison demeure;
without misdeed in prison remains
la languist li chaitis e pleure.
there languishes the wretch and weeps

Se vous n'aviez plus mesfait
If you not-had more misdone
ou monde que cetui mesfait,
in-the world than this misdeed
vous deüst l'en, ne vous peist mie,
you ought one not to-you grieve at-all
bouter hors de cete baillie,
push out of this bailiwick
metre en chartre ou lier en fer.
put in prison or bind in iron
Vous en ireiz ou cul d'enfer,
You thence will-go into-the bottom of-hell
se vous ne vous en repentez.
if you not yourself thereof repent
— Certes», dist il, «vous i mentez.
Certainly said he you therein lie
Mal seiez vous ore venu!
Ill be you now come
Vous ai je pour ce retenu,
You have I for this retained
pour mei dire honte e laidure?
for to-me to-say shame and insult
Par vostre grant malaventure
By your great misfortune
me tenissiez vous pour bergier!
me would-hold you for shepherd
Or alez ailleurs herbergier,
Now go elsewhere to-lodge
qui m'apelez ci menteeur.
who me-call here liar

Vos estes dui enchanteeur,
You are two enchanters
qui m'estes ci venu blasmer,
who to-me-are here come to-blame
e pour veir dire mesasmer.
and for truth telling to-slight
Alez vous ore ce querant?
Go you now this seeking
A touz les deables me rent,
To all the devils myself I-give
ou vous, beaus Deus, me confondez,
or you fair God me confound
s'ainz que li chasteaus fust fondez,
if-before that the castle were founded
ne passerent jour plus de dis
not passed days more than ten
qu'en le me dist, e jou redis,
that-one it to-me said and I-it said-again
e que cil la rose baisa;
and that he the rose kissed
ne sai se plus s'en aaisa.
not I-know if more himself-thereof he-eased
Pour quei me feïst l'en acreire
For why me would-make one believe
la chose s'ele ne fust veire?
the thing if-it not were true
Par Deu! jou dis e redirai,
By God I-it said and will-say-again
e crei que ja n'en mentirai;
and believe that ever not-thereof I-will-lie

e cornerai a mes boisines,
and will-trumpet with my horns
e aus veisins e aus veisines,
both to-the neighbors and to-the neighbor-women
coment par ci vint e par la.» 12275
how by here he-came and by there
Adonques Faus Semblanz parla:
Then False Seeming spoke

Wicked Tongue Confesses and Is Slain

XL

False Seeming argues that the young man no longer comes, which proves him innocent, and Wicked Tongue begins to repent. False Seeming offers to confess him, as the best confessor in the world. Wicked Tongue kneels, and False Seeming strangles him and cuts out his tongue with the razor, and the two throw him into a ditch; the two pilgrims break the gate and strangle the drunken Norman soldiers asleep inside.

«Sire, tout n'est pas evangile
Lord all not-is at-all gospel
quanque l'en dit aval la vile;
whatever one says down the town
or n'aiez pas oreilles sourdes
now not-have at-all ears deaf
e je vous pruis que ce sont bourdes. 12280
and I to-you prove that these are tales
Vous savez bien certainement
You know well certainly
que nus n'aime enterinement,
that any not-loves entirely

pour tant qu'il le puisse saveir,
for so-much that-he it can know
tant ait en lui po de saveir,
however-much he-have in him little of wisdom
ome qui mesdie de lui;
man who slanders of him
e si rest veirs, s'onques le lui,
and so is-in-turn true if-ever it I-read
tuit amant volentiers visitent
all lovers willingly visit
les leus ou leur amours abitent:
the places where their loves dwell
cist vous eneure, cist vous aime,
this-one you honors this-one you loves
cist son trés chier ami vous claime,
this-one his very dear friend you calls
cist par tout la ou vous encontre
this-one through all there where you he-meets
bele chiere e liee vous montre,
fair face and glad to-you shows
e de vous saluer ne cesse;
and of you greeting not ceases
si ne vous fait pas ci grant presse,
so not you makes at-all here great press
n'estes pas trop par lui lassez;
not-you-are at-all too-much by him wearied
li autre i vienent plus assez.
the others there come more plenty

Sachiez, se ses cueurs l'empressast
Know if his heart him-pressed
de la rose, il s'en apressast,
of the rose he himself-thereto would-approach
e ci souvent le veïssiez,
and here often him you-would-see
veire prouvé le preïssiez,
indeed proven it you-would-take
qu'il ne s'en peüst pas garder,
for-he not himself-thereof could at-all guard
s'en le deüst tout vif larder,
if-one him ought all alive lard
il ne fust pas ore en ce point:
he not would-be at-all now in this point
donc sachiez qu'il n'i pense point.
then know that-he not-thereof thinks at-all
Non fait Bel Acueil vraiement,
Not does Fair Welcome truly
tout en ait il mal paiement.
even-if for-it have he ill payment
Par Deu! s'andui bien le vousissent,
By God if-both well it wished
maugré vous la rose cuillissent.
in-spite-of you the rose they-would-pluck
Quant dou vallet mesdit avez,
Since of-the young-man slandered you-have
qui vous aime, bien le savez,
who you loves well it you-know
sachiez, s'il i eüst beance,
know if-he there had desire

ja n'en seiez en mescreance,
ever not-thereof be in disbelief
jamais nul jour ne vous amast,
ever any day not you he-would-love
jamais ami ne vous clamast;
ever friend not you he-would-call
e vousist penser e veillier
and would-wish to-think and to-watch
au chastel rompre e esseillier,
on-the castle to-break and to-destroy
s'il fust veirs, car il le seüst,
if-it were true for he it would-know
qui que seit dit le li eüst.
who that be-it told it to-him would-have
De sei le poïst il saveir:
Of himself it could he know
puis qu'accès n'i poïst aveir
since that-access not-there he-could have
si come avant avait eü,
so as before he-had had
tantost l'eüst aperceü.
at-once it-he-would-have perceived
Or le fait il tout autrement:
Now it does he all otherwise
donc avez vous outreement
then have you outrageously
la mort d'enfer bien deservie
the death of-hell well deserved
qui tel gent avez asservie.»
who such folk have served

Faus Semblanz ainsinc le li preuve.
False Seeming thus it to-him proves
Cil ne set respondre a la preuve,
He not knows to-answer to the proof
e veit touteveis aparence;
and sees nevertheless appearance
près qu'il n'en chiet en repentance,
nearly that-he thereby falls into repentance
e leur dit: «Par Deu! bien peut estre.
and to-them says By God well can be
Semblanz, je vous tieng a bon maistre,
Seeming I you hold for good master
e Astenance mout a sage;
and Abstinence very for wise
bien semblez estre d'un courage.
well seem-you to-be of-one heart
Que me loez vous que je face?
What me counsel you that I do
— Confès sereiz en cete place,
Confessed you-will-be in this place
e ce pechié, senz plus, direiz;
and this sin without more you-will-say
de cetui vous repentireiz,
of this-one yourself you-will-repent
car je sui d'ordre e si sui prestres,
for I am of-order and so am priest
de confessier li plus hauz maistres
of confessing the most high master
qui seit, tant con li mondes dure;
that be as-long as the world lasts

j'ai de tout le monde la cure;
I-have of all the world the cure
ce n'ot onques prestres curez,
this not-had ever priest curate
tout fust a s'iglise jurez;
all be-were to his-church sworn
12345 e si ai, par la haute dame!
and so I-have by the high lady
Cent tanz plus pitié de vostre ame
A-hundred times more pity on your soul
que voz prestres parrochiaus,
than your priests parish
ja tant n'iert vostre especiaus.
ever so-much not-will-be your intimate
Si rai un mout grant avantage:
So in-turn-I-have a very great advantage
12350 prelat ne sont mie si sage
prelates not are at-all so wise
ne si letré de trop con gié;
nor so learned by far as I
j'ai de divinité congié,
I-have of divinity license
veire, par Deu! pieç'a leü.
indeed by God long-ago lectured
Pour confesseur m'ont esleü
For confessor me-have elected
12355 li meilleur qu'en puisse saveir
the best that-one can know
par mon sen e par mon saveir.
by my sense and by my knowledge

Se vous voulez ci confessier
If you wish here to-confess
e ce pechié senz plus laissier,
and this sin without more to-leave
senz faire en jamais mencion,
without making thereof ever mention
vous avreiz m'assolucion.»
you will-have my-absolution
Male Bouche tantost s'abaisse,
Wicked Tongue at-once himself-lowers
si s'agenoille e se confesse,
so himself-kneels and himself confesses
car verais repentanz ja ert;
for true penitent already he-was
e cil par la gorge l'aert,
and he by the throat him-seizes
a deus poinz l'estreint, si l'estrangle,
with two fists him-squeezes so him-strangles
si li a tolue la jangle;
so from-him has taken the chatter
la langue a son rasoir li oste.
the tongue with his razor from-him removes
Ainsinc chevirent de leur oste,
Thus they-managed with their host
ne l'ont autrement enossé,
not him-they-have otherwise choked
puis le tombent en un fossé.
then him they-tumble into a ditch
Senz defense la porte cassent,
Without defense the gate they-break

cassee l'ont, outre s'en passent;
broken it-they-have beyond themselves-thence pass
si trouverent laienz dormanz
so they-found within sleeping
trestouz les soudeiers normanz,
all the soldiers Norman
tant orent beü a guersei
so-much they-had drunk at wassail
dou vin que je pas ne versai;
of-the wine that I at-all not poured
il meïsmes l'orent versé
they themselves it-had poured
tant que tuit jurent enversé.
until that all lay overturned
Ivres e dormanz les estranglent.
Drunk and sleeping them they-strangle
Ja ne seront mais tel qu'il janglent.
Ever not they-will-be more such that-they chatter

Courtesy and Largesse Win the Old Woman

XLI

Courtesy and Largesse join them, and the four find the old woman in the bailey. They ask her to let Fair Welcome come out or at least speak with the young man, give her a clasp and buckles from him, and ask her to carry Fair Welcome a garland. She fears Wicked Tongue, but they tell her he is dead, and she agrees. False Seeming reflects that the lover could get in by stealth, and the lover resolves to follow that plan.

Es vous Courteisie e Largece,
Behold — Courtesy and Largesse
la porte passent senz parece;
the gate they-pass without sloth
si sont la tuit quatre assemblé
so are there all four assembled
repostement e en emblé.
secretly and in stealth
La vieille, qui ne s'en gardait,
The old-woman who not herself-thereof guarded
qui Bel Acueil pieç'a gardait,
who Fair Welcome long-ago guarded
ont tuit quatre ensemble veüe.
have all four together seen
De la tour estait descendue,
From the tower she-was descended
si s'esbatait par mi le baile;
so herself-disported through mid the bailey
d'un chaperon, en leu de veile,
with-a hood in place of veil

sus sa guimple ot couvert sa teste.
over her wimple she-had covered her head
Contre li coururent en heste,
Toward her they-ran in haste
si l'assaillent tantost tuit quatre.
so her-they-assail at-once all four
El ne se vost pas faire batre;
She not herself wished at-all to-make beat
quant les vit touz quatre assemblez:
when them she-saw all four assembled
«Par fei», dist ele, «vous semblez
By faith said she you seem
bone gent, vaillant e courtoise:
good folk valiant and courteous
or me dites, senz faire noise,
now to-me tell without making noise
si ne me tieng je pas pour prise,
so not myself hold I at-all for taken
que querez en cete pourprise?
what you-seek in this enclosure
— Pour prise! douce mere tendre,
For taken sweet mother tender
nous ne venons pas pour vous prendre,
we not come at-all for you to-take
mais seulement pour vous voeir,
but only for you to-see
e, s'il vous peut plaire e soeir,
and if-it you can please and suit

noz cors ofrir tout pleinement
our bodies to-offer all fully
a vostre douz comandement,
to your sweet command
e quanque nous avons vaillant,
and whatever we have of-worth
senz estre a nul jour defaillant;
without being at any day failing
e, s'il vous plaisait, douce mere,
and if-it to-you pleased sweet mother
qui ne fustes onques amere,
who not were ever bitter
requerre vous qu'il vous pleüst,
to-beg you that-it to-you pleased
senz ce que nul mal i eüst,
without this that any harm there were
que plus laienz ne languissist
that more within not he-languished
Bel Acueil, anceis s'en issist
Fair Welcome rather himself-thence went-out
o nous un petitet joer
with us a little-bit to-play
senz ses piez guieres emboer;
without his feet much to-muddy
ou voilliez au meins qu'il parole
or wish at-the least that-he speak
a ce vallet une parole,
to this young-man a word
e que li uns l'autre confort;
and that the one the-other comfort

ce leur fera mout grant confort
this to-them will-do very great comfort
ne guieres ne vous coustera;
nor much not you will-cost
e cil vostre on liges sera,
and he your man liege will-be
mais vostre sers, don vous pourreiz
but your serf of-whom you will-be-able
faire tout quanque vous vourreiz,
to-do all whatever you will-wish
ou vendre, ou pendre, ou mahaignier.
or to-sell or to-hang or to-maim
Bon fait un ami gaaignier.
Good it-is a friend to-win
E vez ci de ses joelez,
And see here of his jewels
cet fermail e cez noelez
this clasp and these little-buckles
vous done, veire un garnement
you he-gives indeed a garment
vous donra il prouchainement.
to-you will-give he shortly
Mout a franc cueur, courteis e large;
Very he-has frank heart courteous and generous
e si ne vous fait pas grant charge;
and so not you makes at-all great burden
de lui estes forment amee;
by him you-are greatly loved
e si n'en sereiz ja blasmee,
and so not-thereof you-will-be ever blamed

qu'il est mout sages e celez;
for-he is very wise and discreet
e prions que vous le celez,
and we-pray that you it conceal
ou qu'il i aut senz vilenie,
or that-he there go without villainy
si li avreiz rendu la vie.
so to-him you-will-have rendered the life
E maintenant ce chapelet
And now this little-garland
de par lui, de fleurs nouvelet,
on behalf-of him of flowers new
s'il vous plaist, Bel Acueil portez,
if-it you please Fair Welcome carry
e de par lui le confortez,
and on behalf-of him him comfort
e l'estrenez d'un beau salu:
and him-gift with-a fair greeting
ce li avra cent mars valu.
this to-him will-have a-hundred marks availed
— Si Deus m'aïst, s'estre peüst
So God me-help if-to-be could
que Jalousie nou seüst,
that Jealousy not-it knew
e que ja blasme n'en oïsse»,
and that ever blame not-thereof I-heard
dist la vieille, «bien le feïsse,
said the old-woman well it I-would-do

mais trop est malement janglierres
but exceedingly is evilly chatterer
Male Bouche li fleütierres.
Wicked Tongue the piper
Jalousie l'a fait sa guiete,
Jealousy him-has made her watchman
c'est cil qui trestouz nous aguiete;
this-is he who all us spies
cil brait e crie senz defense
he brays and cries without restraint
quanqu'il set, veire quanqu'il pense,
whatever-he knows indeed whatever-he thinks
e contreuve neïs matire,
and invents even matter
quant il ne set de cui mesdire;
when he not knows of whom to-slander
s'il en devait estre penduz,
if-he thereof ought be hanged
n'en serait il pas defenduz.
not-thereof would-be he at-all prevented
S'il le disait a Jalousie,
If-he it said to Jealousy
li lierres, il m'avrait honie.
the thief he me-would-have shamed
— De ce», font il, «n'esteut douter,
Of this say they not-must-one doubt
jamais n'en peut riens escouter
ever not-thereof he-can anything hear
ne voeir en nule maniere:
nor see in any manner

morz gist la fors, en leu de biere
dead he-lies there outside in place of bier
en ces fossez, gueule baee.
in these ditches mouth gaping
Sachiez, s'il n'est chose faee,
Know if-it not-is thing enchanted
jamais d'aus deus ne janglera,
ever of-them two not he-will-chatter
car ja ne resoucitera;
for ever not he-will-revive
se deable n'i font miracles
if devils not-there do miracles
par venins e par tiriacles,
by venoms and by theriacs
jamais ne les peut encuser.
ever not them he-can accuse
— Donc ne quier je ja refuser»,
Then not seek I ever to-refuse
dist la vieille, «vostre requeste;
said the old-woman your request
mais dites li que il se heste.
but tell him that he himself hasten
Je li trouverai bien passage,
I for-him will-find well passage
mais n'i parost pas a outrage,
but not-there let-him-speak at-all to excess
ne n'i demeurt pas longuement,
nor not-there remain at-all long

e viegne trop celeement
and come exceedingly secretly
quant je le li ferai saveir;
when I it to-him will-make know
e gart seur cors e seur aveir
and guard on body and on goods
que nus on ne s'en aperceive,
that any man not himself-thereof perceive
ne riens n'i face qu'il ne deive,
nor anything not-there do that-he not ought
bien die sa volenté toute.
well let-him-say his will whole
— Dame, ainsinc sera il senz doute»,
Lady thus will-be it without doubt
font cil, e chascuns l'en mercie.
say they and each her-thereof thanks
Ainsinc ont cele euvre bastie.
Thus they-have that work built
Mais, coment que la chose en seit,
But however that the thing thereof be
Faus Semblanz, qui ailleurs pensait,
False Seeming who elsewhere thought
dist a voiz basse a sei meïsmes:
said with voice low to himself same
«Se cil pour cui nous empreïsmes
If he for whom we undertook
cete euvre de riens me creüst,
this work in anything me believed
puis que d'amer ne recreüst,
since that of-loving not he-gave-up

s'ous ne vous i acordissiez,
if-you not yourself thereto agreed
ja guieres n'i gaaignissiez
ever much not-there you-would-gain
au loing aler, mien escient,
to-the far going (by-)my knowledge
qu'il i entrast en espiant,
that-he there would-enter in spying
s'il en eüst ne tens ne leu.
if-he thereof had either time or place
L'en ne veit pas toujourz le leu,
One not sees at-all always the wolf
ainz prent bien ou teit les berbiz,
rather he-takes well in-the fold the ewes
tout les gart l'en par les erbiz.
however-much them guard one through the pastures
Une eure alissiez au moutier,
One hour you-would-go to-the church
vous i demourastes mout ier;
you there stayed long yesterday
Jalousie, qui si le guile,
Jealousy who so him beguiles
ralast espeir hors de la vile;
would-go-again perhaps out of the town
ou que seit couvient il qu'ele aille:
where that be-it behooves it that-she go
il venist lors en repostaille,
he would-come then in hiding
ou par nuit, devers les cortiz,
or by night toward the gardens

seus, senz chandele e senz tortiz,
alone without candle and without torch
se n'iert d'Ami qui le gaitast,
if not-it-were of-Friend who him watched
espeir, s'il l'en amonestast;
perhaps if-he him-thereof admonished
par confort tost le conduisist,
by comfort soon him would-lead
mais que la lune n'i luisist,
provided that the moon not-there shone
car la lune par son cler luire
for the moon by its clear shining
seaut aus amanz maintes feiz nuire;
is-wont to-the lovers many times to-harm
ou il entrast par les fenestres,
or he would-enter by the windows
qu'il set bien de l'ostel les estres,
for-he knows well of the-house the ways
par une corde s'avalast;
by a rope himself-would-let-down
ainsinc i venist e alast.
thus there would-come and go
Bel Acueil, espeir, descendist
Fair Welcome perhaps would-descend
es courtiz ou cil l'atendist,
into-the gardens where he him-awaited
ou s'enfoïst hors dou pourpris
or himself-would-flee out of-the enclosure
ou tenu l'avez maint jour pris,
where held him-you-have many-a day taken

e venist au vallet paler,
and would-come to-the young-man to-speak
s'il a lui ne poïst aler;
if-he to him not could go
ou, quant endormi vous seüst,
or when asleep you he-knew
se tens e leu voeir peüst,
if time and place see he-could
les uis entrouverz li laissast.
the doors ajar to-him he-would-leave
Ainsinc dou bouton s'apressast
Thus to-the bud himself-would-approach
li fins amanz, qui tant i pense,
the true lover who so-much thereon thinks
e le cuillist lors senz defense,
and it would-pluck then without defense
s'il poïst par nule matire
if-he could by any matter
les autres portiers desconfire.»
the other porters overthrow
E je, qui guieres loing n'estaie,
And I who much far not-was
me pensai qu'ainsinc le feraie.
myself thought that-thus it I-would-do
Se la vieille me veaut conduire,
If the old-woman me wishes to-lead
ce ne me deit grever ne nuire;
this not me ought grieve nor harm

e s'el ne veaut, j'i enterrai
and if-she not wishes I-there will-enter
par la ou meauz mon point verrai,
by there where best my chance I-will-see
si con Faus Semblanz ot pensé.
so as False Seeming had thought
Dou tout m'en tin a son pensé.
In-the whole myself-thereto I-held to his thought

The Old Woman Visits Fair Welcome

XLII

The old woman finds Fair Welcome pensive in the tower, and he hides his distress from her. She brings him the garland from the young man and praises him as loyal, generous, and wise. Fair Welcome fears Jealousy's anger if he takes it, but she tells him to say she gave it to him.

