OLD FRENCH SERIES · VOLUME 24

The Trouvères of 1200

Gace Brulé
Blondel de Nesle
Le Châtelain de Coucy

The Trouvères of 1200

The Songs of Three Poets

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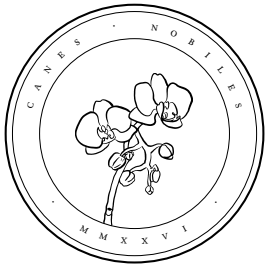
with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



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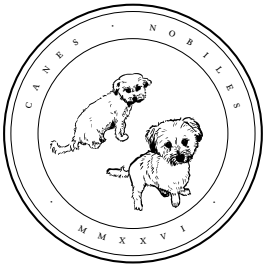

Volume 24 of the Canes Nobiles Old French interlinear texts

The Old French text follows Gédéon Huet's Chansons de Gace Brulé (Paris, 1902), Leo Wiese's Die Lieder des Blondel de Nesle (Dresden, 1904), and Friedrich Fath's Die Lieder des Castellans von Coucy (Heidelberg, 1883)

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

Each poet's text and spelling are his editor's, Huet's for Gace Brulé, Wiese's for Blondel de Nesle, and Fath's for the Châtelain de Coucy, and none is harmonized to another; each poet's songs follow his editor's order and numbers, and are those the editor holds to be the poet's own, without the songs of doubtful attribution each edition prints after them. A refrain the edition abbreviates prints as it abbreviates it, and ∗ ∗ ∗ marks a verse, or the end of one, that the edition counts and does not have. The English titles of the songs are this press's.

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GACE BRULÉ

The Songs

Au renoviau de la douçor d'esté

I · THE RENEWAL OF SUMMER

When summer renews the fountains, he will sing, for sorrow grieves him, and a true lover wrongly accused is easily frightened. Love has led him beyond all law, and he fears slanderers have made his lady forget him. He begs one sweet look a week, warns her that killing a liege man is cruel, and sends the song to Noblet.

Au renoviau de la douçor d'esté,
At-the renewal of the sweetness of-summer
que resclarcist la doiz en la fontaine
when grows-clear the spring in the fountain
et que sont vert bois et vergier et pré
and when are green woods and orchards and meadows
et li rosiers en mai florist et graine,
and the rosebush in May flowers and seeds
lors chanterai, car trop m'avra grevé
then I-shall-sing for too-much me-will-have grieved
ire et esmai ki m'est al cuer prochaine;
anger and dismay which to-me-is at-the heart near
et fins amis, a tort achaisonez,
and true friend at wrong accused
est mout sovent de legier esfreëz.
is very often with ease frightened

Voir est qu'amors m'a estre loi mené,
True is that-love me-has beyond law led
mes mout m'est bel qu'a son plesir me maine,
but very to-me-is fair that-at its pleasure me it-leads

car, se Dieu plet, encor me savra gré
for if God pleases yet to-me it-will-know thanks
de mon travail et de ma longue paine.
for my toil and for my long pain
Mes paor ai que ne m'ait oublié
But fear I-have that — me-it-may-have forgotten
par le conseil de fausse gent vilaine,
through the counsel of false folk churlish
dont li torz est coneüz et prouvez,
whose the wrong is known and proved
qu'a poine sui sans morir eschapez.
that-with pain I-am without dying escaped

Tant ai d'amor mon fin cuer esprové
So-much I-have of-love my true heart proved
que ja sans li n'avrai joie certaine;
that ever without her not-I-shall-have joy certain
tant par sui mis tot a sa volenté
so much I-am put wholly at her will
que nus travaus mon desir ne refraine;
that any toil my desire not restrains
quant plus me truis pensif et esgaré,
when more myself I-find pensive and distraught
plus me confort es biens dont elle est plaine;
more myself I-comfort in-the good-things whereof she is full
et vos, seignor, qui priez et amez,
and you lords who woo and love
fetes ensi se joïr en volez.
do thus if to-rejoice thereof you-wish

Douce dame, tant m'ont achesoné
Sweet lady so-much me-they-have accused
faus tricheor en lor parole vaine
false cheats in their speech vain
que lor dehet m'ont si desconforté
that their curses me-have so discomforted
pres ne m'ont mort; Dieus lor dont male estraine!
near — me-they-have killed God to-them may-give evil luck
Mes, maugré aus, vos ai mon cuer doné,
But despite them to-you I-have my heart given
plein de l'amor ki ja n'en iert lointaine;
full of the-love which ever not-from-it will-be distant
tant s'est en vos finement esmerez
so-much itself-it-is in you finely refined
que si loiaus n'iert ja quis ne trovez.
that so loyal not-will-be ever sought nor found

Douce dame, car m'otroiez, por Dé,
Sweet lady now grant-me for God
un douz regart de vous en la semaine;
a sweet look from you in the week
si atendrai par ceste seürté
so I-shall-wait by this assurance
joie et merci, se bons eürs la maine.
joy and mercy if good fortune it leads
Remembre vos que lede cruauté
Remember you what foul cruelty
fet qui ocit son lige home demeine.
does who kills his liege man own

Douce dame, d'orgueil vos desfendez,
Sweet lady from-pride yourself defend
ne traïssiez vos biens ne vos biautez.
not betray your good-things nor your beauties

Fuiez, chançons, ja ne me regardez,
Flee song ever not me regard
par mon seigneur Noblet vos en alez,
by my lord Noblet yourself thence go
et dites lui de male ore fu nez
and tell him in evil hour he-was born
qui toz jors aime et ja nen iert amez.
who all days loves and ever not will-be loved

Biaus m'est estez quant retentist la brueille

II · THE SUMMER WOOD

When the birds sing, he grieves that he loves a lady of too high lineage; no man of his age loves as he does. His thoughts are on her wherever he goes, and Love is his lord, whom he dares not refuse. At midnight a grief tells him he dies a martyr for her. The envoy tells Guy of Ponceaux that Gace does not know what to say.

Biaus m'est estez quant retentist la brueille,
Fair to-me-is summer when resounds the wood
que li oisel chantent par le boschage,
when the birds sing through the grove
et l'erbe vert de la rosée mueille
and the-grass green with the dew grows-wet
qui resplendir la fet lez le rivage.
which to-shine it makes beside the bank
De bone amor vueil que mes cuers se dueille,
For good love I-wish that my heart itself grieve
que nus fors moi n'a vers li fin corage;
for any except me not-has toward her true heart
et non pourquant, trop est de haut parage
and not for-all-that too is of high lineage
cele cui j'ain; n'est pas droiz qu'el me vueille.
she whom I-love not-is at-all right that-she me wish

Fins amanz sui, coment qu'amors m'acueille,
True lover I-am how-ever that-love me-receives
car je n'ain pas com hons de mon aage,
for I not-love at-all as man of my age

qu'il n'est amis ne hons qui amer sueille
for-there not-is friend nor man who to-love is-wont
qui plus de moi ne truist amor sauvage;
who more than me — may-find love savage
ha las chaitis! ma dame a cui s'orgueille
ah alas wretch my lady to whom herself-prides
vers son ami, cui dolor n'assoage?
toward her friend whom grief not-soothes
Merci, amors, s'ele esgarde parage,
Mercy love if-she regards lineage
dont sui je morz, mes penser que me vueille.
whereof am I dead but to-think that me she-may-wish

De bien amer amors grant sens me baille,
Of well loving love great sense me gives
si m'a traï s'a ma dame n'agrée;
so me-has betrayed if-to my lady not-it-pleases
la volonté pri Dieu que ne me faille,
the will I-pray God that not me fail
car mout m'est bel quant ou cuer m'est entrée;
for very to-me-is fair when in-the heart to-me-is entered
tuit mi penser sont a li, ou que j'aille,
all my thoughts are to her where-ever that I-go
ne rien fors li ne me puet estre mée
nor anything except her not to-me can be physician
de la dolor dont sospir a celée;
of the grief whereof I-sigh in secret
a mort me rent, ainz que longues m'asaille.
to death me it-renders before that long me-it-assails

Mes bien amer ne cuit que riens me vaille,
But well loving not I-think that anything me may-avail
car pitiez est et merciz oubliée
for pity is and mercy forgotten
envers celi qui si grief me travaille
toward her who so grievously me torments
que jeus et ris et joie m'est vaée.
that play and laughter and joy to-me-is denied
Hé las, chaitis! si dure dessevraille!
Ah alas wretch so hard parting
De joie part et la dolors m'agrée,
From joy I-part and the grief me-pleases
dont je sospir coiement, a celée;
whereof I sigh quietly in secret
si me rest bien, coment qu'amors m'asaille.
so to-me is-in-turn well how-ever that-love me-assails

De mon fin cuer me vient a grant mervoille
From my true heart to-me comes as great marvel
qui de moi est, et si me vuet ocire
which of me is and yet me wishes to-kill
qu'a essient en si haut lieu tessoille;
that-with knowledge in so high place strains
donc ma dolor ne savroie pas dire;
whence my grief not I-would-know at-all to-tell
ensinc sui morz, s'amours ne m'i consoille;
thus I-am dead if-love not me-therein counsels
car onques n'oi por li fors poine et ire,
for ever not-I-had for her except pain and anger

mais mes sire est, si ne l'os escondire:
but my lord he-is so not him-I-dare to-refuse
amer m'estuet, puis qu'il s'i aparoille.
to-love me-behooves since that-it itself-thereto prepares

A mie nuit une dolors m'esvoille,
At mid night a grief me-wakes
que l'endemain me tolt joer et rire;
which the-next-day from-me takes to-play and to-laugh
qu'adroit conseil m'a dit dedanz l'oroille:
that-right counsel to-me-has said within the-ear
que j'ain celi por cui muir a martire,
that I-love her for whom I-die in martyrdom
si fais je voir, mes el n'est pas feoille
so do I truly but she not-is at-all faithful
vers son ami qui de s'amor consire.
toward her friend who of her-love goes-without
De li amer ne me doi escondire,
From her loving not myself I-ought to-excuse
n'en puis muer, mes cuers s'i aparoille.
not-thereof I-can change my heart itself-thereto prepares

Gui de Pontiaus, Gasses ne set que dire:
Guy of Ponceaux Gace not knows what to-say
li deus d'amors malement nos consoille.
the god of-love badly us counsels

Chanter me plest qui de joie est norriz

III · SINGING FROM JOY

A man whom love moves composes with ease. He thanks his lady for making him think of her night and day, yet dares neither speak nor hope, and dares not look at her steadily; only in sleep does he find solace, and waking he pays for it. The envoy tells Renaut that if he dies of such ills, the honor outweighs the death.

Chanter me plest qui de joie est norriz:
To-sing to-me it-pleases who with joy is nourished
mes par effort ne doit nus chançon faire;
but by effort not ought anyone song to-make
puis ke solaz est de fin cuer partiz,
since that solace is from true heart departed
paine i covient, ainz qu'on li puist retraire.
pain there behooves before that-one it may tell
Mes cil c'amors et talenz fait chanter,
But he whom-love and desire makes sing
de legier puet bone chançon trouver,
with ease can good song compose
ce que nus hon ne feroit sens amer.
this that any man not would-do without loving

De fine amor est mes cuers esjoïz;
With true love is my heart rejoiced
onques n'ama cil qui s'en puet retraire.
ever not-loved he who himself-thence can withdraw

Li envïeus en font pleintes et criz
The envious thereof make complaints and cries
qu'ele ne daigne a son servise atraire;
that-she not deigns to her service to-draw
mes ma dame li doi je mercïer,
but my lady her ought I to-thank
car nuit et jor me fet a li penser;
for night and day me she-makes of her think
si ne me puet de rien tant honorer.
so not me she-can in anything so-much honor

Quant je regart son cors et j'oi ses diz,
When I look-at her body and I-hear her words
et voi son vis, toz li cuers m'en esclaire;
and I-see her face all the heart to-me-thereof brightens
après en sui destroiz et esbahiz,
after thereof I-am distressed and dismayed
quant je ne puis de grant joie a chief traire;
when I not can of great joy to end draw
et je coment? — Quant n'oz a li parler,
and I how When not-I-dare to her speak
ne n'oz voloir qu'ele le deint cuider,
nor not-I-dare to-wish that-she it may-deign to-think
tant me covient sa valor redoter.
so-much me behooves her worth to-fear

Mes granz desirs ne doit estre periz,
But great desire not ought to-be perished
par ce m'en gart la raison de mesfaire;
by this me-thereof may-keep the reason from misdoing
si l'amerai, sens proier escondiz,
so her-I-shall-love without entreating refused
quant tant ne vail ke je li doie plaire.
since so-much not I-am-worth that I to-her ought to-please
Dieus, qui li vout tant de ses biens doner,
God who to-her wished so-much of his good-things to-give
que je ne l'os a seür esgarder,
that I not her-dare with assurance to-look-at
me dont joïr de si haut desirer!
me may-grant to-enjoy of so high desiring

De ses valors ai en mon cuer escriz
Of her worths I-have in my heart written
tant et de teus que je nel sai retraire;
so-many and of such that I not-it know to-recount
et quant avient que je sui endormiz,
and when it-happens that I am asleep
solas en ai com celui qui doit plaire.
solace thereof I-have as he who ought to-please
Mes crueument le m'estuet comparer,
But cruelly it me-behooves to-pay-for
au resveiller, quant je ne puis trover
at-the waking when I not can find
ce qu'en dormant m'estuet avisonner.
this that-in sleeping me-behooves to-see-in-dream

Renaut, j'en sui legiers a conforter,
Renaut I-thereof am light to comfort
car se je muir por teus maus endurer,
for if I die for such ills enduring
plus vaut honors que morz ne puet grever.
more is-worth honor than death — can grieve

Cil qui d'amor me conseille

IV · BAD COUNSEL

Whoever counsels him to leave his lady has never loved. Right cannot grant him her love unless her courtesy does, but great love makes high and low equal. If churlishness turns her pity aside, he seeks his death, and only death could change his will. Envious felons part lovers, and the envoy says only pity can unbind Odin.

Cil qui d'amor me conseille,
He who about-love me counsels
que de li doie partir,
that from her I-ought to-part
ne set pas ki me resveille,
not knows at-all what me wakes
ne quel sont mi grief souspir.
nor what are my grievous sighs
Petit a sens et voisdie,
Little has sense and cunning
cil qui m'en veut chastier,
he who me-thereof wishes to-correct
n'onques n'ama en sa vie.
nor-ever not-loved in his life
Cil fait trop nice folie,
He does too foolish folly
qui s'entremet dou mestier
who himself-meddles in-the trade
dont il ne se set aidier.
whereof he not himself knows to-help

Hé blanche, clere et vermeille,
Ah white bright and rosy
de vos sont tuit mi desir;
of you are all my desires
car faites en tel merveille
for you-make thereof such marvel
droiture et raison faillir.
right and reason fail
Quant je vos vueill a amie
When I you wish for friend
droiz nel poroit otriier;
right not-it could grant
se vostre grant cortoisie,
if your great courtesy
de gentil dousor garnie,
with noble sweetness furnished
ne me deigne conseillier;
not me deigns to-counsel
mar vos oï tant prisier.
in-an-ill-hour you I-heard so-much praise

Qui trop haut bée et teseille
Who too high gapes and strains
maint desconfort puet oïr;
many-a discomfort can hear
mes tres granz amors pareille
but very great love makes-equal
ce que li plaist a sesir;
this that to-it pleases to seize

sa tres haute seignorie
her very high lordship
fait monter et abessier.
makes rise and lower
Douce dame, vostre aïe!
Sweet lady your help
Celle qui m'a en baillie
She who me-has in keeping
puet bien conduire et haucier
can well lead and raise
mon outrageus desirier.
my outrageous longing

Povres cuers se desconseille
Poor heart itself despairs
et let de paor morir;
and lets of fear die
li viguereus s'apareille
the vigorous itself-prepares
en biau confort de guerir.
in fair comfort of healing
Dame, mais rien que je die
Lady but anything that I may-say
ne me vaut, car je sorquier;
not to-me is-worth for I over-ask
s'un petit de vilainie,
if-a little of churlishness
esprise de felonie,
kindled by felony

vos fet pitié desvoier,
you makes pity stray
mar vos vi et ma mort quier.
in-an-ill-hour you I-saw and my death I-seek

Dedens mon cuer monte treille,
Within my heart climbs trellis
toute preste de florir:
all ready for flowering
granz amor fine et feeille
great love true and faithful
cui la daigneroit joïr.
whom it would-deign to-enjoy
Mes amors qui n'est joïe
But love which not-is enjoyed
ne puet cuer esleecier;
not can heart gladden
bien voi se mort ne chastie
well I-see if death not chastens
ma volenté, m'anemie,
my will my-enemy
ne puis mon biau tort laissier
not I-can my fair wrong leave
ne mon outrage changier.
nor my outrage change

Bels Lorenz, felon, d'envie,
Fair Lorenz felons of-envy
me firent joie esloignier.
me made joy put-far
Meinte douce compeignie
Many-a sweet company
ont a lor tort departie
have with their wrong parted
a mentir et a trichier,
with lying and with cheating
et rien ne s'en puet vengier.
and anything not itself-thereof can avenge

Odins, cil cui amors lie,
Odin he whom love binds
est cheüz en tel baillie,
is fallen into such power
que nus nel puet desliier,
that anyone not-him can unbind
se pitiez ne vuet aidier.
if pity not wishes to-help

Contre tens que voi frimer

V · AGAINST THE FROST

As frost whitens the trees, he sings, though Love makes him pay for never learning to cheat. He tells grief that it kills him wrongly, since grief belongs to those who serve to deceive. His lady is his sweet enemy, and he dares not tell her his love. He sends word to Guiot of Ponceaux never to despair, and ends his song.