La vieille ileuc plus ne sejourne,
The old-woman there more not stays
le trot a Bel Acueil retourne,
at-the trot to Fair Welcome returns
qui la tour outre son gré garde,
who the tower beyond his will keeps
car bien se sofrist de tel garde.
for well himself would-have-spared from such keeping
Tant va qu'ele vient a l'entree
So-far she-goes that-she comes to the-entrance
de la tour, ou tost est entree;
of the tower where soon she-is entered

les degrez monte lieement,
the stairs she-climbs gladly
au plus qu'el peut hastivement,
at-the most that-she can hastily
si li tremblaient tuit li membre;
so to-her trembled all the limbs
Bel Acueil quiert de chambre en chambre,
Fair Welcome she-seeks from chamber to chamber
qui s'iert aus creneaus apuiez,
who himself-was on-the battlements leaning
de la prison touz enuiez;
of the prison all weary
pensif le treuve e triste e mourne;
pensive him she-finds and sad and mournful
de lui reconforter s'atourne:
of him to-comfort herself-she-busies
«Beaus fiz», dist ele, «mout m'esmai
Fair son said she much myself-I-dismay
quant vous truis en si grant esmai;
when you I-find in so great dismay
dites mei quel sont cil pensé,
tell me what are those thoughts
car, se conseillier vous en sai,
for if to-counsel you thereon I-know
ja ne m'en verreiz nul jour feindre.»
ever not me-thereof you-will-see any day to-shirk
Bel Acueil ne s'ose complaindre,
Fair Welcome not himself-dares to-complain
ne dire li quei ne coument,
nor to-tell her what nor how

qu'il ne set s'el dit veir ou ment.
for-he not knows if-she tells truth or lies
Trestout son penser li nia,
All his thought from-her he-denied
car point de seürté n'i a;
for at-all of security not-there has
de riens en li ne se fiait,
in anything in her not himself he-trusted
neïs ses cueurs la desfiait,
even his heart her distrusted
qu'il ot poereus e tremblant,
which-he had fearful and trembling
mais n'en osait montrer semblant,
but not-thereof he-dared to-show semblance
tant l'avait toujourz redoutee,
so-much her-he-had always dreaded
la pute vieille redoutee.
the whore old-woman dreaded
Garder se veaut de mesprison,
To-guard himself he-wishes from mistake
qu'il a peeur de traïson;
for-he has fear of treason
ne li desclot pas sa mesaise,
not to-her discloses at-all his distress
en sei meïsmes se rapaise
in himself same himself appeases
par semblant e fait liee chiere:
by semblance and makes glad face
«Certes», fait il, «ma dame chiere,
Certainly says he my lady dear

combien que mis sus le m'aiez,
however-much that put upon it me-you-have
je ne sui de riens esmaiez,
I not am in anything dismayed
fors senz plus de vostre demeure;
except without more by your delay
senz vous enviz çaienz demeure,
without you reluctantly in-here I-remain
car en vous trop grant amour ai.
for in you exceedingly great love I-have
Ou avez vous tant demouré?
Where have you so-long stayed
— Ou? par mon chief! tost le savreiz,
Where by my head soon it you-will-know
mais dou saveir grant joie avreiz,
but of-the knowing great joy you-will-have
se point estes vaillanz ne sages,
if at-all you-are valiant or wise
car, en leu d'estranges messages,
for in place of-strange messengers
li plus courteis vallez dou monde,
the most courteous young-man of-the world
qui de toutes graces abonde,
who in all graces abounds
qui plus de mil feiz vous salue,
who more than a-thousand times you greets
car jou vi ore en cele rue
for I-him saw now in that street
si come il trespassait la veie,
so as he passed the way

par mei cet chapel vous enveie.
by me this garland to-you sends
Volentiers, ce dist, vous verrait,
Willingly this he-says you he-would-see
jamais puis vivre ne querrait
ever afterward to-live not he-would-seek
n'aveir un seul jour de santé
nor-to-have a single day of health
se n'iert par vostre volenté;
if not-it-were by your will
si le gart Deus e sainte Feiz,
so him guard God and saint Faith
mais qu'une toute seule feiz
provided that-a all single time
paler, ce dist, a vous peüst
to-speak this he-says to you he-could
a leisir, mais qu'il vous pleüst.
at leisure provided that-it you pleased
Pour vous, senz plus, aime il sa vie.
For you without more loves he his life
Touz nuz vourrait estre a Pavie
All naked he-would-wish to-be at Pavia
par tel couvent qu'il seüst faire
by such covenant that-he knew to-do
chose qui bien vous peüst plaire;
thing which well you could please
ne li chaudrait qu'il devenist,
not to-him would-matter what-he became
mais que près de lui vous tenist.»
provided that near of him you he-held

Bel Acueil enquiert touteveie
Fair Welcome inquires nevertheless
qui cil est qui ce li enveie,
who he is who this to-him sends
ainz qu'il receive le present,
before that-he receive the present
pour ce que doutable le sent,
for this that doubtful it he-feels
qu'il peüst de tel leu venir
that-it could from such place come
qu'il n'en vousist point retenir;
that-he not-thereof would-wish at-all to-keep
e la vieille, senz autre conte,
and the old-woman without other tale
toute la verité li conte:
all the truth to-him tells
«C'est li vallez que vous savez,
This-is the young-man whom you know
don tant oï paler avez,
of-whom so-much heard speak you-have
pour cui pieç'a tant vous greva,
for whom long-ago so-much you he-grieved
quant le blasme vous esleva
when the blame on-you raised
feu Male Bouche de jadis.
the-late Wicked Tongue of formerly
Ja n'aille s'ame en paradis!
Ever not-may-go his-soul into paradise
Maint preudome a desconforté;
Many-a worthy-man he-has discomforted

or l'en ont deable porté,
now him-thence have devils carried
qu'il est morz, eschapé li somes,
for-he is dead escaped from-him we-are
ne pris mais sa jangle deus pomes;
not I-prize more his chatter two apples
a toujourz en somes delivre.
for always thereof we-are delivered
E s'il poait ore revivre,
And if-he could now live-again
ne nous pourrait il pas grever,
not us could he at-all grieve
tant vous seüst blasme eslever,
however-much to-you he-knew blame to-raise
car je sai plus qu'il ne fist onques.
for I know more than-he — did ever
Or me creez e prenez donques
Now me believe and take then
cet chapel e si le portez,
this garland and so it wear
de tant au meins le confortez,
by so-much at-the least him comfort
qu'il vous aime, n'en doutez mie,
for-he you loves not-thereof doubt at-all
de bone amour, senz vilenie;
with good love without villainy
e s'il a autre chose tent,
and if-he to other thing aims
ne m'en desclost il mie tant,
not to-me-thereof discloses he at-all so-much

mais bien nous i poons fier;
but well ourselves therein we-can trust
vous li resavreiz bien nier,
you to-him will-know-in-turn well to-deny
s'il requiert chose qu'il ne deive:
if-he requests thing that-he not ought
s'il fait folie, si la beive.
if-he does folly so it let-him-drink
Si n'est il pas fos, ainz est sages,
So not-is he at-all fool rather he-is wise
onc par lui ne fu faiz outrages,
ever by him not was done outrage
don je le pris meauz e si l'ains;
whereby I him prize more and so him-love
n'il ne sera pas si vilains
nor-he not will-be at-all so churlish
qu'il de chose vous requeïst
that-he of thing you would-request
qui a requerre ne feïst.
which to request not would-do
Leiaus est seur touz ceus qui vivent;
Loyal he-is above all those who live
cil qui sa compaignie sivent
those who his company follow
l'en ont toujourz porté tesmoing,
him-thereof have always borne witness
e je meïsmes le tesmoing.
and I myself it witness
Mout est de meurs bien ordenez,
Very he-is in manners well ordered

onc ne fu on de mere nez
ever not was man of mother born
qui de lui nul mal entendist,
who of him any evil heard
fors tant com Male Bouche en dist.
except so-much as Wicked Tongue thereof said
S'a l'en ja tout mis en oubli,
So-has one already all put in oblivion
je meïsmes par po l'oubli;
I myself by little it-forget
ne me souvient nes des paroles
not to-me remembers even of-the words
fors qu'eus furent fausses e foles,
except that-they were false and foolish
e li lierres les controuva,
and the thief them invented
qui onques bien ne se prouva.
who ever good not himself proved
Certes, bien sai que mort l'eüst
Certainly well I-know that dead him-would-have
li vallez, se riens en seüst,
the young-man if anything thereof he-knew
qu'il est preuz e hardiz, senz faille:
for-he is worthy and bold without fail
en cet païs n'a qui le vaille,
in this country not-has who him equal
tant a le cueur plein de noblece.
so-much he-has the heart full of nobility

E seurmonterait de largece
And would-surpass in largesse
le rei Artu, veire Alixandre,
the king Arthur indeed Alexander
s'il eüst autant a despendre
if-he had as-much to spend
d'or e d'argent come cil orent:
of-gold and of-silver as those had
onques cil tant doner ne sorent
ever those so-much to-give not knew
que cist cent tanz plus ne donast;
that this-one a-hundred times more not would-give
par dons tout le monde estonast
by gifts all the world would-astonish
se d'aveir eüst tel plenté,
if of-wealth he-had such plenty
tant a bon cueur en sei planté;
so-much he-has good heart in himself planted
nou peut nus de largece aprendre.
not-him can anyone in largesse teach
Or vous lo ce chapel a prendre,
Now you I-counsel this garland to take
don les fleurs eulent meauz que basme.
of-which the flowers smell better than balm
— Par fei, j'en craindraie aveir blasme»,
By faith I-thereof would-fear to-have blame
fait Bel Acueil, qui touz fremist,
says Fair Welcome who all shudders
e tremble e tressaut e gemist,
and trembles and starts and groans

rougist, palist, pert contenance.
reddens pales loses countenance
E la vieille es poinz le li lance,
And the old-woman into-the fists it to-him throws
e li veaut faire a force prendre,
and to-him wishes to-make by force take
car cil n'i osait la main tendre,
for he not-there dared the hand to-stretch
ainz dist, pour sei meauz escuser,
rather said for himself better to-excuse
que meauz le li vient refuser.
that better it to-him comes to-refuse
Si le vousist il ja tenir,
So it would-wish he already to-hold
que que l'en deüst avenir.
whatever that to-him-thereof ought befall
«Mout est beaus», fait il, «li chapeaus,
Very is fair says he the garland
mais meauz me vendrait mes drapeaus
but better to-me would-come my clothes
aveir touz ars e mis en cendre
to-have all burned and put in ash
que de par lui l'osasse prendre;
than on behalf-of him it-I-dared to-take
mais or seit posé que jou preigne:
but now be-it supposed that I-it take
a Jalousie la riaigne
to Jealousy the raging-one
que pourrions nous ore dire?
what could we now say

Bien sai qu'ele enragera d'ire
Well I-know that-she will-rage with-anger
e seur mon chief le descierra
and on my head it will-tear
piece a piece e puis m'ocierra
piece by piece and then me-will-kill
s'el set qu'il seit de la venuz,
if-she knows that-it be from there come
ou serai pris e pis tenuz
or I-will-be taken and worse held
qu'onques en ma vie ne fui,
than-ever in my life not I-was
ou se je li eschape e fui,
or if I from-her escape and flee
quel part m'en pourrai je foïr?
what way myself-thence will-be-able I flee
Tout vif me verreiz enfoïr
All alive me you-will-see buried
se je sui pris emprès la fuite;
if I am taken after the flight
si crei je que j'avraie suite,
so believe I that I-would-have pursuit
si seraie pris en fuiant;
so I-would-be taken in fleeing
touz li mondes m'irait huiant.
all the world me-would-go hooting
Nou prendrai pas. — Si fereiz, certes,
Not-it I-will-take at-all So you-will-do certainly
ja n'en avreiz blasmes ne pertes.
ever not-thereof you-will-have blames nor losses

— E s'ele m'enquiert don ce vint?
And if-she me-asks whence this came
— Responses avreiz plus de vint.
Answers you-will-have more than twenty
— Touteveis s'el le me demande,
Nevertheless if-she it to-me asks
que puis je dire a sa demande?
what can I say to her question
Se j'en sui blasmez ne repris,
If I-thereof am blamed or reproved
ou dirai je que je le pris?
where will-say I that I it took
Car il le me couvient repondre
For it it to-me behooves to-hide
ou quelque mençonge respondre.
or some lie to-answer
S'el le savait, ce vous plevis,
If-she it knew this to-you I-pledge
meauz voudraie estre morz que vis.
rather I-would-wish to-be dead than alive
— Que vous direiz? Se nou savez,
What you will-say If not-it you-know
se meilleur response n'avez,
if better answer not-you-have
dites que je le vous donai.
say that I it to-you gave

Bien savez que tel renon ai
Well you-know that such renown I-have
que n'avreiz blasme ne vergoigne
that not-you-will-have blame nor shame
de riens prendre que je vous doigne.»
of anything taking which I to-you give

The Old Woman's Youth

XLIII

Fair Welcome puts on the garland, and the old woman begins her sermon. Her merry time is past, and he must pass through the flame of Venus. She was once a famous beauty whose door was broken by quarreling suitors, and she learned love by practice, not theory; when she grew old the young men passed her by. She will teach him so that he may avenge her.

Bel Acueil, senz dire autre chose,
Fair Welcome without saying other thing
le chapel prent, e si le pose
the garland takes and so it places
seur ses crins blonz, e s'asseüre;
on his locks blond and himself-reassures
e la vieille li rit e jure
and the old-woman at-him laughs and swears
s'ame, son cors, ses os, sa pel,
her-soul her body her bones her skin
qu'onc ne li sist si bien chapel.
that-ever not on-him sat so well garland
Bel Acueil souvent le remire,
Fair Welcome often it regards

dedenz son miroer se mire,
within his mirror himself mirrors
saveir s'il est si bien seianz:
to-know if-it is so well becoming
quant la vieille veit que laienz
when the old-woman sees that within
n'avait fors aus deus seulement,
not-there-was except them two only
lez lui s'assiet tout belement,
beside him herself-sits all quietly
si li comence a preeschier:
so to-him begins to preach
«Ha, Bel Acueil, tant vous ai chier,
Ah Fair Welcome so-much you I-hold dear
tant estes beaus e tant valez!
so-much you-are fair and so-much you-are-worth
Mes tens jolis est touz alez,
My time merry is all gone
e li vostres est a venir.
and the yours is to come
Po me pourrai mais soutenir,
Little myself I-will-be-able more sustain
fors a baston ou a potence;
except with stick or with crutch
vous estes encore en enfance,
you are still in childhood
si ne savez que vous fereiz,
so not you-know what you will-do
mais bien sai que vous passereiz,
but well I-know that you will-pass

quant que ce seit, ou tost ou tart,
whenever that it be either soon or late
par mi la flame qui tout art, 12750
through-the midst-of the flame which all burns
e vous baignereiz en l'estuve
and yourself will-bathe in the-bath
ou Venus les dames estuve.
where Venus the ladies bathes
Bien sai le brandon sentireiz;
Well I-know the brand you-will-feel
or vous lo que vous atireiz
now you I-counsel that you prepare
ainz que la vous ailliez baignier, 12755
before that there yourself you-go to-bathe
si con vous m'orreiz enseignier;
so as you me-will-hear teach
car perilleusement s'i baigne
for perilously himself-there bathes
jennes on qui n'a qui l'enseigne;
young man who not-has who him-teach
mais, se mon conseil ensivez,
but if my counsel you-follow
a bon port estes arivez. 12760
at good port you-are arrived
Sachiez se je fusse ausinc sage,
Know if I had-been so wise
quant j'estaie de vostre aage,
when I-was of your age
des jeus d'Amours con je sui ores;
in-the games of-Love as I am now

car de trop grant beauté fui lores,
for of exceedingly great beauty I-was then
mais or m'esteut plaindre e gemir
but now me-behooves to-complain and to-groan
quant mon vis effacié remir,
when my face effaced I-regard
e vei que froncir le couvient,
and I-see that to-wrinkle it it-behooves
quant de ma beauté me souvient,
when of my beauty to-me remembers
qui ces vallez faisait triper;
which these young-men made skip
tant les faisaie defriper
so-much them I-made to-caper
que ce n'iert se merveille non.
that this not-was except marvel not
Trop iere lors de grant renon,
Exceedingly I-was then of great renown
par tout courait la renomee
through all ran the renown
de ma grant beauté renomee;
of my great beauty renowned
tele ale avait en ma maison
such going there-was in my house
qu'onques tele ne vit mais on;
that-ever such not saw any-more man
mout iert mes uis la nuit hurtez,
much was my door the night knocked

trop leur faisaie de durtez
too-much to-them I-did of harshnesses
quant leur faillaie de couvent,
when to-them I-failed in agreement
e ce m'avenait trop souvent,
and this to-me-happened too often
car j'avaie autre compaignie.
for I-had other company
Faite en estait mainte folie,
Done thereby was many-a folly
don j'avaie courrouz assez;
of-which I-had anger plenty
souvent en iert mes uis cassez,
often thereby was my door broken
e faites maintes teus mellees
and done many such frays
qu'anceis qu'eus fussent desmellees
that-before that-they were disentangled
membres i perdaient e vies,
limbs there they-lost and lives
par haïnes e par envies,
by hates and by envies
tant i avenait de contenz.
so-many there happened of quarrels
Se maistre Algus li bien contanz
If master Algus the well counting
i vousist bien metre ses cures
there wished well to-put his cares
e venist o ses dis figures,
and came with his ten figures

par quei tout certefie e nombre,
by which all he-certifies and numbers
si ne peüst il pas le nombre
so not could he at-all the number
des granz contenz certefier,
of-the great quarrels certify
tant seüst bien monteplier.
however-much he-knew well to-multiply
Lors iert mes cors forz e delivres,
Then was my body strong and nimble
j'eüsse or plus vaillant mil livres
I-would-have now more worth a-thousand pounds
de blans estellins que je n'ai;
of white sterlings than I not-have
mais trop nicement me menai.
but too foolishly myself I-conducted
Bele iere e jenne e nice e fole,
Fair I-was and young and silly and foolish
n'onc ne fui d'Amours a escole
nor-ever not I-was of-Love at school
ou l'en leüst la theorique,
where one read the theory
mais je sai tout par la pratique:
but I know all by the practice
esperiment m'en ont fait sage,
experiments me-thereof have made wise
que j'ai hantez tout mon aage;
which I-have frequented all my age
or en sai jusqu'a la bataille,
now thereof I-know up-to the battle

si n'est pas dreiz que je vous faille
so not-is at-all right that I you fail
des biens aprendre que je sai,
of-the goods teaching which I know
puis que tant esprouvez les ai.
since that so-much tested them I-have
Bien fait qui jennes genz conseille.
Well does who young folk counsels
Senz faille, ce n'est pas merveille
Without fail this not-is at-all marvel
s'ous n'en savez quartier ne aune,
if-you not-thereof know quarter nor ell
car vous avez trop le bec jaune.
for you have too-much the beak yellow
Mais tant a que je ne finai
But so-long it-has-been that I not ceased
que la science en la fin ai
that the knowledge in the end I-have
don bien puis en chaiere lire.
whereof well I-can in chair lecture
Ne fait a foïr n'a despire
Not is to flee nor-to despise
tout ce qui est en grant aage;
all that which is in great age
la treuve l'en sen e usage.
there finds one sense and usage

Ç'a l'en bien esprouvé de maint
This-has one well proven of many
qu'au meins en la fin leur remaint
that-at-the least in the end to-them remains
usage e sen pour le cheté,
usage and sense for the purchase
combien qu'il l'aient acheté.
however-much that-they it-have bought
E puis que j'oi sen e usage,
And after that I-had sense and usage
que je n'oi pas senz grant domage,
which I not-had at-all without great harm
maint vaillant ome ai deceü
many-a valiant man I-have deceived
quant en mes laz le tin cheü;
when in my snares him I-held fallen
mais ainz fui par mainz deceüe
but sooner I-was by many deceived
que je me fusse aperceüe.
than I myself had perceived
Ce fu trop tart, lasse dolente!
This was too late wretched sorrowful
J'iere ja hors de ma jouvente,
I-was already out of my youth
mes uis, qui ja souvent ouvrait,
my door which formerly often opened
car par nuit e par jour ouvrait,
for by night and by day it-opened
se tint adès près dou lintier:
itself held always near the lintel

«Nus n'i vient ui, nus n'i vint ier»,
Any not-there comes today any not-there came yesterday
pensaie je, «lasse chaitive!
thought I weary wretched
En tristeur esteut que je vive!»
In sadness it-behooves that I live
De deul me dut li cueurs partir.
With grief to-me was-to the heart break
Lors me vos dou païs partir
Then myself I-wished from-the country to-depart
quant vi mon uis en tel repos
when I-saw my door in such rest
e je meïsmes me repos,
and I myself myself hid
car ne poi la honte endurer.
for not I-could the shame endure
Coment poïsse je durer,
How could I last
quant cil joli vallet venaient
when those merry young-men came
qui ja si chiere me tenaient
who formerly so dear me held
qu'il ne s'en poaient lasser,
that-they not themselves-thereof could weary
e jes voaie trespasser,
and I-them saw pass-by
qu'il me regardaient de coste,
that-they me looked-at from side
e jadis furent mi chier oste?
and formerly were my dear guests

Lez mei s'en alaient saillant
Beside me themselves-thence went leaping
senz mei prisier un euf vaillant,
without me prizing an egg worth
nes cil qui plus jadis m'amaient;
not-even those who most formerly me-loved
vieille ridee me clamaient;
old-woman wrinkled me called
12855 e pis disait chascuns assez
and worse said each plenty
ainz qu'il s'en fust outre passez.
before that-he himself-thence were beyond passed
D'autre part, mes enfes gentis,
On-other part my child noble
nus, se trop n'iert bien ententis,
any if exceedingly not-were well attentive
ou granz deaus essaiez n'avrait,
or great griefs tested not-had
12860 ne penserait ne ne savrait
not would-think nor not would-know
quel douleur au cueur me tenait
what grief at-the heart me held
quant en pensant me souvenait
when in thinking to-me remembered
des beaus diz, des douz aaisiers,
of-the fair sayings of-the sweet comforts
des douz deduiz, des douz baisiers,
of-the sweet delights of-the sweet kisses

e des trés douces acolees
and of-the very sweet embraces
qui s'en ierent si tost volees.
which themselves-thence were so soon flown
Volees? Veire, e senz retour.
Flown Truly and without return
Meauz me venist en une tour
Better to-me would-have-come in a tower
estre a toujourz emprisonee
to-be for always imprisoned
que d'aveir esté si tost nee.
than of-having been so soon born
Deus! en quel soussi me metaient
God into what care me put
li beau don qui failli m'estaient!
the fair gifts which failed to-me-were
E ce qui remés leur estait,
And that which remained to-them was
en quel torment me remetait!
into what torment me put-again
Lasse! pour quei si tost nasqui?
Wretched for why so soon I-was-born
A qui m'en puis je plaindre, a qui,
To whom myself-thereof can I complain to whom
fors a vous, fiz, que j'ai tant chier?
except to you son whom I-hold so-much dear
Ne m'en puis autrement venchier
Not myself-thereof I-can otherwise avenge
que par aprendre ma doctrine.
than by teaching my doctrine

Pour ce, beaus fiz, vous endoctrine
For this fair son you I-instruct
que, quant endoctrinez sereiz,
that when instructed you-will-be
des ribaudeaus me venchereiz,
on-the little-rascals me you-will-avenge
car, se Deu plaist, quant la vendra,
for if God please when there will-come
de cet sarmon vous souvendra;
of this sermon to-you will-remember
car sachiez que dou retenir,
for know that of-the retaining
si qu'il vous en puist souvenir,
so that-it to-you thereof can remember
avez vous mout grant avantage,
have you very great advantage
par la raison de vostre aage;
by the reason of your age
car Platons dist: «C'est chose voire
for Plato says This-is thing true
que plus tenable est la memoire
that more tenacious is the memory
de ce qu'en aprent en enfance,
of that which-one learns in childhood
de quiconques seit la science.»
of whatever be the knowledge

The Old Woman's Regret

XLIV

If she were young again she would take vengeance on the rascals who despise her, though she still delights to remember her good time. She came here to serve Jealousy, and offers to show Fair Welcome the paths she should have followed. The lover adds that Fair Welcome later told him all she said, and swore that nothing she said would have made him betray the lover. She begins her lessons on the games of love.

Certes, chiers fiz, tendre jouvente,
Certainly dear son tender youth
se ma jennece fust presente,
if my youth were present
si come est la vostre orendreit,
so as is the yours right-now
ne pourrait estre escrite en dreit
not could be written in right
la venchance que j'en preïsse.
the vengeance that I-thereof would-take
Par touz les leus ou je venisse
Through all the places where I came
je feïsse tant de merveilles
I would-do so-many of marvels
qu'onques n'oïstes les pareilles
that-ever not-heard-you the like
des ribauz qui si po me prisent
on-the rascals who so little me prize
e me laidengent e despisent
and me revile and despise

e si vilment lez mei s'en passent;
and so vilely beside me themselves-thence pass
e il e autre comparassent
both they and others would-pay-for
leur grant orgueil e leur despit,
their great pride and their contempt
sanz prendre en pitié ne respit;
without taking in pity nor respite
car, au sen que Deus m'a doné,
for with-the sense that God me-has given
si con je vous ai sarmoné,
so as I to-you have preached
savez en quel point jes meïsse?
know-you in what state I-them would-put
Tant les plumasse e tant preïsse
So-much them I-would-pluck and so-much I-would-take
dou leur de tort e de travers
of-the theirs by wrong and by crookedness
que mangier les feïsse a vers
that to-eat them I-would-make to worms
e gesir touz nuz es fumiers,
and to-lie all naked on-the dunghills
meïsmement ceus les prumiers
especially those the first
qui de plus leial cueur m'amassent
who with more loyal heart me-loved
e plus volentiers se penassent
and more willingly themselves troubled
de mei servir e enourer.
of me serving and honoring

Ne leur laissasse demourer
Not to-them I-would-let remain
vaillant un ail, se je peüsse,
worth a garlic if I could
que tout en ma bourse n'eüsse
that all in my purse not-I-had
a povreté touz les meïsse,
in poverty all them I-would-put
e touz emprès mei les feïsse
and all after me them I-would-make
par vive rage tripeter.
with living rage to-stamp
Mais riens n'i vaut le regreter:
But anything not-there avails the regretting
qui est alé ne peut venir.
what is gone not can come
Jamais n'en pourrai nul tenir,
Ever not-thereof I-will-be-able any hold
car tant ai ridee la face
for so-much I-have wrinkled the face
qu'il n'ont garde de ma menace.
that-they not-have care of my threat
Pieç'a que bien le me disaient
Long-ago that well it to-me said
li ribaut qui me despisaient.
the rascals who me despised
Si me pris a plourer des lores.
So myself I-took to weeping from-the time-then

Par Deu! si me plaist il encores
By God so me pleases it still
quant je m'i sui bien pourpensee;
when I myself-thereon am well bethought
mout me delite en ma pensee
much me delights in my thought
12935 e me resbaudissent li membre
and to-me grow-merry the limbs
quant de mon bon tens me remembre
when of my good time myself remember
e de la joliete vie
and of the merry life
don mes cueurs a si grant envie;
of-which my heart has so great desire
tout me rejovenist le cors
all to-me rejuvenates the body
12940 quant j'i pens e quant jou recors;
when I-thereon think and when I recall
touz les biens dou monde me fait
all the goods of-the world to-me it-does
quant me souvient de tout le fait,
when to-me remembers of all the doing
qu'au meins ai je ma joie eüe,
that-at-the least have I my joy had
combien qu'il m'aient deceüe.
however-much that-they me-have deceived
12945 Jenne dame n'est pas oiseuse
Young lady not-is at-all idle
quant el meine vie joieuse,
when she leads life joyous

meïsmement cele qui pense
especially she who thinks
d'aquerre a faire sa despense.
of-acquiring to make her expense
Lors m'en vin en cete contree,
Then myself-thence I-came into this country
ou j'ai vostre dame encontree, 12950
where I-have your lady met
qui ci m'a mise en son servise
who here me-has put in her service
pour vous garder en sa pourprise.
for you to-guard in her enclosure
Deus, qui sires est e tout garde,
God who lord is and all guards
doint que j'en face bone garde!
grant that I-thereof do good guard
Si ferai je certainement 12955
So will-do I certainly
par vostre beau contenement;
by your fair conduct
mais la garde fust perilleuse,
but the guard would-be perilous
pour la grant beauté merveilleuse
for the great beauty marvelous
que Nature a dedenz vous mise,
which Nature has within you put
s'el ne vous eüst tant aprise 12960
if-she not you had so-much taught
proece e sen, valeur e grace.
prowess and sense worth and grace

E pour ce que tens e espace
And for this that time and space
nous est or si venuz a point
to-us is now so come to point
que de destourbier n'i a point
that of hindrance not-there has at-all
de dire quanque nous voulons
of saying whatever we wish
un po meauz que nous ne soulons,
a little better than we — are-wont
tout vous deie je conseillier,
all to-you ought I counsel
ne vous devez pas merveillier
not yourself you-ought at-all marvel
se ma parole un po recop.
if my speech a little I-cut-short
Je vous di bien, avant le cop,
I to-you say well before the blow
ne vous vueil pas en amour metre,
not you I-wish at-all into love to-put
mais, s'ous en voulez entremetre,
but if-you thereof wish to-meddle
je vous mouterrai volentiers
I to-you will-show willingly
e les chemins e les sentiers
both the roads and the paths
par ou je deüsse estre alee
by where I ought be gone
ainz que ma beauté fust alee.»
before that my beauty were gone

Lors se taist la vieille e soupire,
Then herself keeps-silent the old-woman and sighs
pour oïr que cil voudrait dire;
for to-hear what he would-wish to-say
mais n'i va guieres atendant,
but not-there goes much waiting
car, quant le veit bien entendant
for when him she-sees well attentive
a escouter e a sei taire,
to listening and to himself keeping-silent
a son propos se prent a traire
to her purpose herself takes to draw
e se pense: Senz contredit,
and herself thinks Without gainsaying
tout otreie qui mot ne dit.
all grants who word not says
Quant tout li plaist a escouter,
When all to-him pleases to hear
tout puis dire senz riens douter.
all I-can say without anything fearing
Lors a recomencié sa verve,
Then she-has begun-again her prattle
e dist, con fausse vieille e serve,
and said as false old-woman and servile
qui me cuida par ses doctrines
who me thought by her doctrines
faire lechier miel seur espines,
to-make lick honey on thorns

quant vost que fusse amis clamez
when she-wished that I-were friend called
senz estre par amours amez,
without being by love loved
si con cil puis me raconta
so as he afterward me told
qui tout retenu le conte a;
who all retained the tale has
car, s'il fust teus qu'il la creüst,
for if-he were such that-he her believed
certainement traï m'eüst;
certainly betrayed me-he-would-have
mais pour riens nule qu'el deïst
but for thing any that-she said
tel traïson ne me feïst.
such treason not to-me he-would-do
Ce me fiançait e jurait,
This to-me he-pledged and swore
autrement ne m'asseürait.
otherwise not me-he-assured
«Beaus trés douz fiz, bele char tendre,
Fair very sweet son fair flesh tender
des jeus d'Amours vous vueil aprendre,
of-the games of-Love you I-wish to-teach
que vous n'i seiez deceüz,
that you not-there be deceived
quant vous les avreiz receüz;
when you them will-have received
selonc mon art vous confourmez,
according-to my art yourself conform

car nus, s'il n'est bien enfourmez,
for any if-he not-is well informed
nes peut passer senz beste vendre.
not-them can pass without beast selling
Or pensez d'oïr e d'entendre,
Now think of-hearing and of-understanding
e de metre tout a memoire,
and of putting all to memory
car j'en sai trestoute l'estoire. 13010
for I-thereof know all the-story

The Old Woman's Lesson: Many Lovers

XLV

Love's last two commandments, generosity and a single love, are false, she says. A lover should set the heart in many places, give only where the gift brings gain, and take with open hands. Fair Welcome may love the fair young man, but should love others for their money and swear to each that he alone will have the rose, for the gods laugh at lovers' perjury, as Jupiter swore falsely to Juno. Yet only a fool believes a lover's oath.

Beaus fiz, qui veaut joïr d'amer,
Fair son who wishes to-enjoy of-loving
des douz maus qui tant sont amer,
of-the sweet ills which so-much are bitter
les comandemenz d'Amours sache,
the commandments of-Love let-him-know
mais gart qu'Amours a sei nou sache;
but let-him-guard that-Love to himself not-him draw

e ci trestouz les vous deïsse
and here all them to-you I-would-tell
se certainement ne veïsse
if certainly not I-saw
que vous en avez par nature
that you thereof have by nature
de chascun a comble mesure
of each in full measure
quanque vous en devez aveir.
whatever you thereof ought have
De ceus que vous devez saveir
Of those that you ought know
dis en i a, qui bien les nombre;
ten thereof there has who well them numbers
mais mout est fos cil qui s'encombre
but very is fool he who himself-encumbers
des deus qui sont au darrenier,
with-the two which are at-the last
qui ne valent un faus denier.
which not are-worth a false penny
Bien vous en abandon les uit,
Well to-you thereof I-give-over the eight
mais qui des autres deus le suit
but who of-the other two it follows
il pert son estuide e s'afole.
he loses his study and himself-maddens
L'en nes deit pas lire en escole.
One not-them ought at-all read in school

Trop malement les amanz charge
Exceedingly evilly the lovers burdens
qui veaut qu'amanz ait le cueur large,
who wishes that-lover have the heart generous
e qu'en un seul leu le deit metre:
and that-in one single place it he-ought put
c'est faus textes, c'est fausse letre.
this-is false text this-is false letter
Ci ment Amours li fiz Venus,
Here lies Love the son of-Venus
de ce ne le deit creire nus.
in this not him ought believe anyone
Qui l'en creit chier le comparra,
Who him-thereon believes dearly it will-pay-for
si come en la fin i parra.
so as in the end there will-appear
Beaus fiz, ja larges ne seiez;
Fair son ever generous not be
en pluseurs leus le cueur aiez,
in several places the heart have
en un seul leu ja nou metez;
in one single place ever not-it put
ne nou donez, ne ne prestez,
nor not-it give nor not lend
mais vendez le bien chierement
but sell it well dearly
e toujourz par enchierement;
and always by outbidding

e gardez que nus qui l'achat
and take-care that any who it-buy
n'i puisse faire bon achat:
not-there can make good bargain
pour riens qu'il doint ja point n'en ait,
for anything that-he give ever at-all not-thereof let-him-have
meauz s'arde, ou se pende, ou se neit.
rather himself-burn or himself hang or himself drown
Seur toutes riens gardez ces poinz:
Above all things keep these points
a doner aiez clos les poinz
in giving have closed the fists
e a prendre les mains ouvertes.
and in taking the hands opened
Doner est grant folie certes,
To-give is great folly certainly
se n'est un po pour genz atraire,
if not-it-is a little for folk to-draw
quant l'en en cuide son preu faire,
when one thereby thinks his profit to-make
ou pour le don tel chose atendre
or for the gift such thing to-expect
qu'en ne le peüst pas meauz vendre.
that-one not it could at-all better sell
Tel doner bien vous abandone.
Such giving well to-you I-give-over
Bons est doners ou cil qui done
Good is giving where he who gives
son don monteplie e gaaigne;
his gift multiplies and gains

qui certains est de sa gaaigne
who certain is of his gain
ne se peut dou don repentir;
not himself can of-the gift repent
tel don puis je bien consentir.
such gift can I well consent
Emprès, de l'arc e des cinc fleches
After of the-bow and of-the five arrows
qui tant sont plein de bones teches
which so-much are full of good qualities
e tant fierent soutivement,
and so-much strike subtly
traire en savez si sagement
to-shoot thereof you-know so wisely
qu'onques Amours, li bons archiers,
that-ever Love the good archer
des fleches que trait li ars chiers
of-the arrows that shoots the bow dear
ne traist meauz, beaus fiz, que vous faites,
not shot better fair son than you do
qui maintes feiz les avez traites;
who many times them have shot
mais n'avez pas toujourz seü
but not-you-have at-all always known
quel part li cop en sont cheü,
what way the blows thereof are fallen
car, quant l'en trait a la volee,
for when one shoots at the volley

teus peut receveir la colee
such-one can receive the blow
don l'archiers ne se done garde.
of-which the-archer not himself gives heed
Mais, qui vostre maniere esgarde,
But whoever your manner regards
si bien savez e traire et tendre
so well you-know both to-shoot and to-draw
que ne vous en puis riens aprendre.
that not you thereof I-can anything teach
S'en repeut estre teus navrez
So-thereby in-turn-can be such-one wounded
don grant preu, se Deu plaist, avrez.
from-whom great profit if God please you-will-have
Si n'esteut ja que je m'atour
So not-behooves-it ever that I myself-set
de vous aprendre de l'atour
of you teaching of the-attire
des robes ne des garnemenz
of-the robes nor of-the garments
don vous fereiz voz paremenz,
with-which you will-make your adornments
pour sembler aus genz meauz valeir;
for to-seem to-the folk better to-be-worth
n'il ne vous en peut ja chaleir,
nor-it not to-you thereof can ever matter
quant par cueur la chançon savez
since by heart the song you-know
que tant oï chanter m'avez,
which so-often heard sing me-you-have

si con joer nous alion,
so as to-play we went
de l'ymage Pygmalion;
of the-image of-Pygmalion
la prenez garde a vous parer,
there take heed to yourself adorning
s'en savreiz plus que beus d'arer:
so-thereof you-will-know more than ox of-plowing
de vous aprendre ces mestiers
of you teaching these trades
ne vous est il mie mestiers.
not to-you is it at-all need
E se ce ne vous peut soufire,
And if this not to-you can suffice
aucune chose m'orreiz dire
some thing me-you-will-bear say
ça avant, s'ous voulez atendre,
here after if-you wish to-wait
ou bien pourreiz essemple prendre.
where well you-will-be-able example take
Mais itant vous puis je bien dire:
But so-much to-you can I well say
se vous ami voulez eslire,
if you friend wish to-choose
bien lo que vostre amour seit mise
well I-counsel that your love be put
ou beau vallet qui tant vous prise,
in-the fair young-man who so-much you prizes
mais n'i seit pas trop fermement.
but not-there be-it at-all too firmly

Amez des autres sagement,
Love of-the others wisely
e je vous en querrai assez
and I for-you thereof will-seek plenty
don granz aveirs iert amassez.
whereby great wealth will-be amassed
Bon acointier fait omes riches,
Good to-befriend it-makes men rich
s'il n'ont les cueurs avers e chiches,
if-they not-have the hearts miserly and stingy
s'il est qui bien plumer les sache.
if-there is who well to-pluck them know
Bel Acueil quanqu'il veaut en sache,
Fair Welcome whatever-he wishes thereof let-him-know
pour qu'il doint a chascun entendre
provided that-he give to each to-understand
qu'il ne voudrait autre ami prendre
that-he not would-wish other friend to-take
pour mil mars de fin or moulu;
for a-thousand marks of fine gold ground
e jurt que s'il eüst voulu
and let-him-swear that if-he had wished
sofrir que par autre fust prise
to-allow that by other were taken
sa rose, qui bien est requise,
his rose which well is sought
d'or fust chargiez e de joiaus.
with-gold he-would-be laden and with jewels

Mais tant est ses fins cueurs loiaus
But so-much is his true heart loyal
que ja nus la main n'i tendra
that ever any the hand not-there will-stretch
fors cil seus qui lors la tendra.
except he alone who then it will-hold
S'il sont mil, a chascun deit dire:
If-they are a-thousand to each he-ought say
«La rose avreiz touz seus, beaus sire;
The rose you-will-have all alone fair lord
jamais autres n'i avra part;
ever other not-there will-have part
faille mei Deus se ja la part.»
fail me God if ever it I-share
Ce leur jurt e sa fei leur baille;
This to-them let-him-swear and his faith to-them give
s'el se parjure, ne li chaille:
if-she herself perjures not to-her it-let-matter
Deus se rit de tel sairement
God himself laughs at such oath
e le pardone lieement.
and it pardons gladly
Jupiter e li deu riaient
Jupiter and the gods laughed
quant li amant se parjuraient;
when the lovers themselves perjured
e maintes feiz se parjurerent
and many times themselves perjured
li deu qui par amours amerent.
the gods who by love loved

Quant Jupiter asseürait
When Jupiter reassured
Juno sa fame, il li jurait
Juno his wife he to-her swore
la palu d'enfer hautement,
the marsh of-hell loudly
e se parjurait faussement.
and himself perjured falsely
Ce devrait mout asseürer
This ought very assure
les fins amanz de parjurer
the true lovers of perjuring
saintes e sainz, moutiers e temples,
female-saints and male-saints minsters and temples
quant li deu leur donent essemples.
when the gods to-them give examples
Mais mout est fos, si Deus m'ament,
But very is fool so God me-mend
qui pour jurer creit nul amant,
who for swearing believes any lover
car il ont trop les cueurs muables.
for they have too-much the hearts changeable
Jennes genz ne sont point estables,
Young folk not are at-all stable
non sont li vieil souventes feiz,
nor are the old many times
ainz mentent sairemenz e feiz.
rather they-lie oaths and faiths

Men Are Faithless: Dido, Phyllis, and Medea

XLVI

A mouse with only one hole is in danger, and a woman should have many friends, since men are faithless. Aeneas left Dido, who killed herself with his sword; Demophon left Phyllis, who hanged herself; Paris left Oenone; and Jason left Medea, who killed their children. So women should cheat men in turn, learn songs, and dress elegantly.