Contre tens que voi frimer
Against season that I-see frost
les arbres et blanchoier,
the trees and whiten
m'est pris talenz de chanter,
to-me-is taken desire of singing
si n'en eüsse mestier;
yet not-thereof I-should-have need
qu'amors me fet comparer
for-love me makes pay-for
ce qu'onques ne soi trichier,
this that-ever not I-knew to-cheat
n'onques ne poi endurer
nor-ever not I-could endure
a avoir faus cuer legier,
to have false heart light
por ce ai failli a amie.
for this I-have failed of friend

Mout par me sout bien grever
Very much me it-knew well to-grieve
ce qui me deüst aidier:
this which me ought to-help
ce est leiament amer;
this is loyally to-love
qu'ailleurs ne me soi vengier.
that-elsewhere not myself I-knew to-avenge
Dieus la me laist oublier
God her me may-let forget
por estre hors de dangier!
for to-be out of power
Neporquant, bien doi trover
Nevertheless well I-ought to-find
folie quant je la quier.
folly when I it seek
Ha! las, foleur n'est ce mie.
Ah alas folly not-is this at-all

A tort m'ocïez, dolor,
At wrong me-you-kill grief
que point n'en deüsse avoir,
for at-all not-thereof I-ought to-have
mes cil qui trichent amor,
but those who cheat love
et servent por decevoir.
and serve for to-deceive
De tant m'a fet Dieus honor,
In so-much me-has done God honor

dont je li doi gré savoir,
whereof I to-him ought thanks to-know
qu'einc ne fu hore de jor
that-ever not was hour of day
que ne me feïst doloir
that not me made grieve
ma douce dame enemie.
my sweet lady enemy

Dame, por le creator
Lady for the creator
creez moi, car je di voir,
believe me for I say true
qu'en moi n'a tant de vigor
that-in me not-there-is so-much of vigor
que le vos face savoir.
that it to-you I-may-make know
Al cuer en sospir et plor;
At-the heart thereof I-sigh and weep
mes ne li daigne chaloir;
but not to-her deigns to-matter
melz me venist ke valor
better to-me would-have-come that worth
faillist quant l'alai veoir,
had-failed when her-I-went to-see
et biauté et cortoisie.
and beauty and courtesy

Ha las, je pri et reblant
Ah alas I pray and flatter
ce ki me fera morir;
this which me will-make die
qu'amors n'aloit el kerant
for-love not-went else seeking
mes que me peüst traïr;
except that me it-could betray
mal bailli sont li amant
ill treated are the lovers
qu'en sa merci puet tenir!
whom-in its mercy it-can hold
De moi ne voi nul senblant
Of me not I-see any semblance
coment je m'en puisse issir,
how I myself-thence may get-out
se pitiez ne m'en deslie.
if pity not me-thereof unbinds

Amors vuet tot son talent
Love wishes all its desire
de moi grever acomplir.
of me grieving to-accomplish
Grant merveille est que j'aim tant,
Great marvel it-is that I-love so-much
es maus que m'estuet sofrir.
in-the ills that me-behooves to-suffer
A li m'otroi et comant,
To her myself-I-grant and commend

car bien le me puet merir;
for well it to-me she-can reward
hons qui aime en repentant
man who loves in repenting
n'en puet pas au loins joïr,
not-thereof can at-all at-the length enjoy
se d'eür n'a grant aie.
if of-fortune not-he-has great help

A Guiot de Ponceaus mant
To Guiot of Ponceaux I-send-word
que nus ne puet trop servir;
that anyone not can too-much serve
por Deu qu'il ne s'esmait mie.
for God that-he not himself-dismay at-all

Gasses define son chant
Gace ends his song
qui tos jors vuet maintenir
who all days wishes to-maintain
bone amor, sens tricherie.
good love without cheating

De bien amer grant joie atent

VI · LOVE'S DOUBLE REWARD

Love repays twice whoever trusts it. His lady is wise and gracious, though it grieves him that she does not know what he feels. He would rather die loving than forget her for a day, and begs her not to listen to the false folk who disturb so many loves. The envoys go to the Count of Blois and to the man of Bar.

De bien amer grant joie atent,
From well loving great joy I-await
car c'est ma greigneur envie;
for this-is my greatest desire
et sachiez bien certainement
and know well certainly
qu'amors a tel segnorie
that-love has such lordship
qu'au doble guerredon en rent
that-at-the double reward thereof it-renders
celui ki en li se fie;
to-him who in it himself trusts
et cil qui d'amer se repent
and he who of-loving himself repents
s'est bien travailliez por noient.
himself-has well labored for nothing

Cele est de douz acointement
She is of sweet acquaintance
et de bone conpaignie,
and of good company

et sage entre enuieuse gent,
and wise among irksome folk
qui de mon cuer est saisie.
who of my heart is seized
Sens et biautez en li s'estent,
Sense and beauty in her itself-extends
et het toute vilenie,
and hates all churlishness
fors que trop me greive sovent
except that too-much me it-grieves often
qu'el ne set mie ke je sent.
that-she not knows at-all what I feel

Onques ne fis a escient
Ever not I-did with knowledge
contre amor sens ne folie,
against love sense nor folly
ainz sui a son comandement
rather I-am at its command
et serai toute ma vie.
and I-shall-be all my life
Cil remaint enuieusement
He remains wretchedly
de cui amors est partie.
from whom love is departed
Dame ce m'ensaigne et aprent
Lady this me-teaches and instructs
qu'eneurs est d'amer loiaument.
that-honor is of-loving loyally

Granz amorz ne me peut grever;
Great love not me can grieve
quant plus m'ocit, plus m'agrée,
when more me-it-kills more me-it-pleases
et melz vueil morir et amer
and better I-wish to-die and to-love
qu'un seul jour l'aie oubliée.
than-one single day her-I-may-have forgotten
Dame, ki me poëz doner
Lady who to-me can give
ma grant joie desirrée,
my great joy desired
ce me fait souvent sospirer.
this me makes often sigh
Qu'enuios font enui cuider.
For-irksome-ones make trouble suppose

Dame, de toutes la nonper,
Lady of all the peerless
bele et bone, a droit loée,
fair and good at right praised
ja ne deüssiez escouter
ever not you-ought to-listen-to
fausse gent malëurée;
false folk ill-fated
qu'entre mentir et deviner
who-between lying and guessing
ont mainte amor destorbée,
have many-a love disturbed

qui puis ne savoit assener
which then not knew to-find-its-mark
la ou ele deüst aler
there where it ought to-go

Dame, onques ne vos soi celer
Lady ever not from-you I-knew to-hide
mon desir ne ma pensée;
my desire nor my thought
ainz vos aim de cuer sens fauser
rather you I-love with heart without falsifying
plus que nule autre rien née;
more than any other thing born
en vos servir et honorer
in you serving and honoring
ai si m'amor atornée
I-have so my-love turned
que ne puis, sens merci trover,
that not I-can without mercy find
ne loingz garir, ne pres durer.
nor far be-healed nor near endure

Cuens de Blois, senz ensi amer
Count of Blois without thus loving
ne puet nus en haut pris monter.
not can anyone into high worth climb

Dou Barrois, vos doit remembrer
Of-the Barrois you ought to-remember
qu'amors fet les bons amender.
that-love makes the good amend

De bone amor et de loial amie

VII · GOOD LOVE AND LOYAL FRIEND

He will never forget his lady's face, yet he has no hope, since she does not love him. He dares not confess his heart and seeks no deliverance from the love that kills him; it is better to keep silent than to grieve her. The envoy tells Huet that his lady holds both his death and his life.

De bone amor et de loial amie
Of good love and of loyal friend
me vient souvent pitiez et remenbrance;
to-me comes often pity and remembrance
si que jamès a nul jor de ma vie
so that ever on any day of my life
n'oublierai son vis ne sa semblance;
not-I-shall-forget her face nor her semblance
por ce, s'amors ne s'en vuet plus souffrir,
for this if-love not itself-thereof wishes more to-refrain
qu'ele de touz ne face à son plaisir
that-she of all not may-do at her pleasure
et de toutes; mes ne puet avenir
and of all but not can happen
que de la moie aie bone esperance.
that of the mine I-may-have good hope

Coment porroie avoir bone esperance
How could-I have good hope
a bone amor ne a loial amie,
in good love or in loyal friend

ne a vers oilz, n'a la douce semblance
or in gray eyes or-in the sweet semblance
que ne verrai jamès jor de ma vie?
which not I-shall-see ever day of my life
Amer m'estuet, ne m'en pois plus sofrir,
To-love me-behooves not myself-thence I-can more refrain
celi cui ja ne venra a plaisir;
her to-whom ever not it-will-come to pleasure
et si ne sai coment puist avenir
and yet not I-know how it-may happen
qu'aie de li ne secors ne aïe.
that-I-may-have from her either help or aid

Coment porai avoir secors n'aïe
How shall-I-be-able to-have help or-aid
vers fine amor, la ou nus n'a puissance?
toward true love there where anyone not-has power
Amer me fait ce qui ne m'aime mie,
To-love me makes this which not me-loves at-all
dont ja n'avrai fors enui et pesance;
whence ever not-I-shall-have except trouble and heaviness
ne ne li os mon corage gehir
nor not to-her I-dare my heart confess
celi qui tant de maus me fet sentir,
her who so-many of ills me makes feel
que de tel mort sui jugiez a morir,
that of such death I-am judged to die
et si ne puis veoir ma delivrance.
and yet not I-can see my deliverance

Je ne vois pas querant tel delivrance
I not go at-all seeking such deliverance
par quoi amors soit de moi departie;
by which love may-be from me departed
ne ja nul jour n'en quier avoir puissance,
nor ever any day not-thereof I-seek to-have power
ainz amerai ce qui ne m'aime mie.
rather I-shall-love this which not me-loves at-all
Ce n'est pas droiz que jel doie gehir
This not-is at-all right that I-it ought to-confess
por nul destroit que me fase sentir,
for any distress that me she-may-make feel
et si n'i a confort que du morir,
and so not-there is comfort but of-the dying
puisque je sai que ne m'ameroit mie.
since I know that not me-she-would-love at-all

Ne m'ameroit? ice ne sai je mie;
Not me-would-she-love this not know I at-all
mes fins amanz puet par bone atendance
but true lover can by good waiting
et par sofrir conquerre haute amie;
and by suffering win high friend
mes je ne puis avoir bone fiance,
but I not can have good trust
que cele est tels, pour qui pleing et souspir,
for she is such for whom I-lament and sigh
que ma dolor ne deigneroit oïr;
that my grief not she-would-deign to-hear

si me vaut mieus garder mon bon taisir,
so to-me is-worth better to-keep my good silence
que dire rien qui li tort a grevance.
than to-say anything which to-her may-turn to grievance

Ne vos doit pas trop torner a grevance
Not to-you ought at-all too-much to-turn to grievance
se je vos aim, dame, plus que ma vie,
if I you love lady more than my life
que c'est la rien ou j'ai greignor fiance,
for this-is the thing where I-have greatest trust
quant par moi seul vos os nomer amie,
when by me alone you I-dare to-name friend
et por ce fes meint doleros souspir,
and for this I-make many-a grievous sigh
que ne vos puis ne veoir ne oïr,
that not you I-can nor see nor hear
et quant vos voi, n'i a que du tesir,
and when you I-see not-there is but of-the keeping-silent
que si sui pris que ne sai que je die.
for so I-am taken that not I-know what I may-say

Mes beaus conforz ne m'en porra garir,
My fair comfort not me-thereof will-be-able to-heal
de vos amer ne me porrai partir,
from you loving not myself I-shall-be-able to-part
n'a vos parler; ne ne m'en puis tesir
nor-to you speak nor not myself-thereof I-can keep-silent
que mon mal treit en chantant ne vos die.
that my ill suffered in singing — to-you I-may-tell

Par Deu, Huet, ne m'en puis plus sofrir
By God Huet not myself-thereof I-can more refrain
qu'en ma dame est et ma mort et ma vie.
for-in my lady is both my death and my life

Desconfortez, plains de dolor et d'ire

VIII · EVERYONE SAYS HE LOVES

He sings while the world laughs, and his lady kills him without amends. The refrain says everyone claims to love, so no true friend can be told apart, and he prays God to cast false lovers into hell. His pain is light if it teaches him love. He asks her counsel, and Gace ends his song still loving without mercy.

Desconfortez, plains de dolor et d'ire,
Discomforted full of grief and of-anger
m'estuet chanter, qu'aillors n'ai ou entende.
me-behooves to-sing for-elsewhere not-I-have where I-may-attend
Tout le mont voi, fors moi, joer et rire,
All the world I-see except me play and laugh
ne je ne truis qui d'ennui me defende.
nor I not find who from-trouble me may-defend
Cele m'ocit cui mes cuers plus desire,
She me-kills whom my heart most desires
s'en sui iriez, quant ele ne l'amende.
so-thereof I-am angered when she not it-amends
Chascuns dit qu'il aime autresi,
Each says that-he loves likewise
por ce ne conoist on ami.
for this not knows one friend

Ele ne set mon duel ne mon martire,
She not knows my grief nor my martyrdom
por ce m'estuet que sa merci atende;
for this me-behooves that her mercy I-await

touz faus amanz par qui ma joie empire
all false lovers by whom my joy worsens
pri je a Dieu qu'en enfer les descende.
pray I to God that-into hell them he-may-cast
J'aim, fet chascuns: grant loisir ont dou dire:
I-love says each great leisure they-have of-the saying
mais pou en voi qui a amors s'entende.
but few thereof I-see who to love himself-may-devote
Chascuns, etc.
Each etc

De moi grever est amors costumiere;
Of me grieving is love accustomed
si me fait bien por coi de li me plaigne;
so me it-does well for which of it myself I-may-complain
mes a soufrir m'est la peine legiere,
but to suffer to-me-is the pain light
se ce li plet que a amer m'ensaigne.
if this to-it pleases that to love me-it-teaches
Mes cuers me dit que souvent la requiere,
My heart me tells that often her I-may-entreat
si m'est noaus quant el plus me desdaigne.
yet to-me-is worse when she more me disdains
Chascuns, etc.
Each etc

Onques ne fis vers li fausse proiere,
Ever not I-made toward her false prayer
car je nel sai ne ja nus nel m'apraigne:
for I not-it know nor ever anyone not-it me-may-teach
la moie amors n'est mie noveliere,
the mine love not-is at-all fickle
qu'il n'est fors li nule ou mes cuers remaigne.
for-there not-is except her any where my heart may-remain
Se plus n'i prent, l'angoisse en ai mout chiere,
If more not-there I-take the-anguish thereof I-have very dear
puis qu'il li plaist qu'el ensi me destraigne.
since that-it to-her pleases that-she thus me may-constrain
Chascuns, etc.
Each etc

Cil n'aime pas qui s'en cuide retraire
He not-loves at-all who himself-thence thinks to-withdraw
se il i voit ce qu'a merci n'aviegne;
if he there sees this that-to mercy not-he-may-attain
par Dieu, seignor, de ce ne me puis taire:
by God lords of this not myself I-can be-silent
mieus aim morir que pis m'en mesaviegne,
better I-love to-die than worse to-me-thereof may-befall
car tuit li mal que j'ai me doivent plaire
for all the ills that I-have me ought to-please
tant que ma dame en joie me maintiegne.
until that my lady in joy me may-maintain
Chascuns, etc.
Each etc

Conseilliez moi, dame, quil poëz faire;
Counsel me lady who-it can do
s'ensi me muir ne sai mes qui me tiegne
if-thus myself I-die not I-know more who me may-hold
a bone amor, dont li miens cuers s'esclaire,
to good love whereof the mine heart itself-brightens
quant je vos voi, se joie m'en aviegne.
when I you see so joy to-me-thereof may-come
Mout me merveil qu'en franc cuer debonere
Much myself I-marvel that-in noble heart gracious
poëz penser rien dont je morir crieigne.
you-can think anything whereof I to-die may-fear
Chascuns, etc.
Each etc

Douce dame por Dieu vos pri
Sweet lady for God you I-pray
que je n'aie du tot failli!
that I not-may-have of-the all failed

Gasçoz a son chant defeni,
Gace has his song ended
qui toz jors aime et n'a merci.
who all days loves and not-has mercy

Douce dame, grez et graces vos rent

IX · THANKS TO MY LADY

He thanks his lady for letting him sing, though he loves so high. Reason forbids it, but Love judges high and low alike, raising the low and lowering the high. A man condemned for loving highly dies well, and if she kills him, the loss is his and the sin hers. The envoys rebuke Renalt and Gilet for leaving love.

Douce dame, grez et graces vos rent,
Sweet lady thanks and graces to-you I-render
quant il vos plaist que je soie envoisiez;
since it to-you pleases that I be merry
atendu ai vostre comandement,
awaited I-have your command
si chanterai por vos joianz et liez,
so I-shall-sing for you joyful and glad
et, s'il vos plaist, de moi merci aiez.
and if-it to-you pleases of me mercy have
En tel guise vos en praigne pitiez
In such guise you thereof may-take pity
qu'il ne vos poist se j'aim si hautement.
that-it not to-you may-weigh if I-love so highly

Je sai de voir que resons me defent
I know of truth that reason me forbids
si haute amor se vos ne l'otroiez;
so high love if you not it-grant
mais haut et bas sont d'un contenement,
but high and low are of-one bearing

qu'amor les a a son talent jugiez;
for-love them has at its desire judged
siens est li bas qui por li est hauciez,
its is the low who for it is raised
et siens li hauz qui s'en est abaissiez;
and its the high who himself-thereby is lowered
qu'a son voloir les monte et les descent.
for-at its will them it-raises and them lowers

Je ne di pas que nus aint bassement,
I not say at-all that anyone loves basely
puis que d'amor est sorpris et liiez,
since that by-love he-is seized and bound
honorer doit la joie qu'il atent,
to-honor he-ought the joy that-he awaits
s'il estoit rois, et ele ert a ses piez.
if-he were king and she were at his feet
Mais je sui, las, sor toz autres puiez,
But I am alas above all others raised
de hautement amer a mort jugiez;
for highly loving to death judged
mes mout muert bel qui fait tel hardement.
but very dies fair who does such daring

Par Dieu, dame, l'amors de vos m'esprent,
By God lady the-love of you me-kindles
qui m'occira, se vos ne m'en aidiez.
which me-will-kill if you not me-thereof help

El ne fait mes qu'a son comandement,
It not does but that-at its command
si li ert bel se por li m'ociez.
so to-it it-will-be fair if for it me-you-kill
Et s'endroit vos est vaincue pitiez,
And if-in-regard-to you is vanquished pity
moie ert la perte, et vostres li pechiez,
mine will-be the loss and yours the sin
que dou partir de vos n'i a nient.
for of-the parting from you not-there is anything

Fine biauté plesant et cors tres gent
Fine beauty pleasing and body very gracious
vos dona Dieus, dont il soit merciez.
to-you gave God whereof he be thanked
Nus ne porroit loer si finement
Anyone not could praise so finely
voz granz valors con vos les mostreriez,
your great worths as you them would-show
en touz bienfèz et en toz biens proisiez;
in all good-deeds and in all good-things praised
et s'il vos plaist honorez n'essaussiez
and if-it to-you pleases honored nor-exalted
n'iert ja a droit qui d'amor ne l'atent.
not-will-be ever at right who from-love not it-awaits

Chantez, Renalt, ki antan amïez;
Sing Renalt who last-year loved
or m'est avis que vos en retraiez.
now to-me-is opinion that you thence withdraw
Se del partir estes apareilliez,
If for-the parting you-are prepared
ja onques Deus oan ne vos ament.
ever ever God this-year not you may-amend

Par Dieu, Gilet, faus amanz desloiez,
By God Gilet false lover disloyal
qui d'amor s'est partiz et esloigniez,
who from-love himself-is parted and distanced
vaut assez plus qu'uns autres enragiez;
is-worth much more than-an other enraged
chastoiez en vos et l'autre dolent.
correct thereby yourself and the-other sorrowful

En douz tens et en bone hore

X · IN SWEET SEASON

He sings while a false-hearted lady keeps him waiting; if she does not help him at last, hope will have killed him by treason. He dares not speak his whole thought, and since childhood he has loved where he should not. A sweet look once lied to deceive him. Gace sends word of his distress to Odin in France.