E sachiez une chose veire:
And know one thing true
cil qui sires est de la feire
he who lord is of the fair
deit prendre par tout son toulin;
ought take through all his toll
e qui ne peut a un moulin,
and who not can at one mill
hez a l'autre trestout le cours!
hey to the-other all at-the run
Mout a souriz povre secours
Very has mouse poor succor
e fait en grant perill sa druige
and makes in great peril its frolic
qui n'a qu'un pertuis a refuige.
which not-has but-one hole for refuge
Tout ausinc est il de la fame,
All likewise is it of the woman
qui de touz les marchiez est dame
who of all the markets is lady
que chascuns fait pour li aveir:
which each does for her to-have

prendre deit par tout de l'aveir;
take she-ought through all of the-wealth
car mout avrait fole pensee,
for very she-would-have foolish thought
quant bien se serait pourpensee,
when well herself would-be bethought
s'el ne voulait ami que un;
if-she not wished friend but one
car, par saint Lifart de Meün!
for by saint Lifard of Meun
Qui s'amour en un seul leu livre
Who her-love into one single place delivers
n'a pas son cueur franc ne delivre,
not-has at-all her heart frank nor free
ainz l'a malement asservi.
rather it-has evilly enslaved
Bien a tel fame deservi
Well has such woman deserved
qu'ele ait assez enui e peine
that-she have plenty trouble and pain
qui d'un seul ome amer se peine.
who of-a single man loving herself takes-pains
S'el faut a celui de confort,
If-she fails from him of comfort
el n'a nului qui la confort;
she not-has anyone who her comfort
e ce sont ceus qui plus i faillent
and these are those who most there fail
qui leur cueurs en un seul leu baillent:
who their hearts into one single place give

tuit en la fin toutes les fuient,
all in the end all them flee
quant las en sont e s'en enuient.
when weary thereof they-are and themselves-thereof bore
N'en peut fame a bon chief venir.
Not-thereof can woman to good end come
Onc ne pot Enee tenir
Ever not could Aeneas hold
Dido, reïne de Cartage,
Dido queen of Carthage
qui tant li ot fait d'avantage
who so-much to-him had done of-advantage
que povre l'avait receü
for poor him-she-had received
e revestu e repeü,
and reclothed and refed
las e fuitif dou beau païs
weary and fugitive from-the fair country
de Troie, don il fu naïs.
of Troy of-which he was native
Ses compaignons mout enourot,
His companions much she-honored
car en lui trop grant amour ot;
for in him too great love she-had
fist li ses nés toutes refaire
made for-him his ships all to-remake
pour li servir e pour li plaire;
for him to-serve and for him to-please
dona li, pour s'amour aveir,
gave to-him for his-love to-have

sa cité, son cors, son aveir;
her city her body her wealth
e cil si l'en asseüra
and he so her-thereof assured
qu'il li promist e li jura
that-he to-her promised and to-her swore
que siens iert e toujourz serait
that hers he-was and always would-be
ne jamais ne la laisserait;
nor ever not her would-leave
mais cele guieres n'en joï,
but she much not-thereof enjoyed
car li traïtres s'en foï
for the traitor himself-thence fled
senz congié, par mer a navie,
without leave over sea with fleet
don la bele perdi la vie;
whereby the fair-one lost the life
qu'el s'en ocist ainz l'endemain
for-she herself-thereby killed before the-morrow
de l'espee, o sa propre main,
with the-sword with her own hand
qu'il li ot donee, en sa chambre.
which-he to-her had given in her chamber
Dido, qui son ami remembre,
Dido who her friend remembers
e veit que s'amour a perdue,
and sees that her-love she-has lost

l'espee prent, e toute nue
the-sword takes and all naked
la drece, en contremont la pointe,
it raises in upward the point
souz ses deus mameles l'apointe,
under her two breasts it-she-aims
seur le glaive se lait choeir.
on the blade herself lets fall
Mout fu granz pitiez a voeir,
Very was great pity to see
qui tel fait faire li veïst;
whoever such deed to-do her saw
durs fust cui pitiez n'en preïst
hard he-were whom pity not-thereof took
quant si veïst Dido la bele
when so he-saw Dido the fair
seur la pointe de l'alumele.
on the point of the-blade
Par mi le cors la se ficha,
Through mid the body it herself thrust
tel deul ot don cil la tricha.
such grief she-had at-which he her cheated
Phillis ausinc tant atendi
Phyllis likewise so-long waited
Demophon qu'ele se pendi,
Demophon that-she herself hanged
pour le terme qu'il trespassa,
for the term that-he overpassed
don sairement e fei cassa.
whereby oath and faith he-broke

Que fist Paris de Oenoné,
What did Paris to Oenone
qui cueur e cors li ot doné,
who heart and body to-him had given
e cil s'amour li redona?
and he his-love to-her gave-in-turn
Tantost retolu le don a;
At-once taken-back the gift he-has
si l'en ot il en l'arbre escrites
so to-her-thereof had he on-the tree written
a son coutel letres petites,
with his knife letters small
desus la rive, en leu de chartre,
above the bank in place of charter
qui ne valurent une tartre.
which not were-worth a tart
Ces letres en l'escorce estaient
These letters in-the bark were
d'un poplier e representaient
of-a poplar and represented
que Xantus s'en retournerait
that Xanthus himself-thence would-turn-back
si tost come il la laisserait.
as soon as he her would-leave
Or raut Xantus a sa fontaine,
Now may-go-back Xanthus to his spring
qu'il la laissa puis pour Heleine.
for-he her left afterward for Helen

Que refist Jasons de Medee,
What did-in-turn Jason with Medea
qui si vilment refu boulee
who so vilely in-turn-was tricked
que li faus sa fei li menti
that the false-one his faith to-her lied
puis qu'el l'ot de mort garanti,
after that-she him-had from death protected
quant des toreaus qui feu gitaient
when from-the bulls which fire threw
par leur gueules e qui venaient
through their mouths and which came
Jason ardeir ou depecier:
Jason to-burn or to-tear-to-pieces
senz feu sentir e senz blecier,
without fire feeling and without wounding
par ses charmes le delivra;
by her charms him she-delivered
e le sarpent li enivra
and the serpent for-him she-made-drunk
si qu'onc ne se pot esveillier,
so that-ever not itself could awake
tant le fist forment someillier;
so-much it she-made deeply to-sleep
des chevaliers de terre nez,
of-the knights of earth born
bataillereus e forsenez,
battle-hungry and mad
qui Jason voulaient ocierre,
who Jason wished to-kill

quant il entr'aus gita la pierre,
when he among-them threw the stone
fist ele tant qu'il s'entrepristrent
did she so-much that-they each-other-seized
e qu'il meïsmes s'entrocistrent;
and that-they themselves each-other-killed
e li fist aveir la toison
and to-him made have the fleece
par son art e par sa poison.
by her art and by her potion
Puis fist Eson rejovenir,
Then she-made Aeson rejuvenate
pour meauz Jason a sei tenir;
for better Jason to herself to-hold
ne riens de lui plus ne voulait
nor anything of him more not she-wished
fors qu'il l'amast come il soulait,
except that-he her-loved as he was-wont
e ses merites regardast,
and her merits regarded
pour ce que meauz sa fei gardast.
for this that better his faith he-kept
Puis la laissa, li maus trichierres,
Then her left the evil cheat
li faus, li desleiaus, li lierres;
the false-one the disloyal-one the thief
don ses enfanz, quant el le sot,
whereby her children when she it knew
pour ce que de Jason les ot,
for this that from Jason them she-had

estrangla de deul e de rage;
she-strangled from grief and from rage
don el ne refist pas que sage,
whereby she not did-in-turn at-all as wise
quant el laissa pitié de mere,
when she left pity of mother
e fist pis que marrastre amere.
and did worse than stepmother bitter
Mil essemples dire en savraie,
A-thousand examples to-tell thereof I-would-know
mais trop grant conte a faire avraie.
but too great tale to make I-would-have
Briement, tuit les boulent e trichent,
Briefly all them trick and cheat
tuit sont ribaut, par tout se fichent,
all are rascals through all themselves thrust
si les deit l'en ausinc trichier,
so them ought one likewise cheat
non pas son cueur en un fichier.
not at-all her heart in one to-fix
Fole est fame qui si l'a mis,
Foolish is woman who so it-has put
ainz deit aveir pluseurs amis,
rather she-ought have several friends
e faire, s'el peut, que tant plaise
and do if-she can that so-much she-please
que touz les mete a grant mesaise.
that all them she-put in great distress
S'el n'a graces, si les aquiere,
If-she not-has graces so them let-her-acquire

e seit toujourz vers ceus plus fiere
and let-her-be always toward those more fierce
qui plus, pour s'amour deservir,
who most for her-love to-deserve
se peneront de li servir.
themselves will-take-pains of her serving
E de ceus acuillir s'efforce
And of those welcoming herself-let-her-strive
qui de s'amour ne feront force.
who of her-love not will-make force
Sache de jeus e de chançons
Let-her-know of games and of songs
e fuie noises e tençons.
and let-her-flee quarrels and scoldings
S'el n'est bele, si se cointeit,
If-she not-is fair so herself let-her-prettify
la plus laide atour plus cointe ait.
the most ugly attire most elegant let-her-have

The Arts of Beauty

XLVII

A woman who loses her hair should wear the hair of the dead and dye it, paint her face in secret, and show a white neck and hide heavy shoulders, ugly hands, or bad breath. She should laugh with closed lips if her teeth are poor, and weep whenever she wishes, as women do, though a man should never be moved by such tears.

E s'ele voait dechoeir,
And if-she saw to-fall
don granz deaus serait a voeir,
whereof great grief would-be to see
les beaus crins de sa teste blonde;
the fair locks of her head blond
ou s'il couvient que l'en les tonde,
or if-it behooves that one them shear
pour aucune grant maladie,
for some great sickness
don beautez est tost enlaidie;
whereby beauty is soon made-ugly
ou s'il avient que par courrouz
or if-it happens that by anger
les ait aucuns ribauz touz rouz
them have some rascal all torn-out
si que de ceus ne puisse ouvrer,
so that with those not she-can work
pour grosses treces recouvrer,
for big braids to-recover

face tant que l'en li aporte
let-her-do so-much that one to-her bring
cheveus de quelque fame morte,
hair of some woman dead
ou de seie blonde bourreaus,
or of silk blond pads
e boute tout en ses fourreaus.
and let-her-thrust all into her sheaths
Seur ses oreilles port teus cornes
Above her ears let-her-wear such horns
que cers ne bous ne unicornes,
that stag nor ox nor unicorns
s'il se deveit touz effronter,
if-he himself ought all shatter
ne puist ses cornes seurmonter;
not can her horns surpass
e s'eus ont mestier d'estre teintes,
and if-they have need of-being dyed
teigne les en jus d'erbes maintes,
let-her-dye them in juice of-herbs many
car mout ont forces e mecines
for much have forces and medicines
fruit, fust, fueille, escorce e racines.
fruit wood leaf bark and roots
E s'el reperdait sa couleur,
And if-she lost-again her color
don mout avrait au cueur douleur,
whereof much she-would-have at-the heart grief

procurt qu'ele ait ointures moistes
let-her-provide that-she have ointments moist
en ses chambres, dedenz ses boistes,
in her chambers within her boxes
toujourz pour sei farder repostes;
always for herself to-paint hidden
mais bien gart que nus de ses ostes
but well let-her-guard that any of her guests
nes puist ne sentir ne voeir,
not-them can neither smell nor see
trop li en pourrait meschoeir.
exceedingly to-her thereby could mischance
S'ele a beau col e gorge blanche,
If-she has fair neck and throat white
gart que cil qui sa robe trenche
let-her-guard that he who her robe cuts
si trés bien la li escolete
so very well it to-her low-cuts
que la char pere blanche e nete
that the flesh appear white and clean
demi pié darriers e devant,
half foot behind and before
s'en iert assez plus decevant.
so-thereby will-be quite more deceiving
E s'ele a trop grosses espaules
And if-she has too big shoulders
pour plaire a dances e a baules,
for to-please at dances and at balls

de delié drap robe port,
of fine cloth robe let-her-wear
si parra de meins lait deport.
so she-will-appear of less ugly bearing
E s'el n'a mains beles e netes
And if-she not-has hands fair and clean
ou de sirons ou de bubetes,
either from mites or from pimples
13325 gart que laissier ne les i vueille;
let-her-guard that to-leave not them there she-wish
face les oster a l'agueille;
let-her-make them remove with-the needle
ou ses mains en ses ganz repoigne,
or her hands in her gloves let-her-hide
si n'i parra bube ne roigne.
so not-there will-appear pimple nor scab
E s'ele a trop lourdes mameles,
And if-she has too heavy breasts
13330 preigne cuevrechief ou toeles,
let-her-take kerchief or cloths
don seur le piz se face estreindre
with-which on the breast herself let-her-make bind
e tout entour ses costez ceindre,
and all around her sides to-gird
puis atachier, cousdre ou noer,
then fasten sew or knot
lors si se peut aler joer.
then so herself she-can go play

E come bone baisselete,
And as good little-maid
tiegne la chambre Venus nete;
let-her-keep the chamber of-Venus clean
s'ele est preuz e bien enseignie,
if-she is worthy and well taught
ne laist entour nule iraignie
not let-her-leave around any spider
qu'el n'arde ou ree, arache ou housse,
that-she not-burn or shave pull-off or sweep
si qu'il n'i puisse cuillir mousse.
so that-it not-there can gather moss
S'ele a laiz piez, toujourz lés chauce,
If-she has ugly feet always them let-her-shoe
a grosse jambe ait tenve chauce.
with big leg let-her-have thin stocking
Briement s'el set seur li nul vice,
Briefly if-she knows on her any vice
couvrir le deit, se mout n'est nice.
cover it she-ought if very not-she-is silly
S'el set qu'ele ait mauvaise aleine,
If-she knows that-she have bad breath
ne li deit estre griés ne peine
not to-her ought be grievous nor pain
de garder que ja ne jeüne,
of guarding that ever not she-fast
ne qu'el ne parole jeüne,
nor that-she not speak fasting

e gart, s'el peut, si bien sa bouche
and let-her-guard if-she can so well her mouth
que près dou nés aus genz n'aprouche.
that near of-the nose to-the folk not-she-approach
E s'il li prent de rire envie,
And if-it to-her takes of laughing desire
si sagement e si bel rie
so wisely and so fairly let-her-laugh
qu'ele descrive deus fossetes
that-she trace two dimples
d'ambedeus parz de ses levretes;
on-both sides of her little-lips
ne par ris n'enfle trop ses joes
nor by laughing not-let-her-puff too-much her cheeks
ne nes restreigne par ses moes.
nor not-them let-her-contract by her pouts
Ja ses levres par ris ne s'euvrent,
Ever her lips by laughing not let-them-open
mais repoignent les denz e cueuvrent.
but let-them-hide the teeth and cover
Fame deit rire a bouche close,
Woman ought laugh with mouth closed
car ce n'est mie bele chose
for this not-is at-all fair thing
quant el rit a gueule estendue:
when she laughs with throat stretched
trop semble estre large e fendue.
too-much it-seems to-be wide and split

E s'el n'a denz bien ordenees,
And if-she not-has teeth well ordered
mais laides e senz ordre nees,
but ugly and without order born
s'el les montrait par sa risee
if-she them showed by her laughter
meins en pourrait estre prisee.
less thereby she-could be prized
Au plourer rafiert il maniere;
In-the weeping befits it manner
mais chascune est assez maniere
but each is plenty skilled
de bien plourer en quelque place;
in well weeping in whatever place
car, ja seit ce qu'en ne leur face
for even be it that-one not to-them do
ne griés ne hontes ne molestes,
neither griefs nor shames nor troubles
toujourz ont eus les lermes prestes,
always have they the tears ready
toutes pleurent e plourer seulent
all weep and to-weep are-wont
en tel guise come eles veulent.
in such guise as they wish
Mais on ne se deit ja mouveir
But man not himself ought ever move
s'il voait teus lermes plouveir
if-he saw such tears rain
ausinc espès come onques plut,
as thick as ever it-rained

qu'onc a fame teus pleurs ne plut,
for-ever to woman such tears not pleased
ne teus deaus, ne teus maremenz,
nor such griefs nor such laments
13380 que ce ne fust conchiemenz.
that this not were cheating
Pleurs de fame n'est fors aguiet,
Tears of woman not-is except ambush
lors n'est douleurs qu'ele n'aguiet;
then not-is grief that-she not-lie-in-wait-for
mais gart que par voiz ne par euvre
but let-her-guard that by voice nor by work
riens de son penser ne descueuvre.
anything of her thought not she-uncover

At Table

XLVIII

At table a woman should come last, serve the others, touch her food with her fingertips, and wipe her lips before drinking. She should drink little and often and never get drunk, for a drunk woman tells all, and she should not sleep at table, remembering Palinurus, who fell asleep at the helm of Aeneas's ship and drowned.