En douz tens et en bone hore
In sweet time and in good hour
vueill retrere ma chanson.
I-wish to-tell my song
Mestiers est qu'or me secore
Need is that-now me may-succor
fausse riens, a cuer felon,
false thing with heart felonious
a cui je ai m'atendance.
in whom I have my-expectation
Gardez con sui en balance
See how I-am in balance
qui en atent guerredon!
who thereof await reward

Quant de moi est au desore,
When of me it-is at-the upper-hand
n'i a rien se merci non;
not-there is anything except mercy not
mes trop asez me demore,
but too much to-me it-delays

s'en doi avoir garison.
so-thereof I-ought to-have cure
S'au darreain ne m'avance,
If-at-the last not me-it-advances
donques m'a mort esperance,
then me-has killed hope
en guise de traïson.
in guise of treason

N'os pas tot mon penser dire
Not-I-dare at-all all my thought to-tell
celi cui amis je sui;
her whose friend I am
mes duels m'ocirra et ire
but grief me-will-kill and anger
se je l'aim avec autrui.
if I her-love with another
G'en parol com en faillance,
I-thereof speak as in failing
car de dure contenance
for of hard bearing
la trovai, las, quant g'i fui.
her I-found alas when I-there was

Conseill quier de mon martire,
Counsel I-seek for my martyrdom
seignor, mais ne sai a cui;
lords but not I-know from whom

coment puet sa joie eslire
how can his joy choose
qui partout voit son ennui?
who everywhere sees his trouble
Mais j'ai apris des m'enfance
But I-have learned since my-childhood
une fole acoustumance,
a foolish habit
d'amer la ou je ne dui.
of-loving there where I not ought

Cil est bien en aventure
He is well in hazard
qu'amors a en son pouoir;
whom-love has in its power
toz me mis en sa mesure,
wholly myself I-put in its measure
por ma greignor joie avoir;
for my greater joy to-have
mais tant dout ma mescheance,
but so-much I-fear my mischance
que je n'ai mie fiance
that I not-have at-all trust
que riens m'i puisse valoir.
that anything me-there may avail

Li enuis qui tant me dure
The trouble which so-long me lasts
m'eüst mort au mien espoir;
me-would-have killed at-the mine hope
mes adès me rasseüre
but ever me reassures
et fait ma dolor voloir;
and makes my grief wish
car une douce semblance
for a sweet semblance
me dist sanz apercevance
me told without perceiving
un mentir por decevoir.
a lie for to-deceive

Gasses de sa mesestance
Gace of his distress
mande a Odin en France;
sends-word to Odin in France
pour Dieu qu'il en die voir!
for God that-be thereof may-tell true

Fine amor et bone esperance

XI · TRUE LOVE AND GOOD HOPE

He would sing again if his lady ended his sorrow. He dares not speak to her, and when he looks at her he trembles and turns his eyes away. He gives her his whole love and would love her no less if she never heard his prayer. He blames the gossips and the fickle beloved who leaves one man for another.

Fine amor et bone esperance
True love and good hope
me ramoine joie et chanter,
to-me bring-back joy and singing
se cele m'oste ire et pesance
if she from-me-takes anger and heaviness
qui tant m'avra fait endurer;
who so-much me-will-have made endure
qu'ainc ne me vout guerredoner;
for-ever not me she-wished to-reward
pour ce ai esmai et doutance,
for this I-have dismay and fear
se loiauté de bien amer
if loyalty of well loving
ou sa grant pitiez ne m'avance.
or her great pity not me-advances

Ja nel tenisse a mesestance
Ever not-it I-would-hold for distress
qu'a ma dame m'estuet penser,
that-on my lady me-behooves to-think

se par aucune seürance
if by some assurance
i cuidasse merci trover.
there I-thought mercy to-find
Mais quant je plus m'i doi fier
But when I more myself-there ought to-trust
lors i retruis male voillance
then there I-find-in-turn ill will
si que je n'os a li parler,
so that I not-dare to her speak
ains me muir en itel souffrance.
rather myself I-die in such suffering

Douce dame en cui j'ai fiance
Sweet lady in whom I-have trust
de ma grant joie recovrer,
of my great joy to-recover
membre vos qu'en longue atendance
remember you that-in long waiting
me poroit amors trop grever.
me could love too-much grieve
Ne je ne m'en sai conforter,
Nor I not myself-thereof know to-comfort
car en vos est ma delivrance;
for in you is my deliverance
dame, si vos en doit membrer,
lady so you thereof ought to-remember
selon vostre doulce semblance.
according-to your sweet semblance

Dan Dieus, quant remir sa semblance,
Lord God when I-gaze-at her semblance
trestot le cuer me fet trembler,
all-wholly the heart me makes tremble
ne mi oil [n']ont tant de puissance
nor my eyes not-have so-much of power
qu'il osent son cors regarder,
that-they dare her body to-look-at
eins les covient aillors torner,
rather them behooves elsewhere to-turn
si que n'i puis faire atendance;
so that not-there I-can make waiting
et quant li doi merci crier,
and when to-her I-ought mercy to-cry
lors me faut cuer et hardiance.
then me fails heart and boldness

Tote m'amor fine et entiere
All my-love true and entire
doing a ma dame, ligement;
I-give to my lady as-liege
ja por ce, s'el n'ot ma proiere,
ever for this if-she not-hears my prayer
ne l'aim je pas mains finement.
not her-love I at-all less truly
Ce n'est pas amors autrement,
This not-is at-all love otherwise
puis qu'el va avant et arriere;
since that-it goes forward and backward

la paine en trait legierement
the pain thereof bears lightly
qui aime d'amor noveliere.
who loves with-love fickle

Icele gent fole et parliere
That folk foolish and talkative
nos abaisse joie et jovent;
for-us lowers joy and youth
et fause drue noveliere,
and false beloved fickle
qui cestui laisse et autre prent.
who this-one leaves and another takes
Si voit on avenir souvent
So sees one happen often
que la plus fole est la plus fiere;
that the most foolish is the most proud
por ce vait amors a neent,
for this goes love to nothing
que pou trove on mes qui l'ait chiere.
for few finds one more who it-may-hold dear

Gasse, par droit me respondez

XII · A DEBATE WITH GACE

A questioner asks Gace whether a betrayed lover should wait or leave. Gace says a true lover should serve, since she can repay a hundredfold; the other calls him mad and says such love deserves hatred. Gace says a loving heart can no more leave love than he can turn blond, and calls base the friend who abandons his lady.

Gasse, par droit me respondez,
Gace by right me answer
de vos le me couvient oïr,
from you it me behooves to-hear
se je me sui abandonnez
if I myself am given-over
loiaument a amor servir,
loyally to love serve
et cele me vueille traïr
and she me may-wish to-betray
a cui m'estoie abandonez,
to whom myself-I-was given-over
dites moi, lequel me loez,
tell me which me you-advise
ou del atendre, ou del guerpir?
either of-the waiting or of-the abandoning

— Sire, n'en sui pas esgarez,
Lord not-thereof I-am at-all bewildered
de ce sai bien le mieus choisir:
of this I-know well the better to-choose

se finement de cuer amez,
if truly with heart you-love
et loial sont vostre desir,
and loyal are your desires
n'i a nïant de repentir,
not-there is anything of repenting
mais a vostre pooir servez;
but to your power serve
nuls n'iert ja tant d'amor grevez,
anyone not-will-be ever so-much by-love grieved
qu'elle ne poist cent tans merir.
that-she not may-be-able hundred times to-reward

— Qu'est ce, Gasse, estes vos desvez?
What-is this Gace are you mad
Me volez vos afoletir?
Me wish you to-befool
Ceste amor, que vos me loez,
This love that you me advise
devroit touz li mondes haïr.
ought all the world to-hate
Touz jours amer, et puis morir!
All days to-love and then to-die
Vilainement me confortez.
Churlishly me you-comfort
Quant je ai les maus endurez,
When I have the ills endured
lors en devroie bien joïr.
then thereof I-ought well to-enjoy

— Sire, por Dieu, or entendez.
Lord for God now listen
A droit et raison maintenir,
To right and reason maintain
cuers qui bien est enamorez,
heart which well is enamored
coment puet il d'amor partir?
how can it from-love part
Nes que je puis blons devenir,
No-more than I can blond become
n'en poroit il estre tornez.
not-thence could it be turned
Se vos plet, de ce me creëz:
If you please of this me believe
qu'ami traï muerent martir.
that-friends betrayed die martyrs

— Gasse, bien sai que vos pensez,
Gace well I-know what you think
mes amor lais a covenir;
but love I-leave to fend-for-itself
ne sui pas si amesurez,
not I-am at-all so moderate
que je plus li vueille obeïr;
that I more to-it may-wish to-obey
ne poroie plus consentir
not I-could more consent-to
ses felenesses cruautez,
its felonious cruelties

et vos qui goutes n'i veëz,
and you who a-jot not-there see
ne vos en savez revenir.
not yourself thence know to-return

— Sire, onc mes pues que je fui nez,
Lord ever before since that I was born
ne vos vi de rien esbahir;
not you I-saw of anything be-dismayed
ou la raison ne m'escoutez,
or the reason not me-you-hear
que le voir ne volez oïr.
for the truth not you-wish to-hear
Coment se puet avelenir
How itself can debase
fins cuers et loiaus volentez?
true heart and loyal will
Laidement vers amor fausez,
Basely toward love you-falsify
s'einsi vos en volez partir.
if-thus yourself thence you-wish to-part

— Gasse, si fais quant je m'aïr:
Gace so I-do when I myself-anger
touz est li gens cors oubliez,
all is the gracious body forgotten

et ses dous vis fres colorez;
and her sweet face fresh colored
ja ne quier mes que j'en sospir.
ever not I-seek more that I-thereof sigh

— Sire, mout a vilain loisir
Lord very has churlish leisure
fins amis haïz ou amez,
true friend hated or loved
se il est d'amors sormenez,
if he is by-love overdriven
s'il por ce la vuet relenquir.
if-he for this her wishes to-abandon

Grant pechié fet qui de chanter me prie

XIII · SINGING WITHOUT DESIRE

He has never made a song love did not teach him, and he sings now only out of habit. Flatterers have harmed him, and a false one stole his heart, which he won back with pain. When he recalls his lady's company, nothing is as dismayed as his heart. Pride and felony have settled in the most comely lady.

Grant pechié fet qui de chanter me prie,
Great sin does who of singing me begs
car sanz reson n'est pas droiz que je chant,
for without reason not-is at-all right that I sing
qu'onques ne fis chançon jor de ma vie,
for-ever not I-made song day of my life
se fine amor nel m'enseigna avant.
if true love not-it me-taught before
Mais par leur gré chanterai sanz talant,
But by their will I-shall-sing without desire
einsi com cil qui par acostumance
thus as he who by habit
fet tel chançon ou n'a fors contenance.
makes such song where not-there-is except countenance

Je ne di pas qu'amors se soit partie
I not say at-all that-love itself be departed
de mon fin cuer, ja ne vive je tant!
from my true heart ever not may-live I so-long

Mais losengier et felon plein d'envie
But flatterers and felons full of-envy
m'ont grant mal fet, bien est aparissant;
me-have great ill done well is apparent
souvent me font membrer en sospirant:
often me make remember in sighing
qu'onc Deus ne fist si cruel desevrance
that-ever God not made so cruel separation
come de joie et de douce acointance.
as of joy and of sweet acquaintance

Je sai de voir, se de loial amie
I know of truth if from loyal friend
peüsse avoir de joie un biau semblant,
I-could have of joy a fair semblance
que j'ai un cuer qui de legier oublie
that I-have a heart which with ease forgets
ire et travail; et fause, en decevant,
anger and toil and false-one in deceiving
trop longuement m'a trouvé sanz garant;
too long me-has found without protector
tolu m'avoit mon cuer par mescheance,
taken from-me-it-had my heart by mischance
mes rescos l'ai a paine et a grevance.
but rescued it-I-have with pain and with grievance

Car quant recort la douce compaignie
For when I-recall the sweet company
et les deduis dont je sueil avoir tant,
and the delights whereof I was-wont to-have so-many
donc n'a el mont chose si esbahie
then not-there-is in-the world thing so dismayed
conme est mes cuers que j'ai triste en pensant.
as is my heart which I-have sad in thinking
Donc pens et di que mal vive je tant!
Then I-think and say that ill may-live I so-long
Qu'amors me vout alegier ma grevance,
That-love me wished to-lighten my grievance
et chascun jor doble ma mesestance.
and each day doubles my distress

Volage cuer et ondiere folie
Fickle heart and wavering folly
ont maint anui fet a loial amant:
have many-a trouble done to loyal lover
avoir cuidai joieuse compaignie,
to-have I-thought joyful company
par lonc travaill, amoureuz desirrant;
by long toil amorous desiring
maiz losengier par furent si poissant
but flatterers indeed were so powerful
qu'il m'ont tolu ma loial esperance
that-they from-me-have taken my loyal hope
de la grant joie u j'avoie fiance.
of the great joy where I-had trust

Outrage ont fet orgueillz et felenie
Outrage have done pride and felony
qui se sunt mis en la pluz avenant
which themselves are put in the most comely
qui onques fust a ami anemie,
who ever was to friend enemy
et qui plus a biauté douce et pleisant.
and who most has beauty sweet and pleasing
Merveilles fais quant je vois ramembrant
Marvels I-do when I go remembering
sa grant biauté ou je n'ai mais fiance,
her great beauty where I not-have more trust
n'en nul confort ne truis ma delivrance.
nor-in any comfort not I-find my deliverance

Ire d'amour qui en mon cuer repaire

XIV · THE SORROW OF LOVE

Love's sorrow does not let him keep from singing, yet a sweet hope brightens him. His lady's beauty has killed him, and slanderers cannot part him from her. His loyal desires will kill him before his joy comes; love makes him play the fool. He tells the Count of Blois that a man who leaves love will hardly win honor.

Ire d'amour qui en mon cuer repaire
Anger of-love which in my heart dwells
ne me lest tant que de chanter me tiengne.
not me lets so-much that from singing myself I-may-hold
Grant merveille est se chançon en puis traire,
Great marvel it-is if song thence I-can draw
ne je ne sai dont l'ocheson me viengne;
nor I not know whence the-occasion to-me may-come
car li desirs et la grant volentez,
for the desire and the great will
dont je sui si pensis et esgarez,
whereof I am so pensive and distraught
m'ont si mené, ce vous puis je bien dire,
me-have so led this to-you can I well tell
qu'a paines sai conoistre joie d'ire.
that-with pains I-know to-tell joy from-anger

Et nonporquant, touz li cuers m'en esclaire
And nevertheless all the heart to-me-thereof brightens
d'un dous espoir, Dieus doint que il aviengne!
with-a sweet hope God may-grant that it may-come-about

Mout par devroit a ma dame desplaire
Very much ought to my lady to-displease
se ceste amour m'ocist; bien l'en coviengne!
if this love me-kills well to-her-thereof may-befall
Mort m'a ses cors, li genz, li acesmez,
Killed me-has her body the gracious the adorned
et ses douz vis freschement colorez,
and her sweet face freshly colored
et sa biautez dont il n'est riens a dire;
and her beauty whereof there not-is anything to say
Dieus, pour qu'en ot tant a moi desconfire?
God for what-thereof she-had so-much to me undo

Irié me font cele gent de male aire
Angry me make that folk of evil kind
plus que nus maus que por amour sostiengne;
more than any ill that for love I-may-sustain
mes ne lor vaut: que ja ne porront faire
but not to-them avails for ever not they-will-be-able to-make
qu'amours ne m'ait et qu'au cuer ne me tiengne;
that-love not me-may-have and that-at-the heart not me may-hold
si loiaument me sui a li donez
so loyally myself I-am to her given
que sens morir n'en serai desevrez.
that without dying not-thence I-shall-be separated
Nes qu'on se puet vers amour escondire
No-more than-one oneself can toward love excuse
ne puet on pas loial amie eslire?
not can one at-all loyal friend choose

Loial desir, dont j'ai plus de cent paire,
Loyal desires whereof I-have more than hundred pair
m'ocirront voir, ainz que ma joie viengne
me-will-kill truly before that my joy may-come
qui touz jors m'est pramise pour atraire:
which all days to-me-is promised for to-allure
mes je ne cuit qu'a ma dame en soviengne,
but I not think that-to my lady thereof may-remember
ou Dieus a mis tant valours et bontez;
where God has put so-many worths and goodnesses
mes envers moi s'est tant orguels mellez
but toward me itself-is so-much pride mingled
que n'ai pooir de tel mort contredire,
that not-I-have power of such death to-gainsay
puis que mes cuers se veut por li ocire.
since that my heart itself wishes for her to-kill

Tres grans amours me fet folie faire,
Very great love me makes folly do
si ai paour que longues ne me tiengne;
so I-have fear that long — me it-may-hold
mes je n'en puis mon corage retraire,
but I not-thence can my heart withdraw
ensi me plaist, conment qu'il m'en aviengne.
thus me it-pleases how-ever that-it to-me-thereof may-befall
Par tel reson sui povres asasez
By such reason I-am poor sated
quant je plus vuel ce dont sui plus grevez,
when I most wish this whereby I-am most grieved

et en esmai m'estuet joer et rire;
and in dismay me-behooves to-play and to-laugh
ainc mes ne vi si decevant martire.
ever before not I-saw so deceiving martyrdom

Ha! cuens de Blois, vous qui fustes amez,
Ah count of Blois you who were loved
tiengne vous en et vous en remembrez,
hold you thereto and yourself thereof remember
car qui d'amer oste son cuer et tire,
for who from-loving removes his heart and draws
aventure iert s'il grant honor desire.
chance it-will-be if-he great honor desires

Je ne puis pas si loing foïr

XV · I CANNOT FLEE

He cannot flee far enough to forget his lady, who will not keep him. Only liars part from love. He asks Love what it awaits when he serves so loyally, and whether it means to show that those who love much are fools. She kills him at her pleasure, yet he hopes, and he complains that Love led him into her country.