13385 Si rafiert bien qu'el seit a table
So befits-in-turn well that-she be at table
de contenance couvenable;
of conduct fitting
mais, ainz qu'el s'i viegne soeir,
but before that-she herself-there come to-sit

face sei par l'ostel voeir,
let-her-make herself through the-house to-see
e a chascun entendre doigne
and to each to-understand let-her-give
qu'ele fait trop bien la besoigne;
that-she does exceedingly well the business
aille e viegne avant e arriere,
let-her-go and come forward and back
e s'assiee la darreniere;
and herself-let-sit the last
e se face un petit atendre
and herself let-make a little to-wait
ainz qu'el puisse a soeir entendre.
before that-she can to sitting attend
E quant ele iert a table assise,
And when she will-be at table seated
face, s'el peut, a touz servise:
let-her-do if-she can to all service
devant les autres deit taillier,
before the others she-ought carve
e dou pain entour sei baillier;
and of-the bread around herself to-give
e deit, pour grace deservir,
and she-ought for grace to-deserve
devant le compaignon servir
before the companion to-serve
qui deit mangier en s'escuële:
who ought eat in her-bowl
devant lui mete ou cuisse ou ele,
before him let-her-put either thigh or wing

ou beuf ou porc devant lui taille,
or beef or pork before him let-her-carve
selonc ce qu'il avront vitaille,
according-to this that-they will-have victuals
seit de peisson ou seit de char;
be-it of fish or be-it of flesh
n'ait ja cueur de servir eschar,
not-let-her-have ever heart of serving stingily
s'il est qui sofrir le li vueille.
if-there is who to-allow it to-her wish
E bien se gart qu'ele ne mueille
And well herself let-her-guard that-she not wet
ses deiz es broez jusqu'aus jointes,
her fingers in-the broths up-to-the joints
ne qu'el n'ait pas ses levres ointes
nor that-she not-have at-all her lips anointed
de soupes, d'auz ne de char grasse,
with sops with-garlic nor with flesh fat
ne que trop de morseaus n'entasse,
nor that too-many of morsels not-she-heap
ne trop gros nes mete en sa bouche.
nor too big not-them let-her-put in her mouth
Dou bout des deiz le morsel touche
With-the end of-the fingers the morsel let-her-touch
qu'el devra moillier en la sausse,
which-she will-have-to dip in the sauce
seit vert ou cameline ou jausse,
be-it green or cameline or yellow
e sagement port sa bouchiee,
and wisely let-her-carry her mouthful

que seur son piz goute n'en chiee
that on her breast drop not-thereof fall
de soupe, de saveur, de peivre.
of soup of savor of pepper
E si gentement redeit beivre
And so gracefully in-turn-she-ought to-drink
que seur sei n'en espande goute,
that on herself not-thereof she-spill drop
car pour trop rude ou pour trop gloute
for for too rude or for too greedy
l'en pourrait bien aucuns tenir
her-thereby could well some hold
qui ce li verrait avenir;
who this to-her would-see happen
e gart que ja hanap ne touche
and let-her-guard that ever cup not she-touch
tant come ele ait morsel en bouche.
as-long as she have morsel in mouth
Si deit si bien sa bouche terdre
So she-ought so well her mouth wipe
qu'el n'i laist nule graisse aerdre,
that-she not-there let any grease cling
au meins en la levre deseure,
at-the least on the lip upper
car, quant graisse en cele demeure,
for when grease on that remains
ou vin en perent les mailletes,
in-the wine thereof appear the little-spots
qui ne sont ne beles ne netes.
which not are neither fair nor clean

E beive petit a petit,
And let-her-drink little by little
combien qu'ele ait grant apetit;
however-much that-she have great appetite
ne beive pas a une aleine
not let-her-drink at-all in one breath
ne hanap plein ne coupe pleine;
neither cup full nor goblet full
ainz beive petit e souvent,
rather let-her-drink little and often
qu'el n'aut les autres esmouvant
that-she not-go the others moving
a dire que trop en engorge,
to say that too-much thereof she-gulps
ne que trop beive a gloute gorge;
nor that too-much she-drink with greedy throat
mais delieement le coule.
but daintily it let-her-pour
Le bort dou hanap trop n'engoule,
The rim of-the cup too-much not-let-her-swallow
si come font maintes nourrices,
so as do many nurses
qui sont si gloutes e si nices
who are so greedy and so silly
qu'eus versent vin en gorge cruese
that-they pour wine into throat hollow
tout ausinc come en une huese,
all just as into a boot

e tant a granz gorz en entonent
and so-much by great gulps thereof they-funnel
qu'eus s'en confondent e estonent.
that-they themselves-thereby confound and stun
E bien se gart qu'el ne s'en ivre,
And well herself let-her-guard that-she not herself-thereby make-drunk
car en ome ne en fame ivre 13450
for in man nor in woman drunk
ne peut avoir chose secree;
not can have thing secret
e puis que fame est enivree,
and after that woman is made-drunk
il n'a point en li de defense,
it not-has at-all in her of defense
e jangle tout quanqu'ele pense,
and chatters all whatever-she thinks
e est a touz abandonee 13455
and is to all abandoned
quant a tel meschief s'est donee.
when to such mischief herself-is given
E se gart de dormir a table:
And herself let-her-guard from sleeping at table
trop en serait meins agreable;
far thereby she-would-be less agreeable
trop de laides choses avienent
too-many of ugly things happen
a ceus qui teus dormirs maintienent. 13460
to those who such sleepings maintain

Ce n'est pas sens de someillier
This not-is at-all sense of slumbering
es leus estabIiz a veillier;
in-the places established for waking
maint en ont esté deceü,
many thereby have been deceived
par maintes feiz en sont cheü
by many times thereby are fallen
devant ou darriers ou en coste,
before or behind or on side
brisant ou braz ou teste ou coste:
breaking either arm or head or rib
gart que teus dormirs ne la tiegne;
let-her-guard that such sleepings not her hold
de Palinurus li souviegne,
of Palinurus to-her it-let-remind
qui gouvernait la nef Enee:
who steered the ship of-Aeneas
veillant l'avait bien gouvernee,
waking it-he-had well steered
mais, quant dormirs l'ot envaï,
but when sleep him-had invaded
dou gouvernail en mer chaï,
from-the helm into sea he-fell
e des compaignons neia près,
and of-the companions drowned near
qui mout le plourerent après.
who much him wept afterward

Dress and Display

XLIX

A woman should seek love while she is young, for old age takes it away. The Old Woman is sure schools will read her lesson. A woman should go out to church, weddings, and dances, walk gracefully, lift her robe to show her foot, spread her mantle like a peacock's tail, and show her hair; and like the she-wolf, which attacks a thousand ewes to take one, she should spread her nets for every man.

Si deit la dame prendre garde
So ought the lady take heed
que trop a joer ne se tarde,
that too-much in playing not herself she-delay
car el pourrait bien tant atendre
for she could well so-long wait
que nus n'i voudrait la main tendre.
that any not-there would-wish the hand to-stretch
Querre deit d'Amours le deduit
Seek she-ought of-Love the delight
tant con jennece la deduit,
as-long as youth her delights
car, quant vieillece fame assaut,
for when old-age woman assails
d'Amours pert la joie e l'assaut.
of-Love she-loses the joy and the-assault
Le fruit d'Amours, se fame est sage,
The fruit of-Love if woman is wise
cueille en la fleur de son aage,
let-her-pluck in the flower of her age
car tant pert de son tens, la lasse,
for so-much loses of her time the wretch

con sanz joïr d'amours en passe.
as without enjoying of-love thereof she-passes
E s'el ne creit ce mien conseil,
And if-she not believes this my counsel
que pour comun profit conseil,
which for common profit I-counsel
sache qu'el s'en repentira
let-her-know that-she herself-thereof will-repent
quant vieillece la flestira.
when old-age her will-wither
Mais bien sai qu'eles m'en creront,
But well I-know that-they me-thereof will-believe
au meins ceus qui sages seront,
at-the least those who wise will-be
e se tendront aus regles nostres,
and themselves will-hold to-the rules ours
e diront maintes paternostres
and will-say many paternosters
pour m'ame quant je serai morte,
for my-soul when I will-be dead
qui les enseigne ore e conforte;
who them teach now and comfort
car bien sai que cete parole
for well I-know that this word
sera leüe en mainte escole.
will-be read in many-a school

Beaus trés douz fiz, se vous vivez,
Fair very sweet son if you live
car bien vei que vous escrivez
for well I-see that you write
ou livre dou cueur volentiers
in-the book of-the heart willingly
touz mes enseignemenz entiers,
all my teachings entire
e quant de mei departireiz,
and when from me you-will-depart
se Deu plaist, encore en lireiz,
if God please still therein you-will-lecture
e en sereiz maistres con gié,
and thereof you-will-be master as I
je vous doing de lire congié,
I you give of lecturing license
maugré trestouz les chanceliers,
in-spite-of all the chancellors
e par chambres e par celiers,
and through chambers and through cellars
en prez, en jardins, en gaudines,
in meadows in gardens in groves
souz paveillons e souz courtines,
under pavilions and under curtains
e d'enfourmer les escoliers
and of-informing the scholars
par garderobes, par soliers,
through wardrobes through upper-rooms
par despenses e par estables,
through pantries and through stables

s'ous n'avez leus plus delitables.
if-you not-have places more delightful
Mais que ma leçon seit leüe,
Provided that my lesson be read
quant vous l'avreiz bien retenue.
when you it-will-have well retained
E gart que trop ne seit enclose,
And let-her-guard that too-much not be-she shut-in
car, quant plus a l'ostel repose,
for when more at the-house she-rests
meins est de toutes genz veüe
less she-is by all folk seen
e sa beauté meins queneüe,
and her beauty less known
meins couveitiee e meins requise.
less coveted and less sought
Souvent aille a la maistre iglise
Often let-her-go to the chief church
e face visitacions,
and let-her-make visits
a noces, a processions,
to weddings to processions
a jeus, a festes, a queroles,
to games to feasts to carols
car en teus leus tient ses escoles
for in such places holds his schools
e chante a ses deciples messe
and sings to his disciples mass
li deus d'Amours e la deesse.
the god of-Love and the goddess

Mais bien se seit anceis miree,
But well herself let-her-have before mirrored
saveir s'ele est bien atiree.
to-know if-she is well attired
E quant a point se sentira,
And when to point herself she-will-feel
e par les rues s'en ira,
and through the streets herself-thence will-go
si seit de beles aleüres,
so let-her-be of fair gaits
non pas trop moles ne trop dures,
not at-all too soft nor too hard
trop eslevees ne trop courbes,
too raised nor too bent
mais bien plaisanz en toutes tourbes.
but well pleasing in all crowds
Les espaules, les costez meuve
The shoulders the sides let-her-move
si noblement que l'en n'en treuve
so nobly that one not-thereof find
nule de plus beau mouvement;
any of more fair movement
e marche jolietement
and let-her-step prettily
de ses beaus solerez petiz,
with her fair little-shoes small

que faire avra fait si faitiz
which to-make she-will-have made so well-fashioned
qu'il joindront aus piez si a point
that-they will-fit to-the feet so to point
que de fronce n'i avra point.
that of wrinkle not-there will-have at-all
13545 E se sa robe li traïne,
And if her robe on-her trails
ou près dou pavement s'encline,
or near of-the pavement itself-bends
si la lieve en coste ou devant,
so it let-her-lift on side or before
si com pour prendre un po de vent,
so as for to-take a little of wind
ou pour ce que faire le sueille
or for this that to-do it she-be-wont
13550 ausinc con secourcier se vueille
just as to-tuck-up herself she-wish
pour aveir le pas plus delivre.
for to-have the step more free
Lors gart que si le pié delivre
Then let-her-guard that so the foot she-free
que chascuns qui passe la veie
that each who passes the way
la bele fourme dou pié veie.
the fair form of-the foot see

E s'ele est teus que mantel port,
And if-she is such that mantle she-wear
si le deit porter de tel port
so it she-ought wear with such bearing
qu'il trop la veüe n'encombre
that-it too-much the view not-encumber
dou bel cors a cui il fait ombre.
of-the fair body to which it makes shadow
E pour ce que li cors meauz pere,
And for this that the body better appear
e li tessuz don el se pere,
and the girdle with-which she herself adorns
qui n'iert trop larges ne trop grailles,
which not-will-be too wide nor too thin
d'argent doré a menuz pelles,
of-silver gilded with small pearls
e l'aumosniere touteveie,
and the-purse nevertheless
qu'il rest bien dreiz que l'en la veie,
for-it is-in-turn well right that one it see
a deus mains deit le mantel prendre,
with two hands she-ought the mantle take
les braz eslargir e estendre,
the arms to-widen and to-stretch
seit par bele veie ou par boe;
be-it by fair way or by mud
e li souviegne de la roe
and to-her it-let-remind of the wheel
que li paons fait de sa queue;
which the peacock makes with its tail

face ausinc dou mantel la seue,
let-her-make likewise of-the mantle the hers
si que la penne ou vaire ou grise,
so that the fur either vair or gray
ou tel come el l'i avra mise,
or such as she it-there will-have put
e tout le cors en apert montre
and all the body in open she-show
a ceus qu'el veit muser encontre.
to those whom-she sees gape at-her
E s'el n'est bele de visage,
And if-she not-is fair of face
plus leur deit tourner come sage
more to-them she-ought turn as wise
ses beles treces, blondes, chieres,
her fair braids blond dear
e tout le haterel darrieres,
and all the nape behind
quant bel e bien trecié le sent;
when fair and well braided it she-feels
c'est une chose mout plaisant
this-is a thing very pleasing
que beauté de cheveleüre.
that-is beauty of hair
Toujourz deit fame metre cure
Always ought woman put care
qu'el puist la louve resembler
that-she can the she-wolf resemble
quant el veaut les berbiz embler;
when she wishes the ewes to-steal

car, qu'el ne puist dou tout faillir,
for that-she not can in-the whole fail
pour une en vait mil assaillir;
for one thereof she-goes a-thousand to-assail
qu'el ne set la quel el prendra
for-she not knows the which she will-take
devant que prise la tendra.
before that taken her she-will-hold
Ausinc deit fame partout tendre
Likewise ought woman everywhere stretch
ses reiz pour touz les omes prendre,
her nets for all the men to-take
car, pour ce qu'el ne peut saveir
for for this that-she not can know
des queus el puist la grace aveir,
of-the which-ones she can the grace have
au meins pour un a sei sachier,
at-the least for one to herself to-draw
a touz deit son croc atachier:
to all she-ought her hook attach
lors ne devra pas avenir
then not it-will-have-to at-all happen
qu'el n'en deie aucun pris tenir
that-she not-thereof ought some taken hold
des fos entre tant de milliers
of-the fools among so-many of thousands
qui li frotera ses illiers;
who to-her will-rub her loins

veire pluseurs par aventure,
indeed several by chance
car art aïde mout nature.
for art aids much nature

Many Suitors, and How to Pluck Them

L

A woman with many suitors should never let two meet, and should strip each of everything. She should not love a poor man, a guest, or a vain man, nor give herself before the money is in hand. She should keep a suitor between hope and fear, swear she never yielded before, and pluck him with the help of her servants, nurse, and mother, who complain that she lacks a robe.

E s'ele pluseurs en acroche
And if-she several thereof hooks
qui metre la vueillent en broche,
who to-put her wish on spit
gart, coment que la chose cueure,
let-her-guard however that the thing run
qu'ele ne mete a deus une eure,
that-she not put to two one hour
car pour deceü se tendraient
for for deceived themselves they-would-hold
quant pluseur ensemble vendraient,
when several together would-come
si la pourraient bien laissier:
so her they-could well leave
ce la pourrait mout abaissier;
this her could much lower

car au meins li eschaperait
for at-the least to-her would-escape
ce que chascuns aporterait,
that which each would-bring
el ne leur deit ja riens laissier
she not to-them ought ever anything leave
don il se puissent engraissier,
whereby they themselves could fatten
mais metre en si grant povreté
but to-put into so great poverty
qu'il muirent las e endeté,
that-they die wretched and indebted
e cele en seit riche mananz,
and she thereby be rich abounding
car perduz est li remananz.
for lost is the remainder
D'amer povre ome ne li chaille,
Of-loving poor man not to-her it-let-matter
qu'il n'est riens que povres on vaille;
for-it not-is anything that poor man be-worth
se c'iert Ovides ou Homers,
if this-were Ovid or Homer
ne vaudrait il pas deus gomers.
not would-be-worth he at-all two omers
Ne ne li chaille d'amer oste,
Nor not to-her it-let-matter of-loving guest
car, ausinc come il met e oste
for just as he puts and removes
son cors en divers herberjages,
his body in diverse lodgings

ausinc li est li cueurs volages.
likewise to-him is the heart fickle
Oste amer ne li lo je pas;
Guest to-love not to-her counsel I at-all
mais touteveis en son trespas
but nevertheless in his passing
se deniers ou joiaus li ofre,
if pence or jewels to-her he-offers
preigne tout e boute en son cofre,
let-her-take all and thrust into her coffer
e face lors cil son plaisir
and let-do then he his pleasure
ou tout en haste ou a leisir.
either all in haste or at leisure
E bien gart qu'el n'aint ne ne prise
And well let-her-guard that-she not-love nor not prize
nul ome de trop grant cointise,
any man of too great elegance
ne qui de sa beauté se vante,
nor who of his beauty himself boasts
car c'est orgueauz qui si le tente;
for this-is pride which so him tempts
si s'est en l'ire Deu boutez
so himself-is into the-wrath of-God thrust
on qui se plaist, ja n'en doutez,
man who himself pleases ever not-thereof doubt
car ainsinc le dit Tholomee,
for thus it says Ptolemy
par cui fu mout science amee.
by whom was very knowledge loved

Teus n'a poeir de bien amer,
Such-one not-has power of well loving
tant a mauvais cueur e amer;
so-much he-has wicked heart and bitter
e ce qu'il avra dit a l'une
and that which-he will-have said to the-one
autant en dit il a chascune,
as-much thereof says he to each
e pluseurs en revait lober,
and several thereof he-goes-again to-trick
pour eus despoillier e rober;
for them to-strip and to-rob
mainte complainte en ai veüe
many-a complaint thereof I-have seen
de pucele ainsinc deceüe.
of maiden thus deceived
E s'il vient aucuns prometierres,
And if-there comes some promiser
seit leiaus on ou hoquelierres,
be-he loyal man or trickster
qui la vueille d'amour prier
who her wish of-love to-beg
e par promesse a sei lier,
and by promise to himself to-bind
e cele ausinc li repromete;
and she likewise to-him promise-in-turn

mais bien se gart qu'el ne se mete
but well herself let-her-guard that-she not herself put
pour nule rien en sa menaie,
for any thing into his keeping
s'el ne tient anceis la moneie.
if-she not holds before the money
E s'il mande riens par escrit,
And if-he sends anything by writing
gart se cil feintement escrit
let-her-mark if he feignedly writes
ou s'il a bone entencion
or if-he has good intention
de fin cueur senz decepcion.
of true heart without deception
Emprès li rescrive en po d'eure,
After to-him let-her-write-back in little of-hour
mais ne seit pas fait senz demeure:
but not it-let-be at-all done without delay
demeure les amanz atise,
delay the lovers stirs
mais que trop longue ne seit prise.
provided that too long not be taken
E quant ele orra la requeste
And when she will-hear the request
de l'amant, gart qu'el ne se heste
of the-lover let-her-guard that-she not herself hasten
de s'amour dou tout otreier;
of her-love in-the whole to-grant
ne ne li deit dou tout neier,
nor not to-him ought in-the whole deny

ainz le deit tenir en balance,
rather him she-ought hold in balance
qu'il ait peeur e esperance.
that-he have fear and hope
E quant cil plus la requerra
And when he more her will-beg
e cele ne li oferra
and she not to-him will-offer
s'amour, qui si forment l'enlace,
her-love which so strongly him-enlaces
gart sei la dame que tant face
let-guard herself the lady that so-much she-do
par son engin e par sa force
by her wit and by her force
que l'esperance adès enforce,
that the-hope ever strengthen
e petit a petit s'en aille
and little by little itself-thence go
la peeur tant qu'ele defaille,
the fear until that-it fail
e qu'il facent pais e concorde.
and that-they make peace and concord
Cele, qui puis a lui s'acorde,
She who afterward with him herself-accords
e qui tant set de guiles feintes,
and who so-much knows of guiles feigned