Je ne puis pas si loing foïr
I not can at-all so far flee
que ma dame puisse oublier,
that my lady I-may forget
n'el ne me daigne retenir,
nor-she not me deigns to-retain
ne je ne sai quel part aler
nor I not know which way to-go
entre mon cuer et mon desir
between my heart and my desire
et meseürs et trop amer;
and misfortune and too-much loving
et ce que ne li poi celer,
and this that not from-her I-could hide
m'a mort, si ne puis plus sofrir.
me-has killed so not I-can more endure

D'amours se feïst bon partir,
From-love oneself would-do good to-part
mes nus ne s'en puet consirer,
but anyone not himself-thereof can deprive

fors cil qui essaucent mentir
except those who exalt lying
ne de voir ne quierent parler,
nor of truth not seek to-speak
et si nel puent meintenir;
and yet not-it can maintain
ja Deus nes en lest amender!
ever God not-them thereof may-let amend
Tant m'ont fait d'ennui endurer
So-much me-have made of-trouble endure
que n'ai mes pooir de morir.
that not-I-have more power of dying

Et se je mes doi joie avoir,
And if I ever ought joy to-have
amours qu'alez vous atendant,
love what-go you awaiting
quant vers vous fais tout mon povoir
when toward you I-do all my power
en guise de loial amant?
in guise of loyal lover
Voulez vous fere apercevoir
Wish you to-make perceive
que cil sont fol qui aiment tant?
that those are fools who love so-much
Vostre anemi en sont joiant,
Your enemies thereof are joyful
si nel deüssiez pas vouloir.
so not-it you-ought at-all to-wish

De moi puis merveilles veoir,
Of me I-can marvels see
qu'einsi m'ocist a son talant
that-thus me-kills at her desire
cele qui me dut dire voir
she who me ought to-tell true
de sa bele bouche riant.
from her fair mouth laughing
Mes encor i ai bon espoir,
But still there I-have good hope
si atendrai merci proiant,
so I-shall-wait mercy praying
quant je n'ai contre li garant,
since I not-have against her protector
ne d'amor ne me quier mouvoir.
nor from-love not myself I-seek to-move

Bien est voirs qu'amours me desfent
Well is true that-love me forbids
joie et deport et gieu et ris;
joy and pleasure and play and laughter
s'ele en ce se tient longuement,
if-it in this itself holds long
n'en puis mes se je m'esbahis;
not-thereof I-can more if I myself-dismay
qu'adès dient la male gent:
for-ever say the evil folk
plus est fous qui plus est amis;
more is fool who more is friend

mais ne l'ai pas einsi apris:
but not it-I-have at-all thus learned
du repentir n'i a niënt.
of-the repenting not-there is anything

Mal m'ont fet a mon esciënt
Ill me-have done to my knowledge
ma dame et amours qui m'ont pris.
my lady and love who me-have taken
S'ele est de dous acointement
If-she is of sweet acquaintance
et ele a gent cors et cler vis,
and she has gracious body and bright face
qu'en tient il a moi de niënt?
what-thereof holds it to me of nothing
Ja n'en deüsse estre pensis.
Ever not-thereof I-ought to-be pensive
Et qu'est ce, Deus, que je devis?
And what-is this God that I recount
Ja nus n'amera sagement.
Ever anyone not-will-love wisely

Amours, a vous je me dement
Love to you I myself lament
qui me menastes el païs
who me led into-the country
ou j'ai mon cuer en tel lieu mis
where I-have my heart in such place put
dont je morrai s'on le me rent.
whereof I shall-die if-one it to-me returns

L'an que fine fueille et flour

XVI · WHEN LEAF AND FLOWER END

When the cold comes, he sings as if weeping. He cannot be blamed for loving one so worthy, and begs her to take away part of his grief. No one ever loved as he does; she wrongs no one if she lets him die, for he is hers. Loyal service will profit him, and he tells Guy of Ponceaux that he will never forget him.

L'an que fine fueille et flour,
The-year when ends leaf and flower
que voi la froidure entrer,
when I-see the cold enter
lors chant a guise de plour,
then I-sing in guise of weeping
qu'autrement ne puis chanter.
for-otherwise not I-can sing
Mes a la gent vueil mostrer
But to the folk I-wish to-show
se ma dame a grant honour
if my lady has great honor
de son bon ami grever.
of her good friend grieving

Mes cuers me fet grant irour
My heart me does great anger
qui ne m'en lesse torner;
which not me-thence lets turn

ançois double chascun jour
rather doubles each day
son voloir de moi lasser.
its will of me wearying
Quant loisir ai d'esgarder,
When leisure I-have of-looking
seignour, se je fais folour,
lords if I do folly
mout par m'en devroit peser.
very much me-thereof ought to-weigh

Se je l'aim de fine amour,
If I her-love with true love
je n'en fais pas a blasmer,
I not-thereof do at-all to blame
qu'en li a tant de valour
for-in her there-is so-much of worth
qu'on ne la puet trop amer;
that-one not her can too-much love
mes pour Dieu li vueil mander
but for God to-her I-wish to-send-word
que tant m'ost de ma dolour
that so-much from-me-she-may-take of my grief
que l'autre puisse porter.
that the-other I-may bear

S'onques hons merci trova,
If-ever man mercy found
je n'i doi mie faillir;
I not-there ought at-all to-fail
qu'onques mes riens tant n'ama
for-ever before anything so-much not-loved
com je fais en lonc consir.
as I do in long privation
Si ne m'en doi repentir;
So not myself-thereof I-ought to-repent
que cil qui tant servi a
for he who so-much served has
ne doit perdre pour soufrir.
not ought to-lose for suffering

Ja nului tort ne fera
Ever to-anyone wrong not she-will-do
s'ele m'i lesse morir;
if-she me-there lets die
que siens sui, si m'ocira
for hers I-am so me-she-will-kill
quant li vendra a plesir;
when to-her it-will-come at pleasure
n'Amours n'en doit pas mentir:
nor-Love not-thereof ought at-all to-lie
puis qu'ele a li me dona,
since that-she to her me gave
bien me doit en ce tenir.
well me ought in this to-hold

Se Dieu plet, bien me vendra
If God pleases well to-me it-will-come
de loial amour servir;
from loyal love serving
qu'onques nus n'en empira
for-ever anyone not-thereby worsened
s'ele li vouloit merir.
if-she him wished to-reward
Ja Deus ne m'i lest mentir,
Ever God not me-there may-let lie
mes a son plesir sera
but at her pleasure it-will-be
que qu'il m'en doie avenir.
what ever-it to-me-thereof may befall

Gui de Ponciaus, au finir,
Guy of Ponceaux at-the end
ne vous oblierai ja.
not you I-shall-forget ever
Par vous doi la mort haïr.
Through you I-ought the death to-hate

Les oisillons de mon païs

XVII · THE BIRDS OF MY COUNTRY

In Brittany he hears the birds he once heard in Champagne, and they set him singing until he gains what Love promised. His lady stole his heart with a kiss so sweetly that he did not feel it go, and he still feels that kiss on his lips. False suitors make him seem a fool, and he dares not go near her.

Les oisillons de mon païs
The little-birds of my country
ai oïz en Bretaigne;
I-have heard in Brittany
a lor chant m'est il bien a vis
at their song to-me-is it well in view
qu'en la douce Champaigne
that-in the sweet Champagne
les oï jadis,
them I-heard once
se n'i ai mespris.
if not-there I-have erred
Il m'ont en si dous penser mis
They me-have in so sweet thought put
qu'a chançon fere me sui pris
that-to song making myself I-am taken
tant que je parataigne
until that I may-attain
ce qu'Amours m'a lonc tens promis.
this that-Love me-has long time promised

De longue atente m'esbahis
At long waiting myself-I-dismay
sanz ce que je m'en plaigne;
without this that I myself-thereof complain
ce me tout le gieu et le ris;
this from-me takes the play and the laughter
nus cui amours destraigne
anyone whom love may-constrain
n'est d'el ententis.
not-is on-other-thing intent
Mon cors et mon vis
My body and my face
truis si mainte fois entrepris
I-find so many-a time seized
qu'un fol semblant i ai apris.
that-a foolish semblance there I-have learned
Qui qu'en amor mespraigne,
Who ever-in love may-err
ainc, certes, plus ne li mesfis.
ever certainly more not to-it I-misdid

En besant mon cuer me ravi
In kissing my heart from-me ravished
ma douce dame gente;
my sweet lady gracious
trop fu fous quant il me guerpi
too was fool when it me left
pour li qui me tormente!
for her who me torments

Las! ains nel senti,
Alas ever not-it I-felt
quant de moi parti;
when from me it-parted
tant doucement le me toli
so sweetly it from-me she-took
qu'en sospirant le trest a li;
that-in sighing it she-drew to her
mon fol cuer atalente,
my foolish heart she-delights
mais ja n'avra de moi merci.
but ever not-she-will-have on me mercy

D'un beser dont me membre si
Of-a kiss whereof to-me remembers so
m'est avis, en m'entente,
to-me-is opinion in my-mind
qu'il n'est hore, ce m'a traï,
that-there not-is hour this me-has betrayed
qu'a mes levres nel sente.
that-on my lips not-it I-feel
Quant elle souffri
When she suffered
ce que je la vi,
this that I her saw
de ma mort que ne me gari!
from my death why not me she-saved

Elle set bien que je m'oci
She knows well that I myself-kill
en ceste longue atente,
in this long waiting
dont j'ai le vis teint et pali.
whereof I-have the face stained and paled

Puis que me tout rire et juer
Since that from-me takes to-laugh and to-play
et fet morir d'envie,
and makes die of-longing
trop souvent me fet comparer
too often me makes pay-for
amours sa compeignie.
love its company
Las! n'i os aler,
Alas not-there I-dare to-go
car pour fol sembler
for for fool to-seem
me font cil faus proiant d'amer.
me make those false suitors of-love
Morz sui quant jes i voi parler;
Dead I-am when I-them there see speak
que point de tricherie
that a-whit of cheating
ne puet nus d'eus en li trouver.
not can any of-them in her find

Li plusour ont d'amours chanté

XVIII · NOT FEIGNED

Many have sung of love falsely, but he never sang feignedly, and he hates no one. He has loved truly, though he has been away from the country, and Love has taught him that a true friend waits. The envious delay his hope. In Brittany the count he loves has advised him, and he will soon see whether the counsel was good.

Li plusour ont d'amours chanté
The most have of-love sung
par esfort et desloiaument;
by effort and disloyally
mes de tant me doit savoir gré,
but of so-much me ought to-know thanks
qu'onques ne chantai faintement.
that-ever not I-sang feignedly
Ma bone foi m'en a gardé,
My good faith me-thereof has kept
et l'amours, dont j'ai tel plenté
and the-love whereof I-have such plenty
que merveille est se je rien hé,
that marvel it-is if I anything hate
neïs cele envïouse gent.
even that envious folk

Certes j'ai de fin cuer amé,
Certainly I-have with true heart loved
ne ja n'amerai autrement;
nor ever not-I-shall-love otherwise

bien le puet avoir esprouvé
well it can have proved
ma dame, se garde s'en prent.
my lady if heed herself-thereof takes
Je ne di pas que m'ait grevé
I not say at-all that me-it-may-have grieved
qu'el ne soit a ma volenté,
that-she not be at my will
car de li sont tuit mi pensé,
for of her are all my thoughts
mout me plet ce que me consent.
much me pleases this that me she-grants

Se j'ai fors du païs esté,
If I-have outside of-the country been
ou mes biens et ma joie atent,
where my good and my joy awaits
pour ce n'ai je pas oublié
for this not-have I at-all forgotten
conment on aime loiaument;
how one loves loyally
se li merirs m'a demoré
if the rewarding me-has delayed
ce m'en a mout reconforté,
this me-thereof has much comforted
qu'en pou d'ore a on recouvré
that-in little of-hour has one recovered
ce qu'on desirre longuement.
this that-one desires long

Amours m'a par reson moustré
Love me-has by reason shown
que fins amis sueffre et atent;
that true friend suffers and waits
car qui est en sa poësté
for who is in its power
merci doit proier franchement,
mercy ought to-pray freely
ou c'est orgueus; — si l'ai prouvé;
or this-is pride so it-I-have proved
mais cil faus amorous d'esté,
but those false lovers of-summer
qui m'ont d'amour ochoisoné,
who me-have of-love accused
n'aiment fors quant talens lor prent.
not-love except when desire them takes

S'envïous l'avoient juré,
If-envious-ones it-had sworn
ne me vaudroient il nïent,
not me would-avail they anything
la dont il se sont tant pené
there whereof they themselves are so-much labored
de moi nuire a lor essïent.
of me harming to their knowledge
Por ce aient il renoié Dé,
For this may-have they denied God

tant ont mon enui pourparlé
so-much they-have my trouble plotted
qu'a paine verrai achevé
that-with pain I-shall-see achieved
le penser qui d'amours m'esprent.
the thought which with-love me-kindles

Mes en Bretaigne m'a loé
But in Brittany me-has advised
li cuens, cui j'aim tot mon aé,
the count whom I-love all my life
et s'il m'a bon conseil doné,
and if-he me-has good counsel given
ce verrai je procheinement.
this shall-see I soon

Ne me sont pas ocheson de chanter

XIX · NO NEED OF MEADOWS

He needs no meadow to sing; his lady's command is reason enough. He fears his love will kill both him and his heart, but no one should fear so fair a death. He will never achieve his joy and loves without hope. He meant to hide his grief from her, then calls that folly: no one who sees her could fail to know he loves her.

Ne me sont pas ocheson de chanter
Not to-me are at-all occasion of singing
pré ne vergier, pleseïs ne buisson;
meadow nor orchard hedge nor bush
quant ma dame le plest a comander,
when my lady it pleases to command
n'i puis trover plus avenant reson.
not-there I-can find more fitting reason
Si m'est mout bel que sa valour retraie,
So to-me-is very fair that her worth I-may-tell
sa cortoisie et sa biauté veraie,
her courtesy and her beauty true
dont Deus li vout si grant plenté doner
whereof God to-her wished so great plenty to-give
qu'il en covient les autres oublier.
that-it thereby behooves the others to-forget

Et nonporquant, mout dout l'entreprison
And nevertheless much I-fear the-undertaking
qu'ai en mon cuer fete de li amer.
that-I-have in my heart made of her loving

Bien sai de voir qu'ambedui i mourron;
Well I-know of truth that-both there shall-die
mais nus ne doit si bele mort douter;
but anyone not ought so fair death to-fear
decevanment qu'autres sens me desvoie,
deceivingly that-other sense me leads-astray
tres granz amours qui m'ensaigne tel voie
very great love which me-teaches such way
qu'a mon vouloir moi et mon cuer tendron,
that-to my will me and my heart we-shall-hold
mais, par mon chief, ja n'en departiron.
but by my head ever not-thence we-shall-part

Ja ne pourrai ma grant joie achever;
Ever not I-shall-be-able my great joy to-achieve
mourir m'estuet en lieu de guerredon;
to-die me-behooves in place of reward
soëf trait mal qui en cuide eschaper,
sweetly bears ill who thence thinks to-escape
tels confors est d'atendre guerison.
such comfort is of-awaiting healing
Mes sanz espoir me tormente et esmaie
But without hope me torments and dismays
iceste amour, qui m'ocit et apaie;
this love which me-kills and appeases
merci me fet en ma dame cuider
mercy me makes in my lady think
tel que reson n'oseroit creanter.
such that reason not-would-dare to-grant

Biens et biautez sont en li compagnon,
Good and beauty are in her companions
sens et valours les i fist assembler;
sense and worth them there made assemble
quant je regart son cors et sa façon,
when I look-at her body and her fashion
quant plus ai cuer, plus m'i couvient penser.
when more I-have heart more me-there behooves to-think
Quant je la vi, bien soi que je mourroie;
When I her saw well I-knew that I would-die
plus m'ociroit quant je plus la verroie
more me-it-would-kill when I more her would-see
mis grans desirs par si belle ocheson;
my great desire by so fair occasion
dont ja n'avrai sens joie raenson.
whereof ever not-I-shall-have without joy ransom

Adès cuidai ma grant dolor celer,
Ever I-thought my great grief to-hide
que nel seüst la bele o le dous non.
that not-it might-know the fair-one with the sweet name
N'el nel savra. Qui li doie conter
Nor-she not-it will-know Who to-her may tell
quant nus ne set m'angoisse se je non?
when anyone not knows my-anguish except I not
Dit ai que fols: ja nus hom qui la voie,
Said I-have as fool ever any man who her may-see

tant nices n'est, que bien ne saiche et croie
so foolish not-is that well not may-know and believe
que j'aim celi que tant m'oëz louer,
that I-love her whom so-much me-you-hear to-praise
por tant qu'ele est bele et bone sens per.
for so-much that-she is fair and good without peer

Fins amourous, touz jours di et diroie:
True lover all days I-say and would-say
n'est pas amis qui contre Amour guerroie;
not-is at-all friend who against Love wars
puis qu'ele vuet dedens fin cuer entrer,
since that-she wishes into true heart to-enter
vers sa vertu ne puet sens foisonner.
against her power not can sense suffice

N'est pas a soi qui aime coraument

XX · NOT HIS OWN

A true lover is not his own master, and whoever resists Love never reaches honor. Felons cannot lessen his will to serve. God made love grow in him more than in a hundred others, and he would rather die than ask his lady for anything. The envoy bids Renaut sing, since the two of Saint Denise have left love.