Deu deit jurer e sainz et saintes
by-God she-ought swear and male-saints and female-saints
qu'onc ne se vost mais otrier
that-ever not herself wished ever to-grant
a nul, tant la seüst prier;
to any however-much her he-knew to-beg
e die: «Sire, c'est la some,
and let-her-say Lord this-is the sum
fei que dei saint Pere de Rome,
by-the-faith that I-owe saint Peter of Rome
par fine amour a vous me don,
by true love to you myself I-give
car ce n'est pas pour vostre don;
for this not-is at-all for your gift
n'est on nez pour cui ce feïsse
not-is man born for whom this I-would-do
pour nul don, tant grant le veïsse.
for any gift however great it I-might-see
Maint vaillant ome ai refusé,
Many-a valiant man I-have refused
car mout ont maint a mei musé;
for much have many at me gaped
si crei que m'avez enchantee;
so I-believe that me-you-have enchanted
male chançon m'avez chantee.»
evil song me-you-have sung
Lors le deit estreit acoler
Then him she-ought tightly embrace
e baisier, pour meauz afoler.
and to-kiss for better to-befool

Mais, s'el veaut mon conseil aveir,
But if-she wishes my counsel to-have
ne tende a riens fors qu'a l'aveir.
not let-her-aim at anything except that-at the-wealth
Fole est qui son ami ne plume
Foolish she-is who her friend not plucks
jusqu'a la darreniere plume;
up-to the last feather
car, qui meauz plumer le savra,
for who best to-pluck him will-know
c'iert cele qui meilleur l'avra,
this-will-be she who better him-will-have
e qui plus iert chiere tenue,
and who more will-be dear held
quant plus chier se sera vendue;
when more dear herself she-will-have sold
car ce que l'en a pour neient,
for that which one has for nothing
trop le va l'en plus viteiant;
far it goes one more vilifying
l'en nou prise pas une escorce;
one not-it prizes at-all a bark
se l'en le pert, l'en n'i fait force,
if one it loses one not-there makes force
au meins si grant ne si notee
at-the least so great nor so noted
con qui l'avrait chier achetee.
as who it-would-have dear bought

Mais au plumer couvient maniere:
But in-the plucking behooves manner
ses vallez e sa chamberiere
her servants and her chambermaid
e sa sereur e sa nourrice
and her sister and her nurse
e sa mere, se mout n'est nice,
and her mother if very not-she-is silly
pour qu'il consentent la besoigne,
provided that-they consent-to the business
facent tuit tant que cil leur doigne
let-them-do all so-much that he to-them give
seurcot ou cote ou ganz ou moufles,
surcoat or coat or gloves or mittens
e ravissent come uns escoufles
and let-them-snatch like a kite
quanqu'il en pourront agraper,
whatever-they thereof will-be-able grab
si que cil ne puist eschaper
so that he not can escape
de leur mains en nule maniere
from their hands in any manner
tant qu'il ait fait sa darreniere,
until that-he have done his last
si con cil qui jeue aus noiaus,
so as he who plays at-the nut-stones
tant leur doint deniers e joiaus.
so-much to-them let-him-give pence and jewels

Mout est plus tost preie achevee
Much is more soon prey achieved
quant par pluseurs mains est levee.
when by several hands is lifted
Autre feiz li redient: «Sire,
Other time to-him they-say-again Lord
puis qu'il le vous couvient a dire,
since that-it it to-you behooves to say
vez qu'a ma dame robe faut:
see that-for my lady robe lacks
coment sofrez vous cet defaut?
how allow you this lack
Sel vousist faire, par saint Gile!
If-it he-wished to-do by saint Giles
Pour tel a il en cete vile,
For such has it in this town
come reïne fust vestue,
as queen she-would-be clothed
e chevauchast a grant sambue.
and would-ride with great saddle-cloth
Dame, pour quei tant atendez
Lady for why so-long you-wait
que vous ne la li demandez?
that you not it of-him ask
Trop par estes vers lui honteuse
Too much you-are toward him shamefaced
quant si vous laisse sofraiteuse.»
when so you he-leaves wanting

E cele, combien qu'il li plaisent,
And she however-much that-they to-her please
leur deit comander qu'il se taisent,
to-them ought command that-they themselves keep-silent
qui tant, espeir, en a levé
who so-much perhaps thereof has raised
13740 qu'el l'a trop durement grevé.
that-she him-has too harshly grieved

Tricks Played on Lovers

LI

When a lover tires of giving, she should borrow and never repay, claim her robes are in pawn, and disbelieve his promises. She should feign fear when receiving him, let him in by the window, and accuse him of keeping another woman, so that he thinks she is more jealous than Vulcan was when he caught Venus with Mars.

E s'ele veit qu'il s'aperceive
And if-she sees that-he himself-perceive
qu'il li doint plus que il ne deive,
that-he to-her give more than he — ought
e que forment grevez cuide estre
and that greatly grieved he-thinks to-be
des granz dons don il la seaut paistre,
by-the great gifts with-which he her is-wont to-feed
13745 e sentira que de doner
and will-feel that of giving
ne l'ose ele mais sarmoner,
not him-dares she more to-preach

lors li deit prier qu'il li preste,
then him she-ought beg that-he to-her lend
e li jurt qu'ele est toute preste
and to-him let-her-swear that-she is all ready
de le li rendre a jour nomé
of it to-him returning at day named
tel come il li avra nomé.
such as he to-her will-have named
Mais bien est par mei defendu
But well is by me forbidden
que jamais n'en seit riens rendu.
that ever not-thereof be anything returned
Se ses autres amis revient,
If her other friend comes-again
don ele a pluseurs, se devient,
of-whom she has several if it-happens
mais en nul d'aus son cueur n'a mis,
but in any of-them her heart not-she-has put
tout les claime ele touz amis,
even-if them calls she all friends
si se complaigne, come sage,
so herself let-her-complain as wise
que sa meilleur robe e si gage
that her best robe and her pledges
cueurent chascun jour a usure,
run each day at usury

13760 don ele est en si grant ardure
whereby she is in so great burning
e tant est ses cueurs a mesaise
and so-much is her heart in distress
qu'el ne fera riens que li plaise
that-she not will-do anything that to-him please
se cil ne li raient ses gages;
if he not to-her redeems her pledges
e li vallez, se mout n'est sages,
and the young-man if very not-he-is wise
13765 pour quei pecune li seit sourse,
provided that money to-him be source
metra tantost main a la bourse,
will-put at-once hand to the purse
ou fera quelque chevissance
or will-make some arrangement
don li gage aient delivrance,
whereby the pledges have deliverance
qui n'ont mestier d'estre raienz,
which not-have need of-being redeemed
13770 ainz sont, espeir, trestuit laienz,
rather are perhaps all within
pour le bacheler enserré
for the bachelor shut-in
en aucun cofre bien ferré,
in some coffer well iron-bound
qu'il ne li chaut, espeir, s'il cerche
for-it not to-her matters perhaps if-he searches
dedenz sa huche ou a sa perche,
within her chest or on her peg

pour estre de lui meauz creüe,
for to-be by him better believed
tant qu'ele ait la pecune eüe.
until that-she have the money had
Le tierz reserve d'autel lobe;
The third let-her-serve-again with-the-same trick
ou ceinture d'argent, ou robe,
either belt of-silver or robe
ou guimple lo qu'el li demande,
or wimple I-counsel that-she of-him ask
e puis deniers qu'ele despende.
and then pence which-she may-spend
E s'il ne li a que porter,
And if-he not to-her has what to-bring
e jurt, pour li reconforter,
and swears for her to-comfort
e fiance de pié, de main
and pledges with foot with hand
qu'il l'aportera l'endemain,
that-he it-will-bring the-morrow
face lui les oreilles sourdes;
let-her-make to-him the ears deaf
n'en creie riens, car ce sont bourdes.
not-thereof let-her-believe anything for these are tales
Trop sont tuit espert menteeur;
Exceedingly are all expert liars
plus m'ont menti, li fouteeur,
more me-have lied the fornicators

e feiz e sairemenz jadis
both faiths and oaths formerly
qu'il n'a de sainz en paradis.
than-there not-has of saints in paradise
Au meins, puis qu'il n'a que paier,
At-the least since that-he not-has what to-pay
face au vin son gage enveier
let-her-make to-the wine his pledge to-send
pour deus deniers, pour treis, pour quatre,
for two pence for three for four
ou s'aille hors ailleurs esbatre.
or let-him-go out elsewhere to-disport
Si deit fame, s'el n'est musarde,
So ought woman if-she not-is gaping-fool
faire semblant d'estre coarde,
to-make semblance of-being coward
de trembler, d'estre poereuse,
of trembling of-being fearful
d'estre destreite e angoisseuse
of-being distressed and anguished
quant son ami deit receveir,
when her friend she-ought receive
e li face entendre de veir
and to-him make understand of truth
qu'en trop grant perill le receit
that-in too great peril him she-receives
quant son mari pour lui deceit,
when her husband for him she-deceives
ou ses gardes, ou ses parenz;
or her guards or her kinsmen

e que, se la chose ert paranz
and that if the thing were apparent
qu'ele veaut faire en repostaille, 13805
which-she wishes to-do in hiding
morte serait senz nule faille;
dead she-would-be without any fail
e jurt qu'il ne peut demourer,
and let-her-swear that-he not can remain
s'il la devait vive acourer;
if-he her ought alive gut
puis demeurt a sa volenté
then let-him-remain at her will
quant el l'avra bien enchanté. 13810
when she him-will-have well enchanted
Si li redeit bien souvenir,
So to-her in-turn-ought well to-remember
quant ses amis devra venir,
when her friend will-have-to come
s'el veit que nus ne l'aperceive,
if-she sees that any not him-perceive
par la fenestre le receive,
by the window him let-her-receive
tout puisse ele meauz par la porte; 13815
even-if can she better by the gate
e jurt qu'ele est destruite e morte,
and let-her-swear that-she is destroyed and dead
e que de lui serait neienz
and that of him would-be nothing
se l'en savait qu'il fust laienz:
if one knew that-he were within

nou guerraient armes moulues,
not-him would-protect arms ground
heaume, haubert, pel ne maçues,
helm hauberk pole nor clubs
ne huiches, ne clotet, ne chambres,
nor chests nor closet nor chambers
qu'il ne fust depeciez par membres.
that-he not were cut-to-pieces by limbs
Puis deit la dame soupirer
Then ought the lady sigh
e sei par semblant aïrer,
and herself by semblance to-anger
e l'assaille e li cueure seure,
and him-assail and on-him run upon
e die que si grant demeure
and say that so great delay
n'a il mie fait senz raison,
not-has he at-all made without reason
e qu'il tenait en sa maison
and that-he kept in his house
autre fame quel qu'ele seit,
other woman whatever that-she be
don li soulaz meauz li plaisait,
of-whom the solace better to-him pleased
e qu'ore est ele bien traïe
and that-now is she well betrayed
quant il l'a pour autre enhaïe;
when he her-has for other come-to-hate
bien deit estre lasse clamee,
well she-ought be wretch called

quant ele aime senz estre amee.
when she loves without being loved
E quant orra cete parole
And when will-hear this word
cil qui la pensee avra fole,
he who the thought will-have foolish
si cuidera tout erraument
so will-think all forthwith
que cele l'aint trop leiaument,
that she him-loves exceedingly loyally
e que plus seit de lui jalouse
and that more be-she of him jealous
qu'onc ne fu de Venus, s'espouse,
than-ever not was of Venus her-spouse
Vulcanus quant il l'ot trouvee
Vulcan when he her-had found
aveques Mars prise prouvee.
with Mars taken proven
Es laz qu'il ot d'arain forgiez
In-the snares which-he had of-brass forged
les tenait andeus en forz giez,
them held both in strong jesses
ou jeu d'Amours joinz e liez,
in-the game of-Love joined and bound
tant les ot li fos espiez.
so-much them had the fool spied

Venus and Mars, and Women Born Free

LII

Vulcan caught Venus and Mars in his net, and the gods laughed; no wonder Venus preferred Mars to her ugly, sooty husband. Women are born free, the old woman says, and Nature made all women for all men; marriage law restrains them to prevent dissolute living, quarrels, and killings and to help raise children. Before Helen, Horace says, many wars were fought over women.

Si tost con Vulcanus ce sot
As soon as Vulcan this knew
que pris prouvez andeus les ot
that taken proven both them he-had
es laz qu'entour le lit posa,
in-the snares which-around the bed he-placed
mout fu fos quant faire l'osa,
very he-was fool when to-do it-he-dared
car cil a mout po de saveir
for he has very little of wisdom
qui seus cuide sa fame aveir,
who alone thinks his wife to-have
les deus i fist venir en heste,
the gods there he-made to-come in haste
qui mout ristrent e firent feste,
who much laughed and made feast
quant en ce point les aperçurent.
when in this state them they-perceived
De la beauté Venus s'esmurent
By the beauty of-Venus themselves-stirred
tuit li pluseur des damedeus,
all the most of-the lord-gods

qui mout faisait plaintes e deus,
who much made complaints and griefs
come honteuse e courrouciee
as ashamed and angered
don ainsinc iert prise e laciee,
for-which thus she-was taken and laced
n'onc n'ot honte a cete pareille.
nor-ever not-she-had shame to this equal
Si n'iert ce pas trop grant merveille
So not-was this at-all too great marvel
se Venus o Mars se metait,
if Venus with Mars herself put
car Vulcanus si laiz estait
for Vulcan so ugly was
e si charbonez de sa forge,
and so blackened from his forge
par mains e par vis e par gorge,
by hands and by face and by throat
que pour riens Venus ne l'amast,
that for anything Venus not him-would-love
combien que mari le clamast.
however-much that husband him she-called
Non, par Deu! pas, se ce fust ores
No by God at-all if this were now
Absalon o ses treces sores,
Absalom with his braids golden
ou Paris, fiz le rei de Troie,
or Paris son of-the king of Troy
ne l'en portast el ja menoie;
not him-thereby would-hold she ever in-her-keeping

qu'el savait bien, la debonaire,
for-she knew well the gracious-one
que toutes fames sevent faire.
what all women know to-do
D'autre part, eus sont franches nees;
On-other part they are free born
lei les a condicionees,
law them has conditioned
qui les oste de leur franchises,
which them removes from their freedoms
ou Nature les avait mises;
where Nature them had put
car Nature n'est pas si sote
for Nature not-is at-all so stupid
qu'ele face naistre Marote
that-she make be-born Marotte
tant seulement pour Robichon,
so only for Robichon
se l'entendement i fichon,
if the-understanding thereon we-fix
ne Robichon pour Mariete,
nor Robichon for Mariette
ne pour Agnès, ne pour Perrete,
nor for Agnes nor for Perrette
ainz nous a faiz, beaus fiz, n'en doutes,
rather us she-has made fair son not-thereof doubt
toutes pour touz e touz pour toutes,
all-women for all-men and all-men for all-women
chascune pour chascun comune,
each-woman for each-man common

e chascun comun a chascune;
and each-man common to each-woman
si que, quant eus sont afiees,
so that when they are betrothed
par lei prises e mariees,
by law taken and married
pour oster dissolucions
for to-remove dissolutions
e contenz e ocisions,
and quarrels and killings
e pour aidier les nourretures,
and for to-aid the nurturings
don il ont ensemble les cures,
of-which they have together the cares
si s'efforcent en toutes guises
so themselves-strive in all ways
de retourner a leur franchises
to return to their freedoms
les dames e les dameiseles,
the ladies and the damsels
queus qu'eus seient, laides ou beles.
whatever that-they be ugly or fair
Franchise a leur poeir maintienent,
Freedom at their power they-maintain
don trop de maus vendront e vienent,
whence too-many of ills will-come and come
e vindrent a pluseurs jadis,
and came to several formerly
bien en nomberraie ja dis,
well thereof I-would-name already ten

veire tant, mais je les trespasse,
indeed so-many but I them pass-over
que j'en seraie toute lasse,
that I-thereof would-be all weary
e vous d'oïr touz encombrez
and you of-hearing all encumbered
ainz que jes eüsse nombrez;
before that I-them had numbered
car, quant chascuns jadis voait
for when each formerly saw
la fame qui meauz li soait,
the woman who best to-him suited
maintenant ravir la vousist,
at-once to-ravish her he-would-wish
se plus forz ne la li tousist,
if more strong not her from-him took
e la laissast, s'il li pleüst,
and her would-leave if-it to-him pleased
quant son vouleir fait en eüst;
when his will done thereof he-had
si que jadis s'entretuaient
so that formerly each-other-they-killed
e les nourretures laissaient,
and the nurturings left
ainz que l'en feïst mariages
before that one made marriages
par le conseil des omes sages.
by the counsel of-the men wise
E qui voudrait Horace creire,
And who would-wish Horace to-believe

bone parole en dit e veire,
good word thereof he-says and true
car mout sot bien lire e diter,
for very he-knew well to-read and to-compose
si la vous vueil ci reciter;
so it to-you I-wish here to-recite
car sage fame n'a pas honte
for wise woman not-has at-all shame
quant bone auctorité raconte.
when good authority she-recounts
Jadis avant Helene furent
Formerly before Helen were
batailles que li con esmurent,
battles which the cunts stirred
don cil a grant douleur perirent
whereby those with great grief perished
qui pour aus les batailles firent;
who for them the battles made
mais les morz n'en sont pas seües,
but the deaths not-thereof are at-all known
quant en escrit ne sont leües;
since in writing not they-are read
car ce ne fu pas la prumiere,
for this not was at-all the first
non sera ce la darreniere,
nor will-be this the last

par cui guerres vendront e vindrent
by whom wars will-come and came
entre ceus qui tendront e tindrent
between those who will-hold and held
leur cueurs mis en amour de fame,
their hearts put in love of woman
don maint ont perdu cors e ame,
whereby many have lost body and soul
13935 e perdront, se li siecles dure.
and will-lose if the world lasts
Mais prenez bien garde a Nature,
But take well heed to Nature
car, pour plus clerement voeir
for for more clearly to-see
come ele a merveilleus poeir,
how she has marvelous power
mainz essemples vous en puis metre,
many examples to-you thereof I-can put
13940 qui bien font a voeir en letre.
which well are to see in letter

The Caged Bird and the Fish in the Net

LIII

A caged bird longs for the woods, as all women long for freedom; a monk regrets his vows, and a fish in the weir cannot get out again. Nature always returns, as Horace says, even if driven out with a fork, so Venus and straying wives are to be excused. A kitten raised without mice will still chase one, and a colt raised without mares will run to any mare it sees.