N'est pas a soi qui aime coraument,
Not-is at-all to himself who loves heartily
ne cil amis qu'amours ne puet destraindre,
nor he friend whom-love not can constrain
et sachiez bien, qui vers li se defent
and know well who against it himself defends
ne poroit pas a grant honour ataindre.
not could at-all to great honor attain
Li viguerous ne s'i puënt deffendre,
The vigorous not themselves-there can defend
mais qui plus vaut plus tost s'i lesse prendre,
but who more is-worth more soon himself-there lets take
car d'amour sont tuit li bien a devise,
for of-love are all the good-things at will
ne ja sans li n'ert grant joie conquise.
nor ever without it not-will-be great joy won

Faus et felons voi coustumierement,
False and felons I-see habitually
qui se painent d'abessier et d'estaindre
who themselves labor of-lowering and of-quenching
joie et henor sans lor amendement;
joy and honor without their amendment
mes fine amours ne puet pour eus remaindre.
but true love not can for them stop
Mal m'ont il fet, mes ja pour ce n'iert mendre
Ill me-have they done but ever for this not-will-be less
ma volenté de servir ne d'atendre.
my will of serving nor of-waiting
Si servirai, mes ne sai en quel guise
So I-shall-serve but not I-know in what guise
viengne si haut de si bas par servise.
may-come so high from so low by service

Deus qui en moi fist plus qu'en autres cent
God who in me made more than-in others hundred
amors venir et nestre et croistre et maindre,
love come and be-born and grow and remain
m'en dont joïr einsi veraiement
me-thereof may-grant to-enjoy so truly
con je n'ai cuer ne volenté de faindre
as I not-have heart nor will of feigning
vers ma dame, cui ne l'os fere entendre;
toward my lady to-whom not it-I-dare make understand

mieus vueil mon cors de bele mort sorprendre
better I-wish my body by fair death to-overtake
qu'ele soit ja par moi nul jor requise;
than-she be ever by me any day entreated
qu'ele set bien qu'est pitiez et franchise.
for-she knows well what-is pity and nobleness

Se touz li monz savoit ce que je sent,
If all the world knew this that I feel
nes li felon devroient ma mort plaindre;
even the felons ought my death to-lament
qu'en morant vif si com Amors consent,
for-in dying I-live so as Love consents
mes ne me puet trop grever ne destraindre.
but not me it-can too-much grieve nor constrain
Bon gré m'en sai qu'onques osai emprendre
Good thanks to-myself-thereof I-know that-ever I-dared undertake
si haute amor, qu'en moi ne doit descendre
so high love that-in me not ought to-descend
li guerredons, dont ja nen iert requise
the reward whereof ever not will-be entreated
cele ou valors et beautez est assise.
she where worth and beauty is set

Je n'ai mestier de desconfortement,
I not-have need of discomfort
n'a male gent ne se fet nus complaindre;
nor-to evil folk not himself does anyone complain

mes qui d'amors sait bien, voit et entent
but who of-love knows well sees and understands
que grans amors n'est pas legiere a faindre,
that great love not-is at-all light to feign
quant il li plest en fin cuer a descendre,
when it to-it pleases into true heart to descend
que n'a pooir qu'a li puisse contendre;
that not-there-is power that-with it may contend
mes ele est si dedens mon cuer assise,
but it is so within my heart set
la merci Dieu, qu'a mon gré me jostise.
the mercy (of-)God that-at my will me it-governs

Tote autre rien ocist home et debrise
All other thing kills man and breaks
fors sol amors, quant ele est a droit prise.
except only love when it is at right taken

Renaut, chantez, qui amez sens feintise,
Renaut sing who love without feigning
car lessié l'ont li dui de Saint Denise.
for left it-have the two of Saint Denise

Oëz por quoi plaing et sospir

XXI · HEAR WHY I LAMENT

He must serve his own death, yet dying so is an honor. He tells Love that it once left him in peace. His heart and body then debate: the body complains of its burden, and the heart tells it to serve until it wins. In the envoy Gace tells Guy of Ponceaux that Love has imprisoned them both, but they will love until death.

Oëz por quoi plaing et sospir:
Hear for what I-lament and sigh
seignor, n'en fes pas a blasmer.
lords not-thereof I-am at-all to blame
Toz jors m'estuet ma mort servir;
All days me-behooves my death to-serve
amors, n'en puis mon cuer oster;
love not-thence I-can my heart remove
mes honor ai d'einsi morir;
but honor I-have of-thus dying
si en vueil bien les maus sofrir,
so thereof I-wish well the ills to-suffer
tant que plus en puisse monter.
so-much that more thereby I-may rise

S'Amors me fait ses maus sentir
If-Love me makes its ills feel
il ne m'en doit mie peser,
it not me-thereof ought at-all to-weigh

qu'autres nes puet mais sostenir
for-another not-them can more sustain
une hore, sens soi reposer;
one hour without himself resting
mes je sui amis sens mentir,
but I am friend without lying
ja Deus ne m'en lest repentir!
ever God not me-thereof may-let repent
Car en amant vueil bien finer.
For in loving I-wish well to-end

Amor, tel hore fu jadis
Love such hour was once
qu'estre me lessiëz en pes;
that-to-be me you-let in peace
mais or sui je verais amis,
but now am I true friend
n'autre riens ne me grieve mes.
nor-other thing not me grieves more
Serai je donc de vos ocis?
Shall-be I then by you killed
Nenil; trop avriëz mespris
No too-much you-would-have erred
quant je tot por vos servir les.
since I all for you to-serve leave

Cuers, qu'en puis mes se sui pensis,
Heart what-thereof can-I more if I-am pensive
quant tu m'as chargié si grief fes?
when thou me-hast laden so grievous burden
— Ha! cors, de noient t'esbahis,
Ah body for nothing thyself-dismay
ja n'ama onques hom mauvès.
ever not-loved ever man wicked
Serf tant que tu aies conquis
Serve so-long that thou may-have won
ce que plus desires toz dis.
this that most thou-desirest all days
— Voire, cuers, mais la mors m'est pres.
Truly heart but the death to-me-is near

Guis de Pontiaus, en fort prison
Guy of Ponceaux in strong prison
nos a mis Amors sens confort,
us has put Love without comfort
vers celes qui sens ochoison
toward those who without occasion
nos ociront; dont ele a tort.
us will-kill whereof she has wrong
Oïl, car leaument amon;
Yes for loyally we-love
ja ne nos en repentiron.
ever not ourselves thereof we-shall-repent
Bon amer fet jusqu'a la mort.
Good to-love it-makes until the death

Gasçoz define sa chançon.

Gace ends his song

Ha! fins Pyramus que feron?

Ah true Pyramus what shall-we-do

Vers Amor ne somes jor fort.

Against Love not we-are day strong

Pensis d'Amors vueil retraire

XXII · PENSIVE FROM LOVE

His heart makes him do what pains him; he holds Love churlish for killing its servant, yet stays in its service. If his lady were gracious, he would win a joy he will never ask for. He will serve Love until Judgment Day and never part from her. In the envoy he tells Odin that Gace will seek her a long time.

Pensis d'Amors vueil retraire
Pensive from-Love I-wish to-tell
conment li miens cuers me maine,
how the mine heart me leads
qu'a son plaisir m'estuet faire
for-at its pleasure me-behooves to-do
ce dont j'ai enui et paine;
this whereof I-have trouble and pain
trop me fait ma dolor plaire,
too-much me makes my grief please
s'en tieng Amor a vilaine
so-thereof I-hold Love for churlish
qui m'ocit en son servise,
who me-kills in its service
que toz sui a sa devise.
for wholly I-am at its will

Ma dolor me covient taire
My grief me behooves to-keep-silent
et servir Amor certaine,
and to-serve Love certain

car toz mes pensers repaire
for all my thought returns
a estre li suens demaine.
to being the its own
Se cele m'est debonaire,
If she to-me-is gracious
qui de toz bons sens est plaine,
who of all good sense is full
tel joie avroie conquise,
such joy I-would-have won
qui ja n'iert par moi requise.
which ever not-will-be by me entreated

Amors dechiet et empire
Love declines and worsens
par fause gent noveliere;
through false folk fickle
por ce en trai si grief martire
for this thereof I-bear so grievous martyrdom
que siens sui a sa maniere.
for its I-am in its manner
On ne porroit pas bien dire
One not could at-all well tell
si grant dolor en priiere,
so great grief in prayer
com el s'est en mon cuer mise,
as it itself-is in my heart put
de li amer, sens feintise.
of her loving without feigning

Ma volentez tret et tire
My will draws and pulls
la ou l'on la tient moins chiere;
there where one it holds less dear
mes ne me soi escondire
but not myself I-knew to-excuse
de rien qu'Amors me requiere.
of anything that-Love of-me may-require
Je cuit qu'or me vuet ocire
I think that-now me it-wishes to-kill
d'esperance mençongiere;
with-hope lying
mais a servir l'ai emprise;
but to serve it-I-have undertaken
sel ferai jusqu'au juïse.
so-it I-shall-do until-the judgment

De li ne partirai mie,
From her not I-shall-part at-all
por ennui ne por pesance;
for trouble nor for heaviness
et cil qui plus m'en chastie
and he who most me-thereof corrects
ne vuet pas ma delivrance,
not wishes at-all my deliverance
qu'Amors a grant seignorie,
for-Love has great lordship
sol de membrer sa semblance.
only by remembering her semblance

Por ce sui en son servise,
For this I-am in its service
ja m'en a joie promise.
already me-thereof has joy promised

Mon cuer ai en sa baillie;
My heart I-have in her keeping
mal fera, s'el ne m'avance;
ill she-will-do if-she not me-advances
ne ja por riens que nuns die
nor ever for anything that anyone may-say
n'avrai aillors ma fiance;
not-I-shall-have elsewhere my trust
ains morrai, s'el ne m'aïe,
rather I-shall-die if-she not me-helps
en ceste longue atendance.
in this long waiting
Servir la vueil a sa guise,
To-serve her I-wish at her guise
tant qu'Amors l'ara esprise.
until that-Love her-will-have kindled

Odin, lonc tens l'ara quise
Odin long time her-will-have sought
Gasçoz qui tant l'aime et prise.
Gace who so-much her-loves and prizes

Quant flors et glais et verdure s'esloigne

XXIII · WHEN THE FLOWERS FADE

When flowers fade and the birds fall silent, he sings of the love he cannot forget. Love makes him pay dearly, but he would rather go unrewarded than gain joy by deceit. He must die hoping, and begs his lady to remember his ills, which only mercy can remove. Without her, no joy would mean anything to him.

Quant flors et glais et verdure s'esloigne,
When flower and gladiolus and greenery itself-withdraws
que cil oisel n'osent un mot soner,
when those birds not-dare a word to-sound
(por la froidor chascuns dote et resoigne,
for the cold each fears and dreads
jusqu'au biau tens qu'il resuelent chanter,)
until-the fair weather when-they are-wont-again to-sing
lors chanterai, que ne puis oblier
then I-shall-sing for not I-can forget
la douce amor, dont Dieus joie me doigne,
the sweet love whereof God joy me may-give
car de li sont et muevent mi penser.
for from her are and move my thoughts

Coment qu'Amors joie me guerredoigne,
How-ever that-Love joy me may-reward
bien le me fet chierement comparer,
well it me makes dearly pay-for
si comme cil qui delaie et porloigne,
so as he who delays and prolongs

et si me vuet a son plesir grever.
and yet me wishes at its pleasure to-grieve
Je ne di pas qu'on puisse trop amer,
I not say at-all that-one can too-much love
ne qu'ele ja mon cuer de li desjoigne,
nor that-she ever my heart from her may-disjoin
qu'el a trové tel qui ne set fauser.
for-it has found such who not knows to-falsify

Vos amerai, dame, comnent qu'il praigne,
You I-shall-love lady how-ever that-it may-take
si finement (et Deus m'en dont pouoir),
so truly and God me-thereof may-give power
ne ja Amors n'ert tels qu'ele se faigne
nor ever Love not-will-be such that-she herself may-hold-back
de moi aidier, s'ele m'i puet valoir.
from me helping if-she me-there can avail
Tant me covient vostre plesir voloir
So-much me behooves your pleasure to-wish
qu'assez aim mieus que li merirs remaigne,
that-much I-love better that the rewarding may-remain-undone
qu'aie de vos joie par decevoir.
than-I-may-have from you joy by deceiving

Pou prie nus que li cuers ne se faigne
Little prays anyone that the heart not itself may-hold-back
plus que li diz, ce set on bien de voir;
more than the word this knows one well of truth

si me merveil quant ma dame desdaigne
so myself I-marvel when my lady disdains
loial ami, qu'autre ne puet avoir.
loyal friend who-other not can have
Ainsi m'estuet morir en bon espoir,
Thus me-behooves to-die in good hope
que j'ai un cuer qui a amer m'ensaigne;
for I-have a heart which to love me-teaches
dame, merci, ne puet plus remanoir.
lady mercy not can more stay-away

Bien est resons ke longue atente criengne,
Well is reason that long waiting I-may-fear
que c'est la rien qui plus m'avra grevé.
for this-is the thing which most me-will-have grieved
Quels costume quelz maus qu'en aviengne,
What custom what ills that-thence may-come
encontre Amor n'avroit nus poësté.
against Love not-would-have anyone power
Por ce vos pri, belle dame, por Dé,
For this you I-pray fair lady for God
que de mes maus vos remembre et soviengne,
that of my ills you may-remind and may-remember
que sans merci ne pueënt estre osté.
for without mercy not they-can be removed

En vos n'a rien, dame, qui descoviengne,
In you not-there-is anything lady which may-be-unbecoming
tant a en vos sens et pris et beauté;
so-much there-is in you sense and worth and beauty
pour Deu vos pri que vostre cuers retiengne,
for God you I-pray that your heart may-retain
selonc vos biens, grant debonereté.
according-to your good-things great graciousness
Assez vos aim plus que rien n'ai amé;
Much you I-love more than anything I-have loved
ne ja sens vos grant joie ne me viegne;
nor ever without you great joy not to-me may-come
s'el me venoit, ne l'en savroie gré.
if-it to-me came not to-it-thereof I-would-know thanks

Fins amoros, en vos sont mi pensé;
True lovers in you are my thoughts
gardez qu'amors et joie vos maintiengne,
see that-love and joy you may-maintain
plus que les .ij. que tant ont demoré.
more than the two who so-long have stayed

Quant je voi l'erbe reprendre

XXIV · WHEN I SEE THE GRASS

As the grass grows green, Love makes him undertake a grievous task: to love without reward. Far from his blond lady's country, he dares not address her for fear of angering her; the love she once granted was soon withdrawn. He asks only that she admit he loved loyally. Slanderers are hateful, and Gace will love all his life.

Quant je voi l'erbe reprendre
When I see the-grass take-again
par ces prez et renverdir,
through these meadows and grow-green-again
lors vueil a chanter entendre,
then I-wish to singing attend
que plus ne m'en puis tenir;
for more not myself-thence I-can hold
qu'Amors me fait ce enprendre
for-Love me makes this undertake
qu'est mout grief a meintenir;
which-is very grievous to maintain
amer sens guerredon rendre
to-love without reward to-render
ne puet mie cuers soffrir,
not can at-all heart endure
ne longuement meintenir,
nor long maintain
sens confort ou sens merir.
without comfort or without rewarding

Ja ne me grevast l'atendre
Ever not me would-grieve the-waiting
s'au loing me vousist oïr;
if-at-the length me she-would-wish to-hear
mes por c'est ma joie mendre,
but for this-is my joy less
que je redout le faillir.
that I fear the failing
La fin d'amor vueil aprendre
The end of-love I-wish to-learn
que j'en sai jusqu'au morir;
for I-thereof know until-the dying
ne nus ne me puet defendre
nor anyone not me can forbid
a amer ou a haïr;
to love or to hate
si me plest a meintenir
so me it-pleases to maintain
amor, qu'el me puet merir.
love for-it me can reward

Dame, sor totes amée
Lady above all loved
de loial cuer sens trichier,
with loyal heart without cheating
belle et blonde et acemée,
fair and blond and adorned
mes ne vos sai losengier;
but not you I-know to-flatter

loin sui de vostre contrée,
far I-am from your country
ce me fait mout esmaier;
this me makes much be-dismayed
por tant est l'amors doblée,
for so-much is the-love doubled
dont ne vos os aresnier,
whence not you I-dare address
tant vos dot a corrocier,
so-much you I-fear to anger
car ce ne m'avroit mestier.
for this not to-me-would-have use

N'ai pas la joie obliée
Not-I-have at-all the joy forgotten
dou dous termine premier
of-the sweet term first
que l'amor me fu donée,
when the-love to-me was given
dame, que toz jors requier;
lady whom all days I-entreat
mais tost me refu vehée,
but soon to-me was-in-turn denied
quant vos plot a essaier
when to-you it-pleased to test
coment ire est tost montée
how anger is soon risen
la ou joie est a dangier.
there where joy is in power

Si ne m'en os corrocier,
So not myself-thereof I-dare anger
que de servir ai mestier.
for of serving I-have need

Amor a grant seignorie
Love has great lordship
sor moi, bien le m'a mostré;
over me well it me-has shown
por ce nel retrai je mie
for this not-it withdraw I at-all
qu'a li n'aie mon pensé;
that-to it I-may-have my thought
et se ma dame m'oblie,
and if my lady me-forgets
tant li pri merci, por Dé,
so-much to-her I-pray mercy for God
qu'elle reconoisse et die
that-she may-acknowledge and say
que j'ai loiaument amé;
that I-have loyally loved
adonc li soit pardoné
then to-her be pardoned
se je moroie por lé.
if I died for her

Felon losengier d'envie
Felon flatterers of-envy
meint home avront grevé;
many-a man will-have grieved
mes pou vaut lor felonie
but little is-worth their felony
vers la debonaireté
against the graciousness
celi qui en sa baillie
of-her who in her keeping
a si mon cuer atorné.
has so my heart turned
Haï, fause gent haïe!
Ah false folk hated
Car fust de vos a mon gré!
Would-that it-were of you at my will
Ne vos seroit pardonné,
Not to-you would-be pardoned
par la foi que je doi Dé.
by the faith that I owe God

Gasçoz qui tant a amé
Gace who so-much has loved
amera tot son aé.
will-love all his life
Desiranment si pri Dé
Longingly so I-pray God
qu'endroit li n'i ait fausé.
that-toward her not-there he-may-have falsified

Quant l'erbe muert, voi la fueille cheoir

XXV · WHEN THE GRASS DIES

When the leaves fall, he gives his heart back to Love, whom no one resists. He cannot hope his lady will come down so low for him unless pity conquers her reason. Love doubles his martyrdom, and he loves the best lady that worth could choose; a youth who falters in love has no claim on her and sighs in vain.

Quant l'erbe muert, voi la fueille cheoir
When the-grass dies I-see the leaf fall
que li venz fait jus des arbres descendre,
which the wind makes down from-the trees descend
dont covient il les dous chanz remanoir
then behooves it the sweet songs to-cease
des oiselèz, qui n'i pueënt entendre;
of-the little-birds who not-there can attend
lors me covient a Amor mon cuer rendre,
then me behooves to Love my heart to-render
mes par pechié cuidai aillors entendre.
but by sin I-thought elsewhere to-attend

Mout a Amors grant force et grant pooir
Very has Love great force and great power
qu'encontre li ne se puet nus desfendre,
that-against it not himself can anyone defend
fors envios, cui n'en deigne chaloir,
except envious-ones to-whom not-thereof deigns to-matter
que hontes est de lor servise prendre;
for shame it-is of their service to-take

et qui de li ne vuet sa joie atendre,
and who from it not wishes his joy to-await
sachiez de voir que s'onor en iert mendre.
know of truth that his-honor thereby will-be less

Bien puis amer ma dame sens priier,
Well I-can love my lady without entreating
mes ce n'est pas Amors qu'a moi apende,
but this not-is at-all Love that-to me belongs
qu'il n'est pas droiz, ne dire ne le quier,
for-it not-is at-all right nor to-say not it I-seek
que de si haut por moi si bas descende,
that from so high for me so low she-may-descend
se granz pitiez, qui toute rien amende,
if great pity which every thing amends
ne vaint reson en li tant que m'entende.
not conquers reason in her so-much that me-she-may-hear

Amer m'estuet, car je nel puis lessier,
To-love me-behooves for I not-it can leave
ne ja reson ne droiz nel me deffende:
nor ever reason nor right not-it me may-forbid
qu'Amors me puet de grant joie avancier,
for-Love me can with great joy advance
plus que vertuz qui en cest mont s'estende;
more than virtue which in this world itself-extends

et s'il li plest que ses valors me vende,
and if-it to-it pleases that its worths me may-sell
perduz m'i sui, ne sai qu'a moi me rende.
lost myself-there I-am not I-know what-to me me may-return

Tant fet Amors sovent vivre et morir
So-much makes Love often live and die
que je ne sai de mon mal tret que dire:
that I not know of my ill suffered what to-say
quant plus i pens, plus m'estuet esbahir,
when more there I-think more me-behooves to-be-dismayed
et plus et plus me doble mon martire;
and more and more to-me doubles my martyrdom
mais de legier vainquisse peine et ire
but with ease I-would-vanquish pain and anger
se bel semblant fussent sens escondire.
if fair semblances were without refusing

J'aim la meillor que valor puisse eslire;
I-love the best that worth can choose
bien ait mes cuers qui tele la desire.
well may-have my heart which such her desires

Certes meschins qui por amors empire
Certainly youth who for love worsens
n'a en li droit; por nient en sospire.
not-has in her right for nothing thereof sighs

Quant li tens renverdoie

XXVI · WHEN THE WEATHER GROWS GREEN

In spring he means to sing after long grief, for he wants no riches but his lady, who does not care for him. He dies a martyr, unable to leave. She threatens to fail him the more he entreats, yet he will not change his heart, and she must be mad if she has no mercy. The envoy assures Odin he wants no other lady.

Quant li tens renverdoie
When the weather grows-green-again
contre le tens pascor,
toward the season springtime
m'est vis que chanter doie
to-me-is seeming that to-sing I-ought
après ire et dolor
after anger and grief
dont tant avoir soloie,
whereof so-much to-have I-was-wont
por servir fine Amor.
for serving true Love
Mais se ma dame avoie,
But if my lady I-had
mout avroie richor:
much I-would-have riches
que mes cuers n'en vuet nule avoir
for my heart not-thereof wishes any to-have
fors li cui n'en daigne chaloir.
except her to-whom not-thereof deigns to-matter

Grant peine a et grant ire
Great pain has and great anger
en amor maintenir,
in love maintaining
plus que ne vos puis dire,
more than — to-you I-can tell
qui tant la vuet servir.
who so-much it wishes to-serve
Por ce muir a martire,
For this I-die in martyrdom
que ne m'en puis partir.
that not myself-thence I-can part
Fous est qui ce desire
Fool is who this desires
dont il cuide morir;
whereof he thinks to-die
que mes cuers etc.
for my heart etc

Las! petit me solace
Alas little me solaces
ce dont j'ai bon mestier;
this whereof I-have good need
de faillir me menace
with failing me she-threatens
quant je plus la requier;
when I more her entreat

ne por mal que me face
nor for ill that me she-may-do
ne vueil mon cuer changier.
not I-wish my heart to-change
Pechié fait s'el pourchace
Sin she-does if-she seeks
m'ire et mon destorbier;
my-anger and my disturbance
que mes cuers etc.
for my heart etc

Mout ai chier comparée
Very I-have dear paid-for
ceste amor, lonc tens a,
this love long time ago
de ma dame honorée;
of my lady honored
s'el vuet, si m'ocirra;
if-she wishes so me-she-will-kill
et s'il ne li agrée,
and if-it not to-her pleases
ne sai que ce sera;
not I-know what this will-be
or croi qu'ele est desvée
now I-believe that-she is mad
se de moi merci n'a;
if on me mercy not-she-has
que mes cuers etc.
for my heart etc

En atente d'aïe
In waiting of-help
avrai lonc tens amé,
I-shall-have long time loved
si m'a en sa baillie
so me-has in her keeping
leal amor trové,
loyal love found
et qui en li se fie,
and who in it himself trusts
tost l'a guerredoné;
soon him-has rewarded
por moi nel di je mie:
for me not-it say I at-all
d'altrui l'ai esprové;
from-another it-I-have proved
que mes cuers etc.
for my heart etc

Odin, ce sachiez bien de voir,
Odin this know well of truth
que nule autre ne vueil avoir.
that any other not I-wish to-have

Quant noif et geus et froidure

XXVII · WHEN SNOW AND FROST

When winter yields to spring, he sings without merriment, loving without reward. Whoever made Love was cruel, for his loyalty only harms him. Every lover swears Love has used him ill, but he will not lie. Whatever flatterers say, he gives himself to his lady for life, and he curses the slanderers to Monnet.

Quant noif et geus et froidure
When snow and frost and cold
remaint o le tens felon,
stays with the weather felonious
que flors et fueille et verdure
when flower and leaf and greenery
vient o la bele seson,
comes with the fair season
lors chant sens envoiseüre,
then I-sing without merriment
dont j'ai si droite achoison;
whereof I-have so right occasion
que j'aim d'amor qui trop dure,
for I-love with-love which too-long lasts
sens gré et sens guerredon.
without thanks and without reward

Mout fu de cruël nature
Very was of cruel nature
qui Amor fist sens raison;
who Love made without reason

qu'en li ai mise ma cure
for-in it I-have put my care
et tote m'entencion.
and all my-intention
Mes loiautez et droiture
But loyalty and rectitude
ne m'i font se nuire non;
not me-there do except harm not
bien est fous qui s'asseüre
well is fool who himself-assures
en li ne en son dous non.
in it or in its sweet name

Conment que joïr en doie,
How-ever that to-enjoy thereof I-may
lonc tens m'a Amors grevé;
long time me-has Love grieved
si ne sai, se Deus me voie,
so not I-know so God me may-see
se j'ai plus que nus amé.
if I-have more than anyone loved
Chascuns jure et se desloie,
Each swears and himself forswears
qu'Amors l'ont trop mal mené;
that-Love him-have too ill led
mais por rien n'en mentiroie,
but for anything not-thereof I-would-lie
que que m'en ait destiné.
what ever to-me-thereof it-may-have destined

De tant ma dame me croie,
Of so-much my lady me may-believe
si l'en savroie bon gré,
so to-her-thereof I-would-know good thanks
s'a son plesir estoit moie,
if-at her pleasure she-were mine
par la foi que je doi Dé,
by the faith that I owe God
ja si grant joie n'avroie
ever so great joy not-I-would-have
d'autre amor en mon aé;
from-other love in my life
n'au mien tort ne lesseroie
nor-at-the mine wrong not I-would-leave
de fere sa volenté.
from doing her will

Dame, mainz trichiere prie,
Lady many-a cheat prays
mes je vos aim finement;
but I you love truly
ja por avoir d'autre aïe
ever for having from-another help
ne prierai longuement,
not I-shall-pray long

car la vostre conpaignie
for the your company
me plest issi doucement
me pleases so sweetly
que ja n'en iert departie
that ever not-thence will-be parted
m'amors, au mien esciënt.
my-love at-the mine knowledge

Que que losengiers vos die,
What ever flatterer to-you may-say
douce dame, a vos me rent;
sweet lady to you myself I-render
s'en moi cuident tricherie
if-in me they-think cheating
vers vos, n'en i a niënt;
toward you not-thereof there is anything
ainz serai tote ma vie
rather I-shall-be all my life
a vostre comandement;
at your command
fins amis vers douce amie
true friend toward sweet friend
doit estre cui Amors prent.
ought to-be whom Love takes

Ha, Monnet, losengerie
Ah Monnet flattery
de la felonnesse gent
of the felonious folk
mal m'a fait, Dieus les maudie!
ill me-has done God them may-curse
Que jel sai certainement.
For I-it know certainly

Quant voi la flor botonner

XXVIII · WHEN THE FLOWER BUDS

When the lark sings, he cannot be comforted. He took his death in looking at his lady's face, and the refrain swears he will never part from her while he lives. He will serve her though liars besiege her. He asks Guillot to tell the Count to love loyally, and to tell his lady that he has seen her in a dream.

Quant voi la flor botonner,
When I-see the flower bud
qu'esclarcissent rivage,
when-brighten banks
et j'oi l'aloe chanter
and I-hear the-lark sing
du tens qui rassoage,
of-the weather which grows-mild
las! ne me puis conforter,
alas not myself I-can comfort
qu'Amors vuet mon damage;
for-Love wishes my harm
a celi me fet penser
of her me makes think
qui me tient a outrage.
who me holds for outrage
Ha! fins amis
Ah true friend
morrai, ce m'est vis.
I-shall-die this to-me-is seeming

Ja voir n'en partirai vis:
Ever truly not-thence I-shall-part alive
trop m'a sorpris.
too-much me-has seized

Ma mort pris en esgarder
My death I-took in looking-at
son cors et son visage;
her body and her face
ne m'en poi amesurer:
not myself-thereof I-could moderate
trop en crui mon courage,
too-much thereof I-believed my heart
mes pour Deu de li amer
but for God of her loving
nel me tiengne a folage,
not-it to-me may-she-hold for folly
qu'a s'amor faire oblier
for-to her-love make forget
seroient fol li sage.
would-be fools the wise
Ha! si m'a pris!
Ah so me-has taken
Siens serai toz dis.
Hers I-shall-be all days
Ja voir etc.
Ever truly etc

Je n'oi pooir contre Amor,
I not-had power against Love
puis qu'en moi se fu mise;
since that-in me itself was put
car ma joie et ma dolor
for my joy and my grief
est tote a sa devise;
is all at its will
ja sens li n'avrai nul jor
ever without her not-I-shall-have any day
ce qui plus me justise;
this which most me governs
qui quel me tiengne a folor,
who ever-it me may-hold for folly
je ferai son servise.
I shall-do her service
Ha! jel me quis
Ah I-it myself sought
ce dont muir pensis.
this whereof I-die pensive
Ja voir etc.
Ever truly etc

De c'est ma graindre paor
Of this-is my greatest fear
que ma dame ont assise
that my lady have besieged
losengier et menteor
flatterers and liars
et gent de male guise.
and folk of evil kind
Mes pou dot losengeor:
But little I-fear flatterers
s'el s'en ert entremise
if-she herself-thereof were concerned
tost les avroit mis el tor
soon them she-would-have put in-the tower
et moi hors de juïse.
and me out of judgment
Ha! por quel dis?
Ah for what-it I-say
Ainz m'avra ocis.
Rather me-she-will-have killed
Ja voir etc.
Ever truly etc

Guillot, le Conte me di
Guillot the Count for-me tell
(et si le me salue)
and so him for-me greet

qu'il aint et serve en merci
that-he love and serve in mercy
ou sa peine a perdue;
or his pain he-has lost
qu'Amors n'a mes nul ami,
for-Love not-has more any friend
se ses cuers s'en remue,
if his heart itself-thence moves
fors moi qu'a son oes choisi
except me whom-to its use it-chose
quant ma dame oi veüe.
when my lady I-had seen
Ha! si bien fis,
Ah so well I-did
quant mon cuer i mis!
when my heart there I-put
Ja voir etc.
Ever truly etc

Guillot, beaus amis, di li,
Guillot fair friend tell her
s'ert ma joie creüe,
so-will-be my joy grown
q'il m'est, puis que je nel vi,
that-it to-me-is since that I not-her saw
tel honors avenue,
such honor befallen
qu'en un lit, ou m'endormi,
that-in a bed where I-fell-asleep

ai ma dame veüe.
I-have my lady seen
Bien met pitié en obli
Well puts pity in oblivion
qui tel dormir remue!
who such sleep disturbs
Ha! en son vis
Ah in her face
choisi un dou ris!
I-saw a sweet laugh
Ja voir etc.
Ever truly etc

Ha! enemis
Ah enemies
a en son païs
has in his country
Gasses, qui est fins amis,
Gace who is true friend
et iert toz dis.
and will-be all days

Quant voi le tens bel et cler

XXIX · FAIR BRIGHT WEATHER

In fair weather he sings to comfort himself, though the best-loved lady aims to grieve him. He will not betray her even if she wants his death. He dares not often go to her country, and other lovers' boasts double his sorrow. He begs her to heed no other suitor, and tells Guy he cannot forget him.

Quant voi le tens bel et cler,
When I-see the weather fair and bright
ainz que soit noif ne gelée,
before that there-be snow or frost
chant por moi reconforter,
I-sing for me to-comfort
car trop ai joie obliée.
for too-much I-have joy forgotten
Merveille est com puis durer,
Marvel it-is how I-can endure
qu'adès bée a moi grever
for-ever aims at me grieving
du monde la mieus amée.
of-the world the best loved

Bien set que n'en puis torner,
Well she-knows that not-thence I-can turn
por ce criem que ne me hée;
for this I-fear that — me she-may-hate
mais ne fez pas a blasmer,
but not I-am at-all to blame

que teus est ma destinée:
for such is my destiny
je fui fez por li amer;
I was made for her to-love
ja Deus ne m'i dont fauser,
ever God not me-there may-grant falsify
nes s'ele a ma mort jurée.
even if-she has my death sworn

Mout me plest a regarder
Much me it-pleases to look-at
li païs et la contrée
the country and the region
ou je n'os sovent aler
where I not-dare often to-go
por la gent mal eürée;
for the folk ill fated
mes si ne savroit garder,
but so not she-would-know guard
s'el me vuet joie doner,
if-she me wishes joy to-give
que bien ne lor soit emblée.
that well not from-them be stolen

Quant oi en parole entrer
When I-hear into speech enter
chascun de sa desirée,
each of his desired-one

et lor mençonge aconter
and their lie recount
dont il ont meinte assenblée,
whereof they have many-a gathering
ce me fet m'ire dobler;
this me makes my-anger double
si me font grief sospirer
so me make grievously sigh
quant chascuns son trichier née.
when each his cheating denies

Amor, bien vos doit membrer,
Love well you ought to-remember
s'il est a aise qui bée;
if-he is at ease who yearns
quant plus cuit merci trover,
when more I-think mercy to-find
plus est ma peine doblée.
more is my pain doubled
Ce me fet mout trespenser
This me makes much brood
que n'os mes a li parler
that not-I-dare more to her speak
de rien, s'il ne li agrée.
of anything if-it not to-her pleases

Bien me poüst amender
Well me she-could amend
sens ce qu'ele en fust grevée;
without this that-she thereof were grieved
mais, por Dieu, li vueil mander,
but for God to-her I-wish to-send-word
quant je n'ai merci trovée,
since I not-have mercy found
qu'autre ne vueille escouter;
that-other not she-may-wish to-hear
car mout li devroit peser
for much to-her it-ought to-weigh
s'ert de faus amanz gabée.
if-she-were by false lovers mocked

Ma chançon voil definer:
My song I-wish to-end
Gui, ne vos puis oblier,
Guy not you I-can forget
por vos ai la mort blasmée.
for you I-have the death blamed

Sens atente de guerredon

XXX · WITHOUT HOPE OF REWARD

He serves his lady without hope of reward, since she has set her mind on hating him. Love is a cruel prison, but he would not leave it, and the flatterers take no ransom. He has prayed for five years and could have left long ago if he were false. The envoy asks Count Geoffrey not to be false, or both would die.