Li oisillons dou vert boschage,
The little-bird of-the green wood
quant il est pris e mis en cage,
when he is taken and put in cage
nourriz mout ententivement
nourished very attentively
laienz delicieusement,
within delicately
e chante, tant con sera vis, 13945
and sings so-long as he-will-be alive
de cueur gai, ce vous est avis,
with heart gay this to-you is seeming
si desierre il les bois ramez
so desires he the woods branched
qu'il a naturelment amez,
which-he has naturally loved
e voudrait seur les arbres estre,
and would-wish on the trees to-be
ja si bien nou savra l'en paistre; 13950
ever so well not-him will-know one to-feed

toujourz i pense e s'estudie
always thereon he-thinks and himself-strives
a recouvrer sa franche vie.
to recover his free life
Sa viande a ses piez demarche,
His food with his feet he-tramples
o l'ardeur qui son cueur li charche,
with the-ardor which his heart him burdens
13955 e va par sa cage traçant,
and goes through his cage tracing
a grant angoisse pourchaçant
with great anguish pursuing
coment fenestre ou pertuis truisse
how window or hole he-may-find
par quei voler au bois s'en puisse.
by which to-fly to-the wood himself-thence he-can
Ausinc sachiez que toutes fames,
Likewise know that all women
13960 seient dameiseles ou dames,
be-they damsels or ladies
de quelconques procession,
of whatever descent
ont naturel entencion
have natural intention
qu'eus cercheraient volentiers
that-they would-seek willingly
par queus chemins, par queus sentiers
by what roads by what paths

a franchise venir pourraient,
to freedom come they-could
car toujourz aveir la vourraient.
for always to-have it they-would-wish
Ausinc vous di je que li on
Likewise to-you say I that the man
qui s'en entre en religion,
who himself-thence enters into religion
e vient après qu'il se repent,
and comes after that-he himself repents
par po que de deul ne se pent;
by little that from grief — himself he-hangs
e se complaint e se demente
and himself complains and himself laments
si que touz en sei se tourmente,
so that all in himself himself he-torments
tant li sourt granz desirs d'ouvrer
so-much in-him springs great desire of-working
coment il pourra recouvrer
how he will-be-able recover
la franchise qu'il a perdue;
the freedom which-he has lost
car la volenté ne se mue
for the will not itself changes
pour nul abit qu'il puisse prendre,
for any habit that-he can take
en quelque leu qu'il s'aille rendre.
in whatever place that-he himself-go to-surrender

C'est li fos peissons qui s'en passe
This-is the foolish fish which himself-thence passes
par mi la gorge de la nasse,
through the-midst-of the throat of the weir
qui, quant il s'en veaut retourner,
who when he himself-thence wishes to-turn-back
maugré sien l'esteut sejourner
in-spite-of his him-behooves to-stay
a toujourz en prison laienz,
for always in prison within
car dou retourner est neienz.
for of-the returning there-is nothing
Li autre qui dehors demeurent,
The others who outside remain
quant il le veient, si acueurent,
when they him see so run-up
e cuident que cil s'esbanoie
and think that he himself-disports
a grant deduit e a grant joie,
with great delight and with great joy
quant la le veient tourneier
when there him they-see turning
e par semblant esbaneier;
and by semblance sporting
e pour ice meïsmement
and for this especially
qu'il veient bien apertement
that-they see well openly
qu'il a laienz assez viande,
that-it has within plenty food

tele con chascuns d'aus demande,
such as each of-them asks
mout volentiers i enterraient:
very willingly there they-would-enter
si vont entour e tant tourneient,
so they-go around and so-much turn
tant i hurtent, tant i aguietent,
so-much there they-knock so-much there they-watch
que le trou treuvent, si s'i gietent.
that the hole they-find so themselves-there throw
Mais, quant il sont laienz venu,
But when they are within come
pris a toujourz e retenu,
taken for always and retained
puis ne se peuent il tenir
afterward not themselves can they hold
qu'il ne vueillent bien revenir,
that-they not wish well to-come-back
mais ce n'est pas chose possible,
but this not-is at-all thing possible
qu'il sont meauz pris que a la trible:
for-they are better taken than at the trammel
la les couvient a grant deul vivre
there them behooves with great grief to-live
tant que la mort les en delivre.
until that the death them thence deliver
Tout autel vie va querant
All the-same life goes seeking
li jennes on quant il se rent,
the young man when he himself gives

car ja si granz solers n'avra,
for ever so great shoes not-he-will-have
ne ja si faire ne savra
nor ever so to-make not he-will-know
grant chaperon ne large aumuce
great hood nor wide almuce
que Nature ou cueur ne se muce:
that Nature in-the heart not herself hide
lors est il morz e mal bailliz
then is he dead and ill handled
quant frans estaz li est failliz,
when free state to-him is failed
s'il ne fait de necessité
if-he not makes of necessity
vertu, par grant humilité;
virtue by great humility
mais Nature ne peut mentir,
but Nature not can lie
qui franchise li fait sentir;
who freedom to-him makes feel
car Horaces neïs raconte,
for Horace even recounts
qui bien set que tel chose monte:
who well knows what such thing amounts
qui voudrait une fourche prendre
who would-wish a fork to-take
pour sei de Nature defendre,
for himself from Nature to-defend
e la bouterait hors de sei,
and her would-thrust out of himself

revendrait ele, bien le sai.
would-come-back she well it I-know
Toujourz Nature recourra,
Always Nature will-run-back
ja pour abit ne demourra.
ever for habit not she-will-stay
Que vaut ce? Toute creature
What avails this All creature
veaut retourner a sa nature;
wishes to-return to its nature
ja nou laira pour violence
ever not-it will-leave for violence
de force ne de couvenance.
of force nor of covenant
Ce deit mout Venus escuser
This ought much Venus excuse
qu'el voulait de franchise user,
that-she wished of freedom to-use
e toutes dames qui se jeuent,
and all ladies who themselves play
combien que mariage veuent,
however-much that marriage they-vow
car ce leur fait Nature faire,
for this to-them makes Nature to-do
qui les veaut a franchise traire.
who them wishes to freedom to-draw
Trop est fort chose que Nature,
Exceedingly is strong thing that Nature
el passe neïs nourreture.
she passes even nurture

Qui prendrait, beaus fiz, un chaton
Who would-take fair son a kitten
qui onques rate ne raton
which ever rat nor little-rat
veü n'avrait, puis fust nourriz
seen not-would-have then it-were nourished
senz ja voeir rat ne souriz,
without ever seeing rat nor mouse
lonc tens, par ententive cure,
long time by attentive care
de delicieuse pasture,
with delicate pasture
e puis veïst souriz venir,
and then it-saw mouse come
n'est riens qui le peüst tenir,
not-is anything that it could hold
se l'en le laissait eschaper,
if one it let escape
qu'il ne l'alast tantost haper;
that-it not it-would-go at-once to-snatch
trestouz ses mes en laisserait,
all its dishes thereof it-would-leave
ja si famílleus ne serait;
ever so famished not it-would-be
n'est riens qui pais entr'aus feïst,
not-is anything that peace between-them would-make
pour peine que l'en i meïst.
for pain that one there put

Qui nourrir un poulain savrait
Who to-nourish a colt would-know
qui jument veüe n'avrait
which mare seen not-would-have
jusqu'a tant qu'il fust granz destriers
until-to so-much that-he were great war-horse
pour sofrir seles e estriers,
for to-bear saddles and stirrups
e puis veïst jument venir,
and then he-saw mare come
vous l'orriez tantost henir,
you him-would-hear at-once neigh
e voudrait encontre li courre,
and would-wish against her to-run
s'il n'iert qui l'en peüst rescourre;
if-it not-were who him-thence could rescue
non pas morel contre morele
not at-all black-horse against black-mare
seulement, mais contre fauvele,
only but against fawn-mare
contre grise, ou contre liarde,
against gray-mare or against dapple-mare
se freins ou bride nou retarde,
if curb or bridle not-him holds-back
qu'il n'en a nules espiees,
for-he not-thereof has any spied
fors qu'il les truisse desliees,
except that-he them find untied
ou qu'il puisse seur eus saillir:
or that-he can on them leap

toutes les voudrait assaillir.
all them he-would-wish to-assail
E qui morele ne tendrait,
And who black-mare not would-hold
tout le cours a morel vendrait,
all the run to black-horse would-come
veire a fauvel ou a liart,
indeed to fawn-horse or to dapple-horse
si con sa volenté li art.
so as her will her burns
Li prumiers qu'ele trouverait,
The first that-she would-find
c'est cil qui ses mariz serait,
this-is he who her husband would-be
qu'ele n'en ra nus espiez,
for-she not-thereof in-turn-has any spied
fors qu'el les truisse desliez.
except that-she them find untied

Nature's Pull, and the Lady's Feints

LIV

All creatures follow nature, and law restrains men and women only a little, though that little is too much, the old woman says. The old woman herself desired every man and would have yielded to all. After being exposed, Mars and Venus did openly what they had done in secret, so a husband who catches his wife only makes things worse. A woman should feign jealousy and threaten to take another lover.

E ce que je di de morele
And that which I say of black-mare
e de fauvel e de fauvele
and of fawn-horse and of fawn-mare
e de liart e de morel,
and of dapple-horse and of black-horse
di je de vache e de torel
say I of cow and of bull
e des berbiz e dou mouton;
and of-the ewes and of-the ram
car de ceus mie ne douton
for of those at-all not we-doubt
qu'il ne vueillent leur fames toutes;
that-they not wish their females all
ne ja de ce, beaus fiz, ne doutes
nor ever of this fair son not doubt
que toutes ausinc touz ne vueillent:
that all likewise all — wish
toutes volentiers les acueillent.
all willingly them welcome
Ausinc est il, beaus fiz, par m'ame!
Likewise is it fair son by my-soul

De tout ome e de toute fame,
Of every man and of every woman
quant a naturel apetit,
as to natural appetite
don lei les retrait un petit.
from-which law them draws-back a little
Un petit! mais trop, ce me semble,
A little but too-much this to-me seems
car, quant lei les a mis ensemble,
for when law them has put together
el veaut, seit vallez ou pucele,
it wishes be-it young-man or maiden
que cil ne puisse aveir que cele,
that he not can have but her
au meins tant come ele seit vive,
at-the least as-long as she be alive
ne cele autre tant con cil vive.
nor she other as-long as he live
Mais touteveis sont il tenté
But nevertheless are they tempted
d'user de franche volenté,
of-using of free will
car bien sai que tel chose monte,
for well I-know what such thing amounts
si s'en gardent aucun pour honte,
so themselves-thereof guard some for shame
li autre pour peeur de peine,
the others for fear of pain

mais Nature ausinc les demeine
but Nature likewise them leads
con les bestes que ci deïsmes.
as the beasts which here we-told
Je le sai bien par mei meïsmes,
I it know well by me myself
car je me sui toujourz penee
for I myself am always taken-pains
d'estre de touz omes amee;
of-being by all men loved
e se je ne doutasse honte,
and if I not feared shame
qui refreine mainz cuers e donte,
which restrains many hearts and tames
quant par ces rues m'en alaie,
when through these streets myself-thence I-went
car toujourz aler i voulaie
for always to-go there I-wished
d'aournemenz envelopee,
in-adornments enveloped
pour neient fust une poupee,
for nothing would-be a doll
ces vallez, qui tant me plaisaient,
these young-men who so-much me pleased
quant ces douz regarz me faisaient,
when these sweet looks to-me they-made
(douz deus! quel pitié m'en prenait
sweet God what pity me-thereof took
quant cil regarz a mei venait!)
when that look to me came

Touz ou pluseurs les receüsse,
All or most them I-would-receive
s'il leur pleüst e je peüsse;
if-it to-them pleased and I could
touz les vousisse tire a tire,
all them I-would-wish rank by rank
se je peüsse a touz soufire;
if I could to all suffice
e me semblait que, s'il peüssent,
and to-me seemed that if-they could
volentiers tuit me receüssent,
willingly all me would-receive
(je n'en met hors prelaz ne moines,
I not-thereof put out prelates nor monks
chevaliers, bourgeis ne chanoines,
knights burghers nor canons
ne clerc ne lai, ne fol ne sage,
nor cleric nor lay nor fool nor wise
pour qu'il fust de poissant aage,)
provided that-he were of powerful age
e des religions saillissent,
and from-the religions they-would-leap
s'il ne cuidassent qu'il faillissent,
if-they not thought that-they would-fail
quant requise d'amours m'eüssent;
when requested of-love me-they-had
mais, se bien mon pensé seüssent
but if well my thought they-knew
e noz condicions trestoutes,
and our conditions all

il n'en fussent pas en teus doutes;
they not-thereof would-be at-all in such doubts
e crei que, se pluseur osassent,
and I-believe that if several dared
leur mariages en brisassent;
their marriages thereby they-would-break
ja de fei ne leur souvenist,
ever of faith not to-them would-remember
se nus en privé me tenist;
if any in private me held
nus n'i gardast condicion,
any not-there would-keep condition
fei ne veu ne religion,
faith nor vow nor religion
se ne fust aucuns forsenez,
if not were some madman
qui fust d'amours enchifrenez,
who were with-love stuffed-with-cold
e leiaument s'amie amast:
and loyally his-friend loved
cil, espeir, quite me clamast,
he perhaps quit me would-declare
e pensast a la seue aveir,
and would-think of the his to-have
don il ne preïst nul aveir.
for-which he not would-take any wealth
Mais mout est po de teus amanz,
But very is few of such lovers
si m'aïst Deus e sainz Amanz,
so me-help God and saint Amand

come je crei certainement.
as I believe certainly
S'il parlast a mei longuement,
If-he talked to me long
que qu'il deïst, mençonge ou veir,
whatever that-he said lie or truth
trestout le feïsse esmouveir;
all him I-would-make to-stir
queus qu'il fust, seculers ou d'orde,
whatever that-he were secular or of-order
fust ceinz de cuir rouge ou de corde,
he-were girt with leather red or with rope
quelque chaperon qu'il portast,
whatever hood that-he wore
o mei, ce crei, se deportast,
with me this I-believe himself would-disport
s'il cuidast que je le vousisse,
if-he thought that I it wished
ou que, senz plus, le li sofrisse.
or that without more it to-him I-allowed
Ainsinc Nature nous joustise,
Thus Nature us rules
qui noz cueurs a delit atise,
who our hearts to delight stirs
pour quei Venus de Mars amer
for which Venus for Mars loving
a meins deservi a blasmer.
has less deserved to (be-)blamed

Ainsinc come en tel point estaient
Thus as in such state they-were
Mars e Venus, qui s'entramaient,
Mars and Venus who each-other-loved
des deus i ot mainz qui vousissent
of-the gods there were many who would-wish
que li autre d'aus se resissent
that the others of-them themselves laughed
en tel point come il font de Mars.
in such state as they do of Mars
Meauz vousist puis deus mile mars
Better would-wish afterward two thousand marks
aveir perdu dans Vulcanus
to-have lost sir Vulcan
que cete euvre seüst ja nus;
that this work had-known ever anyone
car li dui, qui tel honte en orent,
for the two who such shame thereof had
quant il virent que tuit le sorent,
when they saw that all it knew
firent des lors a uis ouvert
did from then at door open
ce qu'il faisaient en couvert,
that which-they did in covert
n'onques puis dou fait n'orent honte
nor-ever afterward of-the deed not-they-had shame
que li deu tindrent d'aus leur conte,
that the gods held of-them their tale

e tant publierent la fable
and so-much published the fable
qu'el fu par tout le ciel notable;
that-it was through all the heaven notable
s'en fu Vulcanus plus irez
so-thereof was Vulcan more angered
quant plus fu li faiz empirez,
when more was the deed worsened
n'onques puis n'i pot conseil metre:
nor-ever afterward not-there he-could counsel put
e, si con tesmoigne la letre,
and so as witnesses the letter
meauz li venist estre soferz,
better to-him would-have-come to-be patient
qu'aveir au lit les laz oferz,
than-to-have to-the bed the snares offered
e que ja ne s'en esmeüst,
and that ever not himself-thereof he-stirred
mais feinsist que riens n'en seüst,
but feigned that anything not-thereof he-knew
s'il vousist aveir bele chiere
if-he wished to-have fair face
de Venus, que tant avait chiere.
of Venus whom so-much he-held dear
Si se devrait cil prendre garde
So himself ought he take heed
qui sa fame ou s'amie garde,
who his wife or his-friend guards

e par son fol aguiet tant euvre
and by his foolish watching so-much works
qu'il la prent prouvee seur l'euvre;
that-he her takes proven on the-work
car sache que pis en fera
for let-him-know that worse thereof she-will-do
quant prise prouvee sera;
when taken proven she-will-be
ne cil qui dou mal felon art,
nor he who of-the evil cruel burns
qui si l'a prise par son art,
who so her-has taken by his art
jamais n'en avra, puis la prise,
ever not-thereof will-have afterward the taking
ne bel semblant ne bon servise.
neither fair semblance nor good service
Trop est fos maus que jalousie,
Exceedingly is foolish evil that jealousy
qui les jalous art e soussie;
which the jealous burns and worries
mais cete a jalousie feinte
but this-one has jealousy feigned
qui feintement fait tel complainte,
who feignedly makes such complaint
e amuse ainsinc le musart.
and fools thus the gaper
Quant plus l'amuse e cil plus art.
The more him-she-fools and he more burns

E, s'il ne s'en deigne escondire,
And if-he not himself-thereof deigns to-excuse
ainz die, pour li metre en ire,
rather says for her to-put in wrath
qu'il a veirement autre amie,
that-he has truly other friend
gart qu'el ne s'en courrouce mie.
let-her-guard that-she not herself-thereof anger at-all
Ja seit ce que semblant en face,
Even be it that semblance thereof she-make
se cil autre amie pourchace,
if he other friend pursues
ja ne li seit a un bouton
ever not to-her it-let-be at a button
de la ribaudie au glouton;
of the harlotry to-the wretch
mais face tant que cil recreie,
but let-her-do so-much that he believe
pour ce que d'amer ne recreie,
for this that of-loving not he-give-up
qu'el vueille autre ami pourchacier
that-she wish other friend to-pursue
e qu'el nou fait fors pour chacier
and that-she not-it does except for to-chase
celui don el veaut estre estrange,
him from-whom she wishes to-be estranged
car bien est dreiz qu'el s'en estrange;
for well is right that-she herself-thence estrange
e die: «Trop m'avez mesfait,
and let-her-say Too-much to-me-you-have misdone

venchier m'esteut de ce mesfait;
to-avenge me-behooves of this misdeed
puis que vous m'avez faite coupe,
since that you me-have done wrong
je vous servirai d'autel coupe.» 14220
I you will-serve with-the-same cup
Lors sera cil en pire point
Then will-be he in worse point
qu'onques ne fu, s'il l'aime point,
than-ever not he-was if-he her-loves at-all
ne ne s'en savra deporter;
nor not himself-thereof will-know to-divert
car nus n'a poeir de porter
for any not-has power of bearing
grant amour ardemment ou piz 14225
great love ardently in-the breast
s'il n'a peeur d'estre acoupiz.
if-he not-has fear of-being cuckolded

The Lover Received in Secret

LV

The maid should cry that the husband has come, and the lady hides her lover; a second lover can be received and sent away. In bed she should keep her lover afraid, darken the room to hide any blemish, and share or feign pleasure. She should delay visits to his house, and to escape a jealous husband she may drug him or feign illness and go to the baths.