Sens atente de guerredon
Without expectation of reward
m'otroi a ma dame servir;
myself-I-grant to my lady to-serve
puis que toute s'entencïon
since that all her-intention
a si tornée a moi haïr
she-has so turned to me hating
qu'ele m'ocit a desreson.
that-she me-kills with unreason
Ja Dieus mes ne m'i dont joïr
Ever God more not me-there may-grant to-enjoy
de riens, fors que de tost morir;
of anything except that of soon dying
qu'autrement ne me puet faillir
for-otherwise not me can fail
l'ire dont el set l'ochoison.
the-sorrow whereof she knows the-occasion

Grant mestier a de guerredon
Great need has of reward
qui ainc ne fina de servir,
who ever not ceased from serving
et g'i ai si m'entencïon
and I-there have so my-intention
qu'il m'en covient mon bien haïr;
that-it me-thereby behooves my good to-hate
por ce si tieng a desreson
for this so I-hold for unreason
de toz jors priier sens joïr;
of all days praying without enjoying
mains aim tel vie que morir,
less I-love such life than dying
qu'a ce viaus ne puis je faillir:
for-at this at-least not can I fail
si en ai loial ochoison!
so thereof I-have loyal occasion

Mout tieng a cruel la prison
Very I-hold for cruel the prison
dont fins amis ne puet issir;
whence true friend not can go-out
por ce s'ai mon cuer a felon
for this so-I-have my heart for felon
qui son mal quist por moi traïr,
which its ill sought for me to-betray

or n'i voi autre reançon
now not-there I-see other ransom
fors que d'atendre et de sofrir
except that of-waiting and of suffering
les maus, dont nus ne puet garir
the ills whereof anyone not can be-healed
fors au trichier et au mentir;
except by-the cheating and by-the lying
mais n'i morrai se loiaus non.
but not-there I-shall-die except loyal not

Deus! tant me plait ceste prison
God so-much me pleases this prison
que ja voir n'en queïsse issir;
that ever truly not-thence I-would-seek to-go-out
mais li losengeor felon
but the flatterers felonious
qui se poinnent de moi traïr
who themselves labor of me betraying
n'en vuelent prendre reançon;
not-thereof wish to-take ransom
lor cuers ne le porroit sofrir.
their heart not it could endure
Ainsi ne le puis je garir,
Thus not it can I heal
quant au trichier et au mentir
since by-the cheating and by-the lying
ne penroie se ma mort non.
not I-would-take except my death not

Onc por rien ne me vueil garder
Ever for anything not myself I-wish to-keep
que plus n'aie amé que priié
that more I-may-have loved than prayed
(et sens trichier et sens fauser)
both without cheating and without falsifying
l'Amor qui tel soin m'a lessié.
the-Love which such care me-has left
Se les dous parz d'ainsi amer
If the two parts of-thus loving
ne me tout, bien est sens pitié;
not from-me takes well it-is without pity
ou viaus doint ma dame congié
or at-least may-give my lady leave
du felon penser retorner
from-the felonious thought to-return
qu'ele a por ma mort comencié.
which-she has for my death begun

Bien deüst ma dame garder
Well ought my lady to-look
a ce que j'ai cinc ans proié;
to this that I-have five years prayed
se je li vousisse fauser,
if I to-her had-wished to-falsify
pieça que l'eüsse lessié.
long-ago that her-I-would-have left

Mais tant la vueil de cuer amer
But so-much her I-wish with heart to-love
que ja n'avra dou cors pitié;
that ever not-she-will-have of-the body pity
espoir sil fes sens son congié;
perhaps so-it I-do without her leave
mais grief sera a retorner
but grievous will-be to return
amors, puis qu'ele a comencié.
love since that-she has begun

Ci puet ma chançon definer
Here can my song end
d'Amors, qui si m'a essaiié.
of-Love which so me-has tested
Le conte Joffroi ai priié,
The count Geoffrey I-have prayed
que n'ait envie de fauser;
that not-he-may-have desire of falsifying
mort serïon par son pechié.
dead we-would-be through his sin

Sospris d'Amors et pleins d'ire

XXXI · SEIZED BY LOVE

Seized by Love, he sings by effort, for his lady wants his martyrdom. She once called him friend and told him that what he asked could well be left, since love is easy to feign, and he cannot unlearn love. Her laugh and bright face deceived him. He never learned to cheat, and Gace says love must be kept until death.

Sospris d'Amors et pleins d'ire
Seized by-Love and full of-anger
m'estuet par efforz chanter;
me-behooves by effort to-sing
se m'en peüsse escondire
if myself-thereof I-could excuse
du tot le lessasse ester:
of-the all it I-would-let be
lessier doi joër et rire,
to-leave I-ought to-play and to-laugh
que la me couvient penser
for there me behooves to-think
ou l'on plus vuet mon martire;
where one most wishes my martyrdom
n'ochoison n'i puis trover,
nor-occasion not-there I-can find
fors bien amer.
except well loving

J'ai mainte fois oï dire:
I-have many-a time heard say
faus cuers fait desesperer;
false heart makes despair
li esmai et li consire
the dismays and the privations
doivent la joie amener
ought the joy to-bring
que leaus amis desire;
which loyal friend desires
en ce me doi conforter.
in this myself I-ought to-comfort
Bien me puet ma dame ocire,
Well me can my lady kill
ja ne m'i verra fauser;
ever not me-there will-she-see falsify
c'est sens guiler.
this-is without deceiving

Doucement me sot destraindre
Sweetly me she-knew to-constrain
quant ele me dist: «Amis,
when she to-me said Friend
desormais puet bien remaindre
henceforth can well rest
ce que tant m'avez requis;
this that so-much of-me-you-have asked

qu'amors est legiere a faindre
for-love is light to feign
puis qu'el change en dous païs:
since that-it changes in sweet country
la ou autres puisse ataindre
there where other may attain
ne sera ja mes cuers mis.
not will-be ever my heart put
Si l'ai empris.
So it-I-have undertaken

Je ne me sai de li plaindre
I not myself know of her to-complain
ne ne doi, ce m'est avis;
nor not I-ought this to-me-is opinion
trop seroit fors a destraindre
too-much would-be strong to constrain
mes cuers puisqu'il l'a empris.
my heart since-it it-has undertaken
De tant est ma dolors graindre
By so-much is my grief greater
que je l'ai de loin apris
that I it-have from far learned
a desamer ou a faindre.
to unlove or to feign
Deceü m'a ses dous ris
Deceived me-has her sweet laugh
et ses clers vis.
and her bright face

D'Amor ne me puis defendre;
From-Love not myself I-can defend
face de moi son plesir!
may-it-do of me its pleasure
Legierement me puet rendre
Lightly to-me it-can render
ce qu'el m'a fet deservir.
this that-it me-has made deserve
Bien l'ai apris a atendre;
Well it-I-have learned to wait
ne doi perdre por sofrir.
not I-ought to-lose for suffering
Las! por ce n'est mie mendre
Alas for this not-is at-all less
la dolors dont je sospir,
the grief whereof I sigh
sens repentir.
without repenting

Dame, mains en voi entendre
Lady many thereof I-see attend
a trichier et a mentir;
to cheat and to lie
mes onques n'i soi aprendre;
but ever not-there I-knew to-learn
si puisse de vos joïr!
so may-I of you enjoy

A ce vos en poëz prendre
To this you thereof can take
que loial sont mi sospir;
that loyal are my sighs
si est granz pechiez de vendre
so is great sin to sell
joie que l'en puet merir
joy that one can reward
a tel desir.
to such desire

Gasçoz dit qu'amors emprendre
Gace says that-love to-undertake
ne doit nus, sens maintenir
not ought anyone without maintaining
jusqu'au morir.
until-the dying

Tant de solas come j'ai pour chanter

XXXII · SO MUCH SOLACE

Since his lady grants no mercy, he must give up his songs. He cannot change his love and dares not entreat her; her beauty and courtesy have killed him. He tells the Count of Blois that Love is ill served if it kills him, since no one in France, not even the Count, will serve it so loyally.

Tant de solas come j'ai pour chanter,
So-much of solace as I-have for singing
dame, m'estuet et guerpir et laissier;
lady me-behooves both to-abandon and to-leave
quant je ne puis en vos merci trover
since I not can in you mercy find
trop covendra mes chançons empirier;
too-much it-will-behoove my songs to-worsen
por ce le les, que joie m'est faillie
for this it I-leave that joy to-me-is failed
quant en vos n'ai atente ne fïance,
since in you not-I-have expectation nor trust
ne ja d'aillors ne quier avoir aïe:
nor ever from-elsewhere not I-seek to-have help
tot ai perdu, confort et esperance.
all I-have lost comfort and hope

Ce me par fet du tot desconforter
This me indeed makes of-the all despair
qu'aillors ne puis la grant amor changier
that-elsewhere not I-can the great love change
dont je ne poi mon corage celer
whereof I not could my heart hide
vers vos, dame, cui je n'os mes priier,
toward you lady whom I not-dare more to-entreat
qu'orgueils a ja mainte beauté traïe;
for-pride has already many-a beauty betrayed
por vos en ai sovent ire et pesance;
for you thereof I-have often anger and heaviness
mais, se Dieu plest, vos n'avrez ja envie
but if God pleases you not-will-have ever desire
de ce voloir qui toz biens desavance.
of this willing which all good-things sets-back

Dame, de vos ne me sai ou clamer,
Lady of you not myself I-know where to-complain
car sens amor nus ne m'en puet aidier;
for without love anyone not me-thereof can help
por ce m'estuet plus et plus comparer
for this me-behooves more and more to-pay-for
vos granz valors que mar soi acointier.
your great worths which in-an-ill-hour I-knew to-meet
Vostre beauté et vostre cortoisie, —
Your beauty and your courtesy
dont m'ociëz, — vos et ma mescheance,
whereby me-kill you and my mischance

ont si de moi tote joie partie
have so from me all joy parted
qu'en ire vif, ja n'en avrai legeance.
that-in anger I-live ever not-thereof I-shall-have relief

Com escilliez doit folement parler
As exile ought foolishly to-speak
cil cui Amors puet si desconseillier
he whom Love can so leave-without-counsel
com el fet moi, qui ne m'i soi garder;
as it does me who not myself-there knew to-guard
si croi ma mort quant ma volenté quier;
so I-increase my death when my will I-seek
je nel di pas, dame, par felonie;
I not-it say at-all lady by felony
mais hom destroiz est toz jors en errance;
but man distressed is all days in wandering
si par vueil tant la vostre compaignie
so much I-wish so-much the your company
que li desirs doble ma mesestance.
that the desire doubles my distress

Dieus, qui poroit si grant amor porter,
God who could so great love bear
qui toz jors croist et sens apeticier,
which all days grows and without diminishing
par mon fin cuer, qui ne puet oblier,
through my true heart which not can forget

ce que trop vuet, ce ne li a mestier.
this that too-much it-wishes this not to-it has use
Ne fes pas sens, ne je n'i voi folie,
Not I-do at-all sense nor I not-there see folly
qu'a force vuet cele ou je n'ai puissance.
for-by force it-wishes her where I not-have power
Tant a sor moi Amors grant seignorie
So-much has over me Love great lordship
que me destruit reson et abstenance.
that me destroys reason and restraint

Ha! cuens de Blois, Amors est mal baillie
Ah count of Blois Love is ill treated
s'ele m'ocit; qu'au roiaume de France
if-she me-kills for-in-the kingdom of France
ne sera mes si leaument servie,
not will-she-be more so loyally served
neïs par vos; car je l'apris d'enfance.
even by you for I it-learned from-childhood

Tant m'a mené force de seignorage

XXXIII · FORCE OF LORDSHIP

Love's lordship forces him to sing, though his lady has grieved him too long; for loving her he fears neither death nor harm. It angers him that she smiles on cruel slanderers. Before her he dreams waking, and he wakes in his dreams. In the envoy he tells Gillès that his loyalty has long tormented him.

Tant m'a mené force de seignorage
So-much me-has led force of lordship
et une amor qui au cuer me descent,
and a love which into-the heart to-me descends
que je ne puis plus celer mon corage;
that I not can more hide my heart
si chanterai, s'ire nel me defent;
so I-shall-sing if-anger not-it me forbids
que celle m'a grevé trop longuement
for she me-has grieved too long
qui de mon cuer ne prist onques ostage,
who of my heart not took ever hostage
puis qu'ele l'ot en son comandement.
since that-she it-had in her command

Pechié fera s'ele tient a outrage
Sin she-will-do if-she holds for outrage
ce que je l'aim si amorosement;
this that I her-love so lovingly
qu'en li amer ne crien mort ne damage.
for-in her loving not I-fear death nor harm

Tels est l'amor qui m'enflame et esprent.
Such is the-love which me-inflames and kindles
Morir en puis; mais point ne m'en repent,
To-die thereof I-can but at-all not myself-thereof I-repent
que mon fin cuer li donai d'avantage,
for my true heart to-her I-gave in-advance
quant j'esgardai son cors premierement.
when I-looked-at her body first

Une des riens qui plus me tient en ire
One of-the things which most me holds in anger
si est de ce qu'ele fait beau semblant
so is of this that-she makes fair semblance
vers une gent qu'on ne puet trop despire,
toward a folk whom-one not can too-much despise
felon, sens foi, cruel et mesdisant;
felonious without faith cruel and slandering
et quant jes truis devant li ennuiant
and when I-them find before her irksome
lors si ne sai que faire ne que dire;
then so not I-know what to-do nor what to-say
toz esbahiz m'i obli en estant.
all dismayed myself-there I-forget in standing

De ceste amor, dont je trai tel martire
Of this love whereof I bear such martyrdom
que devant li me fet dormir veillant,
that before her me makes sleep waking

ne porroit nus, ce cuit, mon cuer eslire,
not could anyone this I-think my heart choose
car autresi m'i resveil en dormant.
for likewise myself-there I-wake in sleeping
Lors vient ma joie et vait a son talent;
Then comes my joy and goes at its desire
si angoissos me truis a l'escondire,
so anguished myself I-find at the-refusing
qu'a pou mes cuers ne part en sospirant.
that-by little my heart — departs in sighing

Douce dame, onques ne mi soi faindre
Sweet lady ever not myself I-knew to-hold-back
de vos amer, ainsi l'ai comencié;
from you loving thus it-I-have begun
ma volentez en est chascun jor graindre,
my will thereof is each day greater
ne contre ce n'avez de moi pitié;
nor against this not-you-have of me pity
qu'Amors le m'a comandé et priié:
for-Love it me-has commanded and prayed
que fins amis doit morir, ou ataindre
that true friend ought to-die or to-attain
ce qu'a toz jors pensé et covoitié.
this that-he-has all days thought and coveted

Nus ne se doit de loial amor plaindre
Anyone not himself ought of loyal love to-complain
puis qu'il i a son servise emploié;
since that-he there has his service employed
ce n'a mestier; tant ne m'i set destraindre
this not-has use so-much not me-there it-knows to-constrain
que ja vers li aie mon cuer irié;
that ever toward her I-may-have my heart angered
et se li plest, mout m'a bien essaié;
and if to-her it-pleases much me-she-has well tested
onques ne soi decevoir ne ataindre,
ever not I-knew to-deceive nor to-attain
dont meint felon se seront avancié.
whereby many-a felon themselves will-be advanced

Amis Gillès, lonc tens m'a travaillié
Friend Gillès long time me-has tormented
ma loiautez qui ne puet pas remaindre;
my loyalty which not can at-all cease
si croi qu'Amors vos a mal conseillié.
so I-believe that-Love you has ill counseled

BLONDEL DE NESLE

The Songs

A l'entrant d'esté, que li tans conmence

I · AT THE ENTRY OF SUMMER

When summer begins, he is seized by Love, his only sustenance. His lady could soothe a year of ills with one look. As long as it pleases her, he is king of France. He wonders whether she will ever say, "Friend, I love you," and answers that she will not. Love has brought Blondel from death to life.