Lors resaille la chamberiere,
Then let-leap-up-again the chambermaid
qui face poereuse chiere,
who make fearful face
e die: «Lasses, mortes somes:
and let-her-say Wretches dead we-are
mes sires, ou ne sai queus omes,
my lord or not I-know what men
est entrez dedenz nostre court.»
is entered within our court
La couvient que la dame court,
There behooves that the lady run
e entrelaist toute besoigne;
and leave-off all business
mais le vallet anceis repoigne
but the young-man before let-her-hide
en teit, en estable ou en huiche,
in roof in stable or in chest
jusqu'a tant qu'ele le rehuiche,
until-to so-much that-she him call-again
quant ele iert arriers la venue;
when she will-be back there come

cil qui desierre la venue
he who desires the coming
voudrait lors estre ailleurs, espeir,
would-wish then to-be elsewhere perhaps
de peeur e de desespeir.
from fear and from despair

Lors, se c'est uns autres amis,
Then if this-is an other friend
cui la dame terme avra mis,
to-whom the lady term will-have put
don el n'avra pas esté sage,
in-which she not-will-have at-all been wise
qu'el n'en port dou tout le musage,
that-she not-thereof bear of-the whole the gaping
combien que de l'autre li membre,
however-much that of the-other to-her it-remind
mener le peut en quelque chambre:
lead him she-can into some chamber
face lors tout ce qu'il vourra
let-him-do then all that which-he will-wish
cil qui demourer n'i pourra,
he who stay not-there will-be-able
don mout avra pesance e ire,
whereof much he-will-have heaviness and wrath
car la dame li pourra dire:
for the lady to-him will-be-able say
dou demourer est ce neienz,
of-the staying is this nothing
puis que mes sires est çaienz,
since that my lord is in-here

e quatre mien cousin germain;
and four my cousins german
si m'aïst Deu e saint Germain,
so me-help God and saint Germain
quant autre feiz venir pourreiz,
when other time come you-will-be-able
je ferai quanque vous vourreiz;
I will-do whatever you will-wish
mais sofrir vous couvient atant:
but to-suffer you behooves thereupon
je m'en revois, car l'en m'atent.»
I myself-thence go-back for one me-awaits
Mais anceis le deit hors bouter,
But before him she-ought out thrust
qu'el nou puist ui mais riens douter.
that-she not-him can today more anything fear
Lors deit la dame retourner,
Then ought the lady return
qu'ele ne face sejourner
that-she not make stay
trop longuement l'autre a mesaise,
too long the-other in distress
pour ce que trop ne li desplaise,
for this that too-much not to-him displease
si que trop ne se desconfort;
so that too-much not himself be-discomfort
si li redoint nouvel confort.
so to-him let-her-give-again new comfort
E comant que de prison saille,
And let-her-command that from prison he-leap

e que couchier avec li s'aille
and that to-lie with her he-go
entre ses braz, dedenz sa couche;
between her arms within her bed
mais gart que senz peeur n'i couche.
but let-her-guard that without fear not-there he-lie
Face li entendant e die
Let-her-make him understanding and say
qu'ele est trop fole e trop hardie,
that-she is too foolish and too bold
e jurt que, par l'ame son pere,
and swear that by the-soul of-her father
l'amour de lui trop chier compere,
the-love of him too dear she-pays-for
quant se met en tel aventure,
when herself she-puts in such adventure
ja seit ce qu'el seit plus seüre
even be it that-she be more secure
que ceus qui vont a leur talent
than those who go at their desire
par chans e par vignes balant;
through fields and through vineyards dancing
car deliz en seürté pris
for delight in security taken
meins est plaisanz, meins a de pris.
less is pleasing less has of worth
E, quant aler devront ensemble,
And when go they-shall together
gart que ja cil a li n'assemble,
let-her-guard that ever he with her not-join

combien qu'il la tiegne a sejour,
however-much that-he her hold at leisure
pour qu'ele veie cler le jour,
provided that-she see clear the day
qu'el n'entrecloe ainz les fenestres,
that-she not-half-close before the windows
que si seit ombragiez li estres
that so be shadowed the place
que, s'ele a ne vice ne tache
that if-she has either vice or blemish
seur sa char, que ja cil nou sache.
on her flesh that ever he not-it know
Gart que nule ordure n'i veie,
Let-her-guard that any filth not-there he-see
qu'il se metrait tantost a veie,
for-he himself would-put at-once on way
e s'en fuirait queue levee;
and himself-thence would-flee tail raised
s'en serait honteuse e grevee.
so-thereby she-would-be shamed and grieved
E, quant se seront mis en l'euvre,
And when themselves will-be put in the-work
chascuns d'aus si sagement euvre
each of-them so wisely let-work
e si a point que il couviegne
and so to point that it behoove
que li deliz ensemble viegne
that the delight together come

de l'une e de l'autre partie
from the-one and from the-other part
ainz que l'euvre seit departie,
before that the-work be parted
e s'entredeivent entratendre
and each-other-ought to-await-each-other
pour ensemble a leur bone tendre.
for together to their boundary to-aim
L'uns ne deit pas l'autre laissier,
The-one not ought at-all the-other leave
de nagier ne deivent cessier
from sailing not they-ought cease
jusqu'il preignent ensemble port:
until-they take together port
lors avront enterin deport.
then they-will-have entire pleasure
E, s'el n'i a point de delit,
And if-she not-there has at-all of delight
feindre deit que trop s'i delit,
feign she-ought that exceedingly herself-therein she-delight
e feigne e face touz les signes
and let-her-feign and make all the signs
qu'el set qui sont au delit dignes,
which-she knows which are to-the delight fitting
si qu'il cuit que cele en gré preigne
so that-he think that she in favor take
ce qu'el ne prise une chastaigne.
that which-she not prizes a chestnut

E s'il, pour aus asseürer,
And if-he for them to-assure
peut vers la dame procurer
can toward the lady procure
qu'ele viegne a son propre ostel,
that-she come to his own house
si rait la dame propos tel,
so in-turn-has the lady purpose such
le jour qu'el devra l'eirre emprendre,
the day that-she will-have-to the-journey undertake
qu'el se face un petit atendre,
that-she herself make a little wait
si que cil en ait grant desir
so that he thereof have great desire
ainz qu'il la tiegne a son plaisir.
before that-he her hold at his pleasure
Jeus d'Amours est, quant plus demeure,
Game of-Love is when more it-tarries
plus agreables par demeure;
more agreeable by delay
s'en sont cil meins entalenté
so-thereof are those less eager
qui les ont a leur volenté.
who them have at their will
E, quant iert a l'ostel venue,
And when she-will-be at the-house come
ou tant sera chiere tenue,
where so-much she-will-be dear held

lors li jurt e li face entendre
then to-him let-her-swear and to-him make understand
qu'au jalous se fait tant atendre
that-to-the jealous-one herself makes so-much wait
qu'ele en fremist e tremble toute,
that-she thereat shudders and trembles all
e que trop durement se doute
and that too greatly herself she-fears
d'estre laidengiee ou batue
of-being reviled or beaten
quant ele iert arriers revenue;
when she will-be back returned
mais, coment qu'ele se dementе,
but however that-she herself lament
combien qu'el die veir ou mente,
however-much that-she say truth or lie
preigne en peeur seürement,
let-her-take in fear surely
seürté poereusement,
security fearfully
e facent en leur priveté
and let-them-do in their privacy
trestoute leur joliveté.
all their merriment
E, s'el n'a pas leisir d'aler
And if-she not-has at-all leisure of-going
a son ostel a lui paler,
to his house to him to-speak
ne receveir ou sien ne l'ose,
nor to-receive in-the hers not him-dares

tant la tient li jalous enclose,
so-much her holds the jealous-one shut-in
lors le deit, s'el peut, enivrer,
then him she-ought if-she can make-drunk
se meauz ne s'en set delivrer.
if better not herself-thereof she-knows to-deliver
E, se de vin nou peut faire ivre,
And if with wine not-him she-can make drunk
d'erbes peut aveir une livre,
of-herbs she-can have a pound
ou plus ou meins, don senz dangier
or more or less of-which without difficulty
li peut faire beivre ou mangier:
to-him she-can make drink or eat
lors dormira cil si forment
then will-sleep he so deeply
qu'il li laira faire en dormant
that-he to-her will-let do in sleeping
trestout quanque cele vourra,
all whatever she will-wish
car destourner ne l'en pourra.
for turn-aside not her-thereof he-will-be-able
De sa maisnie, s'ele l'a,
Of her household if-she it-has
enveit ci l'un, e l'autre la;
let-her-send here the-one and the-other there
ou par legiers dons les deceive,
or by light gifts them let-her-deceive
e son ami par aus receive;
and her friend by them let-her-receive

ou les repeut touz abevrer,
or them she-can-again all make-drink
se dou secré les veaut sevrer.
if from-the secret them she-wishes to-wean
Ou, s'il li plaist, au jalous die:
Or if-it to-her pleases to-the jealous-one let-her-say
«Sire, ne sai quel maladie,
Lord not I-know what sickness
ou fievre ou goute ou apostume,
or fever or gout or abscess
tout le cors m'embrase e alume,
all the body me-burns and inflames
si m'esteut que j'aille aus estuves,
so me-behooves that I-go to-the baths
tout aions nous çaienz deus cuves;
even-if have we in-here two tubs
n'i vaudrait riens bainz senz estuve,
not-there would-avail anything baths without steam-room
pour ce couvient que je m'estuve.»
for this behooves that I myself-steam

No Guard Can Keep a Woman

LVI

At the baths she may lie with her lover. No guard can keep a woman who will not keep herself, not even hundred-eyed Argus. She should not trust in charms, for Medea could not hold Jason nor Circe Ulysses, and she should give lovers only small gifts. Fair Welcome should keep what he is given against old age.

Quant li vilains avra songié,
When the churl will-have dreamed
li donra il, espeir, congié,
to-her will-give he perhaps leave
combien qu'il face laide chiere;
however-much that-he make ugly face
mais qu'ele meint sa chamberiere,
provided that-she lead her chambermaid
ou aucune seue veisine,
or some her neighbor
qui savra toute sa couvine,
who will-know all her plot
e son ami, espeir, ravra,
and her friend perhaps will-have-again
e cele ausinc tout resavra.
and she likewise all will-know-again
Lors s'en ira chiés l'estuvier,
Then herself-thence will-go to-the-house-of the-bath-keeper
mais ja ne cuve ne cuvier
but ever neither tub nor vat
par aventure n'i querra,
by chance not-there she-will-seek

mais o son ami se gerra,
but with her friend herself will-lie
se n'est pour ce que bon leur semble
if not-it-is for this that good to-them it-seems
que baignier se deivent ensemble;
that bathe themselves they-ought together
car il la peut ileuc atendre,
for he her can there await
s'il set qu'el deit cele part tendre.
if-he knows that-she ought that way aim
Nus ne peut metre en fame garde
Any not can put on woman guard
s'ele meïsmes ne se garde:
if-she herself not herself guards
se c'iert Argus qui la gardast,
if this-were Argus who her guarded
e de ses cent eauz l'esgardast,
and with his hundred eyes her-watched
don l'une des meitiez veillait
of-which the-one of-the halves was-awake
e l'autre meitié someillait,
and the-other half slept
quant Jupiter li fist trenchier
when Jupiter to-him made cut-off
le chief, pour Yo revenchier,
the head for Io to-avenge
qu'il avait en vache muee,
whom-he had into cow changed
de fourme humaine desnuee;
from form human stripped

(Mercurius le li trencha
Mercury it from-him cut-off
quant de Juno la revencha,)
when of Juno her he-avenged
n'i vaudrait sa garde mais rien.
not-there would-avail his guard more anything
Fos est qui garde tel mairien.
Fool he-is who guards such timber
Mais gart que ja ne seit si sote,
But let-her-guard that ever not be-she so stupid
pour riens que clers ne lais li note,
for anything that cleric or lay to-her notes
que ja riens d'enchantement creie,
that ever anything of-enchantment she-believe
ne sorcerie, ne charaie,
nor sorcery nor spell
ne Balenus, ne sa science,
nor Balenus nor his knowledge
ne magique, ne nigromance,
nor magic nor necromancy
que par ce puisse ome esmouveir
that by this she-can man move
a ce qu'il l'aint par estouveir,
to this that-he her-love by necessity
ne que pour li nule autre hee:
nor that for her any other he-hate
onques ne pot tenir Medee
ever not could hold Medea
Jason pour nul enchantement;
Jason for any enchantment

n'onc Circé ne tint ensement
nor-ever Circe not held likewise
Ulixès qu'il ne s'en foïst
Ulysses that-he not himself-thence fled
pour nul sort que faire en poïst.
for any spell that do thereof she-could
Si gart fame qu'a nul amant,
So let-guard woman that-to any lover
tant l'aille son ami clamant,
however-much him-go her friend calling
ne doigne don qui guieres vaille:
not she-give gift which much be-worth
bien doigne oreillier, ou toaille,
well let-her-give pillow or towel
ou cueuvrechief, ou aumosniere,
or kerchief or purse
mais qu'el ne seit mie trop chiere,
provided that-it not be at-all too dear
aguillier, ou laz, ou ceinture,
needle-case or lace or belt
don po vaille la ferreüre,
whose little be-worth the metalwork
ou un beau petit coutelet,
or a fair little little-knife
ou de fil un lumuisselet,
or of thread a little-ball
si con font nonains par coustume;
so as do nuns by custom
mais fos est qui les acoustume.
but fool he-is who them frequents

Meauz vient fames dou siecle amer:
Better comes women of-the world to-love
l'en ne s'en fait pas tant blasmer,
one not himself-thereof makes at-all so-much blame
si vont meauz a leur volentez;
so they-go better at their wills
leur mariz e leur parentez
their husbands and their kindred
sevent bien de paroles paistre;
they-know well with words to-feed
e, ja seit ce qu'il ne puisse estre
and even be it that-it not can be
que l'une e l'autre trop ne coust,
that the-one and the-other too-much not cost
trop sont nonains de graindre coust.
far are nuns of greater cost
Mais on qui bien sages serait
But man who well wise would-be
touz dons de fame douterait,
all gifts of woman would-fear
car don de fame, au dire veir,
for gifts of woman at-the saying true
ne sont fors laz a deceveir;
not are except snares to deceive
e contre sa nature peche
and against her nature sins
fame qui de largece a teche.
woman who of largesse has fault
Laissier devons largece aus omes,
Leave we-ought largesse to-the men

car, quant nous, fames, larges somes,
for when we women generous are
c'est grant mescheance e granz vices:
this-is great mischance and great vice
dëable nous ont fait si nices.
devils us have made so silly
Mais ne m'en chaut, il n'en est guieres
But not to-me-thereof matters there not-thereof is much
qui de dons seient coustumieres.
who of gifts be accustomed
De teus dons con j'ai dit devant,
Of such gifts as I-have said before
mais que ce seit en decevant,
provided that this be in deceiving
beaus fiz, poez vous bien user
fair son can you well use
pour les musarz meauz amuser.
for the gapers better to-amuse
E gardez quanque l'en vous done,
And keep whatever one to-you gives
e vous souviegne de la bone
and to-you it-let-remind of the boundary
ou trestoute jennece tent,
to-which all youth aims
se chascuns poait vivre tant:
if each could live so-long
c'est de vieillece, qui ne cesse,
this-is of old-age which not ceases
qui chascun jour de nous s'apresse,
which each day of us itself-approaches

si que, quant la sereiz venuz,
so that when there you-will-be come
ne seiez pas pour fol tenuz;
not be at-all for fool held
mais seiez d'aveir si garniz
but be with-wealth so provided
que vous n'en seiez escharniz;
that you not-thereof be mocked
car aquerre, s'il n'i a garde,
for acquiring if-it not-there has keeping
ne vaut pas un grain de moustarde.
not is-worth at-all a grain of mustard

The Old Woman's Lament

LVII

The old woman did not follow her own advice: she gave everything away to a rascal who beat her, called her a whore, and spent it all in taverns, yet he was the one she loved. When the gifts ran out he became a beggar and she was left with nothing. Her state, she tells Fair Welcome, should be his example, for when his rose withers the gifts will fail.

Ha! lasse! ainsinc n'ai je pas fait:
Ah wretch thus not-have I at-all done
or sui povre par mon las fait.
now I-am poor by my wretched doing

Les granz dons que cil me donaient
The great gifts that those to-me gave
qui tuit a mei s'abandonaient
who all to me themselves-gave-over
aus meauz amez abandonaie.
to-the best loved I-gave-over
L'en me donait e je donaie,
One to-me gave and I gave
si que n'en ai riens retenu:
so that not-thereof I-have anything retained
doner m'a mise au pain menu.
giving me-has put to-the bread crumbled
Ne me souvenait de vieillece,
Not to-me came-to-mind of old-age
qui or m'a mise en tel destrece;
which now me-has put in such distress
de povreté ne me tenait;
of poverty not to-me mattered
le tens ainsinc come il venait
the time thus as it came
laissaie aler, senz prendre cure
I-let go without taking care
de despens faire par mesure.
of expenses to-make by measure
Se je fusse sage, par m'ame!
If I had-been wise by my-soul
Trop eüsse esté riche dame;
Exceedingly I-would-have been rich lady
car de trop granz genz fui acointe,
for with exceedingly great folk I-was acquainted

quant j'iere ja mignote e cointe,
when I-was formerly dainty and elegant
e bien en tenaie aucuns pris;
and well thereof I-held some taken
mais, quant j'avaie des uns pris,
but when I-had from-the some taken
fei que dei Deu ne saint Tibaut,
by-the-faith that I-owe God and saint Theobald
trestout donaie a un ribaut,
all I-gave to a rascal
qui trop de honte me faisait,
who too-much of shame to-me did
mais c'iert cil qui plus me plaisait.
but this-was he who most me pleased
Les autres touz amis clamaie,
The others all friends I-called
mais lui tant seulement amaie;
but him so only I-loved
mais sachiez qu'il ne me prisait
but know that-he not me prized
un peis, e bien le me disait.
a pea and well it to-me said
Mauvais iert, onques ne vi pire,
Wicked he-was ever not I-saw worse
onc ne me cessa de despire;
ever not me ceased-he of despising
putain comune me clamait
whore common me called
li ribauz, qui point ne m'amait.
the rascal who at-all not me-loved

Fame a trop povre juigement,
Woman has exceedingly poor judgment
e je fui fame dreitement.
and I was woman truly
Onc n'amai ome qui m'amast,
Ever not-loved-I man who me-loved
mais, se cil ribauz m'entamast
but if that rascal me-gashed
l'espaule, ou ma teste eüst casse,
the-shoulder or my head had broken
sachiez que je l'en merciasse.
know that I him-thereof would-have-thanked
Il ne me seüst ja tant batre
He not me would-know ever so-much to-beat
que seur mei nou feïsse embatre;
that on me not-him I-would-make to-throw
qu'il savait trop bien sa pais faire,
for-he knew exceedingly well his peace to-make
ja tant ne m'eüst fait contraire.
ever so-much not me-he-had done wrong
Ja tant ne m'eüst mal menee
Ever so-much not me-he-had ill handled
ne batue ne traïnee,
nor beaten nor dragged
ne mon vis blecié ne nerci,
nor my face hurt nor blackened
qu'anceis ne me criast merci
that-before not to-me he-cried mercy
que de la place se meüst;
than from the place himself he-stirred

ja tant dit honte ne m'eüst
ever so-much said shame not me-he-had
que de pais ne m'amonestast
that of peace not me-he-urged
e que lors ne me rafaistat:
and that then not me he-made-up-with
si ravions pais e concorde.
so we-had-again peace and concord
Ainsinc m'avait prise en sa corde,
Thus me-he-had taken in his rope
car trop estait fiers rafaitierres
for exceedingly he-was bold reconciler
li faus, li traïtres, li lierres.
the false-one the traitor the thief
Senz celui ne poïsse vivre,
Without him not I-could live
celui vousisse toujourz sivre.
him I-would-wish always to-follow
S'il foïst, bien l'alasse querre
If-he fled well him-I-would-go to-seek
jusqu'a Londres en Engleterre,
up-to London in England
tant me plut e tant m'abeli.
so-much me he-pleased and so-much me-delighted
Cil me mist a honte e je li,
He me put to shame and I him
car il menait les granz cembaus
for he led the great revels
des dons qu'il ot de mei tant beaus,
with-the gifts which-he had from me so fair

ne n'en metait nus en espernes,
nor not-thereof put any into savings
tout joait aus dez es tavernes;
all he-played at-the dice in-the taverns
n'onques n'aprist autre mestier,
nor-ever not-learned other trade
n'il ne l'en iert lors nul mestier,
nor-it not to-him-thereof was then any need
car tant li livraie a despendre,
for so-much to-him I-delivered to spend
e je l'avaie bien ou prendre:
and I it-had well where to-take
touz li mondes iert mes rentiers,
all the world was my rent-payer
e il despendait volentiers,
and he spent willingly
e toujourz en ribauderie,
and always in debauchery
trestouz frianz de lecherie;
all greedy for gluttony
tant par avait la bouche tendre
so-much very he-had the mouth tender
qu'il ne vost a nul bien entendre;
that-he not wished to any good to-attend
n'onc vivre ne li abelit
nor-ever to-live not to-him pleased
fors en oiseuse e en delit.
except in idleness and in delight
En la fin l'en vi mal bailli,
In the end him-thence I-saw ill handled

quant li don nous furent failli:
when the gifts to-us were failed
povres devint e pain queranz,
poor he-became and bread seeking
e je n'oi vaillant deus ceranz,
and I not-had worth two herrings
n'onques n'oi seigneur espousé;
nor-ever not-I-had lord espoused
lors m'en vin, si con dit vous ai,
then myself-thence I-came so as told to-you I-have
par ces boissons gratant mes temples:
through these bushes scratching my temples
cist miens estaz vous seit essemples,
this my state to-you be example
biaus douz fiz, e le retenez;
fair sweet son and it retain
si sagement vous demenez
so wisely yourself conduct
que meauz vous seit de ma maistrie;
that better to-you be from my mastery
car, quant vostre rose iert flestrie
for when your rose will-be withered
e les chaines vous assaudront,
and the white-hairs you will-assail
certainement li don faudront.»
certainly the gifts will-fail