A l'entrant d'esté, que li tans conmence,
At the-entry of-summer when the weather begins
que j'oi seur la flour ces oisiauz tentir,
when I-hear upon the flower these birds resound
soupris sui d'Amours, ou mes cuers balance;
seized I-am by-Love where my heart wavers
Dieus m'en doint avoir joie a mon plaisir!
God me-thereof may-grant to-have joy at my pleasure
Ou autrement cuit morir sanz faillance,
Or otherwise I-think to-die without fail
car je n'ai el mont autre soustenance,
for I not-have in-the world other sustenance
qu'Amours est la rienz, que je pluz desir.
for-Love is the thing that I most desire

N'est pas drois d'Amours, que les biens en sence
Not-is at-all right of-Love that the good-things thereof may-feel
cil, qui nul des mauz n'en veut soustenir.
he who any of-the ills not-thereof wishes to-bear

Chargiez les mes a en ma penitance
Charged them on-me has in my penance
la bele, qui bien les me puet merir.
the fair-one who well them to-me can reward
Touz les maus d'un an par une samblance
All the ills of-a year by one semblance
m'assouageroit mout a grant puissance
me-would-soothe much with great power
cele, qui me fait parler et taisir.
she who me makes speak and be-silent

Un autre home en fust pieç' a la mors prise,
An other man thereof would-be long ago the death taken
s'il alast einsint, com j'ai fait touz jours.
if-he had-gone thus as I-have done all days
Quar onques n'en peu par mon bel servise
For ever not-thereof I-could by my fair service
avoir biau samblant, si com j'ai d'aillours.
to-have fair semblance so as I-have from-elsewhere
Ja en bel servir n'avrai maiz fiance.
Ever in fair serving not-I-shall-have more trust
Se je l'amour pert, ou j'ai m'atendance,
If I the-love lose where I-have my-expectation
asseüré m'a de morir la flours.
assured me-has of dying the flower

He, las! je l'aim tant de cuer sanz faintise;
Ah alas I her-love so-much with heart without feigning
avra ja de moi merci fine Amours?
will-have ever of me mercy true Love
Mout par ai ma painne en bel lieu assise,
Very much I-have my pain in fair place set
maiz trop m'i demeure et joie et secours.
but too to-me-there tarries both joy and help
Ainz maiz nus amans en tel esperance
Ever before any lover in such hope
n'atendi d'Amours la reconnoissance,
not-awaited from-Love the recognition
com a fait cist las a si grans dolours!
as has done this wretch in so great griefs

Mon cuer doi haïr, se longues la prie.
My heart I-ought to-hate if long her it-entreats
Cuidiez vous, li maus d'amer ne m'ennuit?
Think you the ill of-loving not me-wearies
Nenil, par ma foi! Dit ai grant folie;
No by my faith Said I-have great folly
ja n'en quier avoir nul autre deduit.
ever not-thereof I-seek to-have any other delight
Tant com li plaira, serai rois de France,
As-long as to-her it-will-please I-shall-be king of France
quar en tot le mont n'a de sa vaillance
for in all the world not-there-is of her worth
dame ne pucele, maiz que trop me fuit.
lady nor maiden but that too me she-flees

Je chant et respont de ma douce amie
I sing and answer of my sweet friend
et a li penser me confort la nuit.
and in her thinking myself I-comfort the night
Dieus, verrai je ja le jour qu'ele die:
God shall-see I ever the day that-she may-say
'Amis, je vous aim'? Nenil voir, je cuit.
Friend I you love No truly I think
Amours me soustient, ou j'ai esperance,
Love me sustains where I-have hope
et ce que je sai qu'ele est bele et blanche;
and this that I know that-she is fair and white
ne m'en partirai, s'or m'avoit destruit.
not myself-thence I-shall-part if-now me-she-had destroyed

Nus ne doit Amours servir en doutance,
Anyone not ought Love to-serve in doubt
quar a chascun rent selonc sa vaillance.
for to each she-renders according-to his worth
Blondel a de mort a vie aconduit.
Blondel she-has from death to life led

A l'entree de la saison

II · WHEN WINTER ENDS

A lover who is not loved has an evil reward; his lady has a cruel heart and keeps him in prison. He asks whether she will let so good a friend die; if she grants no mercy, let her not tell him. The envoy tells Gace that he has a companion in Blondel, who has met only such good as a false creature promised.

A l'entree de la saison
At the-entry of the season
qu'ivers faut et lait le geler,
when-winter fails and leaves the freezing
que la flours naist lez le buisson,
when the flower is-born beside the bush
bien la doit cueillir et porter,
well it ought to-gather and to-carry
qui amez est sanz compaignon.
who loved is without companion
Maiz cil a mout mal guerredon,
But he has very evil reward
qui aimme et bien n'i puet trouver.
who loves and good not-there can find

Pour moi le di; en ma chançon
For me it I-say in my song
le puet l'en oïr au chanter,
it can one hear at-the singing
que cele a mout le cuer felon,
that she has very the heart felonious

qui tant me fet a li penser
who so-much me makes of her think
et bien set que sui en prison.
and well knows that I-am in prison
S'or ne met a guarison,
If-now not she-puts to cure
nule autre ne m'en puet jeter.
any other not me-thence can cast

Dame, quels est vo volentez?
Lady what is your will
Morra pour vous si bons amis?
Will-die for you so good friend
Touz jours vous serai reprouvez,
All days to-you I-shall-be reproached
se je sui en ceste fin pris,
if I am in this end taken
s'ensinc me muir et desamez.
if-thus myself I-die and unloved
Se meilleur conseill n'en prendez,
If better counsel not-thereof you-take
je morrai, quar vous m'avez pris.
I shall-die for you me-have taken

Ja n'iere maiz reconfortez
Ever not-I-shall-be more comforted
par nule autre, ce m'est a vis,
by any other this to-me-is in view

s'a cest grant besoig me falez,
if-at this great need me you-fail
que ne soie amez ne joïs.
so-that not I-be loved nor enjoyed
Et se vous merci n'en avez,
And if you mercy not-thereof have
pour Dieu, ja nel me racontez!
for God ever not-it to-me tell
Mieuz aim ensi vivre touz dis.
Better I-love thus to-live all days

Gasses, tel compaignon avez;
Gace such companion you-have
Blondiaus a teus biens encontrez,
Blondel has such good-things met
com fausse riens li a pramis.
as false thing to-him has promised

Bien doit chanter cui fine Amours adrece

III · WHOM LOVE DIRECTS

Love does not summon him to sing, for he finds no joy, and only his song or his pale face shows his distress. His lady wounded him with a look, and he loves her more than being a king. Love gives more grief to one than to a hundred, and he is that one. Her pity sleeps, and she will neither kill nor heal him.

Bien doit chanter cui fine Amours adrece
Well ought to-sing whom true Love directs
de joie avoir, maiz pas ne m'en semont;
of joy to-have but at-all not me-thereof she-summons
qu'en moi ne truis ne joie ne leece
for-in me not I-find nor joy nor gladness
pour coi je chant, ne ne savroie dont.
for which I sing nor not I-would-know whence
Et nonpourquant, se le mal ne despont,
And nevertheless if the ill not I-expound
qu'entre ma dame et fine Amour me font,
which-between my lady and true Love me do
bien puis morir, ja ne le saveront,
well I-can die ever not it they-will-know
se par mon chant n'en sevent la destrece,
if by my song not-thereof they-know the distress
ou par mon vis, dont la couleur defont.
or by my face whereof the color fades

Ne m'a rescous faintise ne perece,
Not me-has rescued feigning nor sloth
que ma dame ne m'ait navré parfont
that my lady — me-may-have wounded deep
d'un douz reguart, dont la plaie me blece,
with-a sweet look whereof the wound me hurts
qu'ele me fist des biaux ieus de son front.
which-she me made with-the fair eyes of her brow
N'en puis guerir, se mire ne m'i sunt
Not-thereof I-can heal if physicians not to-me-there are
a l'aïde de son cuer, qui confont
at the-help of her heart which confounds
moi et le mien, dont pluz l'aim en cest mont,
me and the mine whence more her-I-love in this world
qu'a estre rois de la greigneur hautece,
than-to be king of the greatest highness
se Dieus joie ne guerredon m'en dont.
if God joy or reward me-thereof may-give

Ja pour doleur, que j'aie, n'iert jus mise
Ever for grief that I-may-have not-will-be down put
ma volentez d'amer veraiement;
my will of-loving truly
quar j'ai un cuer, qui de loins l'a emprise,
for I-have a heart which from far it-has undertaken
n'onques pour ce n'amai mainz loiaument.
nor-ever for this not-I-loved less loyally

Quar je sai bien que faillir a sa gent
For I know well that to-fail to its folk
ne doit Amours, se droiture ne ment;
not ought Love if right not lies
maiz pluz doune doleur a un qu'a cent.
but more gives grief to one than-to hundred
Las! je sui cil, cui pluz grieve et justise!
Alas I am he whom most it-grieves and governs
Maiz c'est auques par mon commencement.
But this-is somewhat by my beginning

Que j'ai doleur! maiz pas ne fust assise
That I-have grief but at-all not would-be set
en cuer d'un cors, n'amast trop finement;
in heart of-a body not-loved too truly
maiz de tel lieu m'est venue et tramise,
but from such place to-me-is come and sent
dont je ne doi refuser le tourment.
whence I not ought to-refuse the torment
Bien fait Amours de moi a son talent
Well does Love of me at its desire
et esperance et ma dame ensement;
and hope and my lady likewise
mout m'engignent entr'eles doucement;
much me-deceive between-them sweetly
ne sai se ja avront jour convoitise,
not I-know if ever they-will-have day desire
de moi rendre nul guerredounement.
of me to-render any rewarding

Mout fu Amours corageuse et hardie,
Very was Love spirited and bold
quant en mon cors vint mon cuer assaillir;
when into my body came my heart to-assail
poruec non fu, qu'ele n'i venist mie,
for-this not was that-she not-there would-come at-all
s'ele cuidast qu'ele i deüst faillir.
if-she had-thought that-she there ought to-fail
Maiz tant counut volenté et desir,
But so-much she-knew will and desire
que de mon cuer ne se pueent partir:
that from my heart not themselves can part
d'un douz reguart fist verge a moi ferir.
of-a sweet look she-made rod for me to-strike
Las! mar la vi en si biaux ieus cueillie,
Alas in-an-ill-hour it I-saw in so fair eyes gathered
se ma dame nel fist pour moi sentir!
if my lady not-it made for me to-feel

Pour cui j'ai moi et toute rien guerpie
For whom I-have me and every thing abandoned
bien me devroit a son oés retenir;
well me she-ought to her use to-retain
qu'il n'est doleurs d'Amours, ne d'autre envie,
for-there not-is grief of-Love nor of-other longing
qui mon voloir en peüst departir.
which my will thence could part

Se loiautez valoit mieuz de trahir
If loyalty were-worth better than betraying
et Amours veut ses biens a droit partir,
and Love wishes its good-things at right to-share
encor porroie a grant bien avenir.
still I-could to great good come
Maiz en li est pitiez si endormie,
But in her is pity so asleep
qu'el ne me veut ocirre ne guerir.
that-she not me wishes to-kill nor to-heal

Conment que d'Amours me dueille

IV · HOWEVER I GRIEVE

However Love grieves him, he must sing, for she smiles on him as her man; he fears another may gather what he hastens toward. Proud Love seeks no loyal lover, who falls in despair like a leaf in the wind. If she desired him as he desires her, she would not withhold herself. If Blondel has lied, may she never tell him the truth.

Conment que d'Amours me dueille,
How-ever that of-Love myself I-grieve
bien est drois, que de li chant,
well is right that of her I-sing
et que je ma doleur vueille,
and that I my grief may-wish
quant cele me fait samblant,
when she to-me makes semblance
qu'a son home me recueille.
that-as her man me she-receives
Doucement sanz decevant
Sweetly without deceiving
d'eus et de bouche riant
with-eyes and with mouth laughing
me vait pluz qu'ele ne sueille.
to-me goes more than-she — is-wont
Ce me fait estre joiant
This me makes be joyful
et en ma joie doutant.
and in my joy fearing

Maiz je criem qu'autres ne cueille
But I fear that-another — may-gather
ce, dont je me vois hastant.
this whereof I myself go hastening
Maiz n'est droiz, qu'autrui acueille,
But not-is right that-another she-receive
quar nus hom ne l'aime tant.
for any man not her-loves so-much
Las! Amors puis que s'orgueille,
Alas Love since that itself-prides
ne quiert pas loial amant;
not seeks at-all loyal lover
ainz chiet en desesperant,
rather falls in despairing
autresint com fait la fueille,
likewise as does the leaf
la, ou vens la vait menant.
there where wind it goes leading
Ce me fet estre pensant.
This me makes be pensive

Mes voloirs ne ma pensee
My will nor my thought
ne me sert d'autrui a gre,
not me serves of-another at will
ne nule tant ne m'agree,
nor any so-much not me-pleases
s'Amours m'en laist estre amé.
if-Love me-thereof lets be loved

Pour moi grever la fist nee
For me to-grieve her it-made born
et pour li amer moi ne.
and for her to-love me born
Avoir moi cuide engané,
To-have me it-thinks deceived
maiz pluz m'a joie dounee,
but more me-it-has joy given
que li meïsme doné,
than to-her self given
et ma dame a pluz biauté.
and my lady has more beauty

Doucement ai comperee
Sweetly I-have paid-for
l'amour, ou j'ai tant pensé.
the-love where I-have so-much thought
Bien doi amer ma pensee,
Well I-ought to-love my thought
quel mal qu'en aie enduré.
what ill that-thence I-may-have endured
Se ma dame desirree
If my lady desired
eüst moi tant desirré,
had me so-much desired
com j'ai li — ce m'a pesé, —
as I-have her this me-has weighed

ne se fust pas consirree
not herself would-have at-all deprived
de ce, dont m'ai consirré;
of this whereof myself-I-have deprived
maiz tout li soit pardouné.
but all to-her be pardoned

Sa biautez m'est anemie,
Her beauty to-me-is enemy
qu'ainc en dame tant n'en vi.
for-ever in lady so-much not-thereof I-saw
C'est ce, qui pluz me detrie,
This-is this which most me delays
a avoir l'amour de li.
to have the-love of her
Se fine Amours ne l'en prie,
If true Love not her-thereof begs
qui de moi a fait ami,
which of me has made friend
en douz espoir m'a trahi.
in sweet hope me-it-has betrayed
Maiz ja pour ce n'iert haïe
But ever for this not-she-will-be hated
de moi qui la desir si
by me who her desire so
qu'en mon desirrier m'oci.
that-in my longing myself-I-kill

Bien en doit faire m'amie
Well thereof ought to-make my-friend
l'Amours, ou j'ai tant servi;
the-Love where I-have so-much served
c'onques nul jour de ma vie
for-ever any day of my life
certes ne m'en repenti;
certainly not myself-thereof I-repented
n'encor ne m'en faig je mie,
nor-yet not myself-thereof hold-back I at-all
pour tant cuit avoir merci.
for so-much I-think to-have mercy
Se loiautez, ou m'afi,
If loyalty where myself-I-trust
valoit melz de trecherie,
were-worth better than cheating
bien doi avoir desservi
well I-ought to-have deserved
ce, dont je ma dame pri.
this whereof I my lady pray

Se Blondiauz i a menti,
If Blondel there has lied
ja cele voir ne li die,
ever she truth not to-him may-tell
pour cui amour il soufri
for whose love he suffered
la doleur, que je vous di.
the grief that I to-you tell

J'aim par coustume et par us

V · BY CUSTOM AND USAGE

He loves where he cannot attain. His lady is water and fire to kindle and quench him; she gilded first and painted after. Even were he a king, she would not think of him. He loves without cheating and hopes that, when it pleases her, his pain will be rewarded and Blondel, whom she will not call friend, retained.

J'aim par coustume et par us
I-love by custom and by usage
la, ou je ne puis ataindre
there where I not can attain
et chant com amis et drus,
and I-sing as friend and beloved
qui d'Amours ne s'ose plaindre;
who of-Love not himself-dares complain
s'en ai mout de mauz eüs;
so-thereof I-have much of ills had
maiz ne m'en doi mie faindre,
but not myself-thereof I-ought at-all to-hold-back
pour si dous fais metre jus.
for so sweet burden to-put down
Ja Dieus ne m'i laist enfraindre
Ever God not me-there may-let break
un seul jour de bien amer.
one single day of well loving

N'est pas drois, que je refus
Not-is at-all right that I refuse
la doleur, qui me fait taindre.
the grief which me makes grow-pale
Ma dame est douce iaue et fus,
My lady is sweet water and fire
pour moi esprendre et estaindre.
for me to-kindle and to-quench
Maiz ce ne fist onques nus:
But this not did ever anyone
primes dorer et puis paindre,
first to-gild and then to-paint
a premiers fui bien venus;
at first I-was well received
de tant est ma doleurs graindre,
by so-much is my grief greater
que truis aprés dous amer.
that I-find after sweet bitter

L'ire, par coi m'est faluz
The-anger by which to-me-has failed
douz samblans, n'a pas faussee
sweet semblance not-has at-all falsified
ma volenté, ainz aim plus
my will rather I-love more
ma dame vers moi iree.
my lady toward me angered
Se Amours n'i fait vertuz,
If Love not-there does miracles

qui seur moi s'est esprouvee,
which on me itself-is proved
ja ses pris n'en iert creüz,
ever its worth not-thereby will-be increased
ainz li sera reprouvee
rather to-it will-be reproached
ma loiautez sanz fausser.
my loyalty without falsifying

Ma dame, a cui sui renduz,
My lady to whom I-am rendered
a ma joie emprisonee
has my joy imprisoned
et le douz samblant repus,
and the sweet semblance hidden
dont ele m'a mort dounee,
whereby she me-has death given
se d'amer sui recreüz.
if of-loving I-am recreant
Qu'ai je dit! fole pensee!
What-have I said foolish thought
Se j'estoie rois ou dus,
If I-were king or duke
si fust de moi si amee,
yet were-she by me so loved
n'i devroit ele penser.
not-there ought she to-think

Tant est de moi au desus,
So-much she-is of me at-the uppermost
que je criem que ne m'ocie,
that I fear that — me-she-may-kill
se n'i sui ramenteüz
if not-there I-am remembered
d'Amours, qui parage oublie.
by-Love which lineage forgets
Bien m'iert li samblanz venduz
Well to-me-will-be the semblance sold
et la douce compaignie,
and the sweet company
dont criem estre deceüz;
whereof I-fear to-be deceived
maiz esperance m'afie
but hope me-assures
tout adés de recouvrer.
all ever of recovering

Chascun jour sui assaluz
Each day I-am assailed
d'Amor, qui m'a en baillie.
by-Love which me-has in keeping
Soie merchi, desfenduz
Its mercy defended
vers li ne me sui je mie.
against it not myself am I at-all
Bien en doi estre creüz;
Well thereof I-ought to-be believed

quar jou aim sanz trecherie;
for I love without cheating
si soie je chier tenus
so may-be I dear held
de ma dame, qu'ai servie
by my lady whom-I-have served
lonc tanz sanz guerredouner.
long time without rewarding

Et quant li plaira, merie
And when to-her it-will-please rewarded
iert la painne et retenuz
will-be the pain and retained
Blondiauz, qui Amours desfie,
Blondel whom Love defies
s'ami nel daigne clamer.
if-friend not-him she-deigns to-call

L'amours, dont sui espris

VI · THE LOVE THAT KINDLES ME

Love summons him to sing; he has gained little but has learned to love loyally. He cannot turn from her fresh face. He asks God why she would kill him, since he never lied to her, and thinks all who see her must love her, then takes it back. Unless pity moves her she will kill him, and he inherits Tristan's ills.

L'amours, dont sui espris,
The-love whereby I-am kindled
me semont de chanter,
me summons to singing
si chant com hom soupris,
so I-sing as man seized
qui ne puet amender.
who not can amend
Petit i ai conquis,
Little there I-have won
mais bien me puis vanter:
but well myself I-can boast
se li plaist, j'ai apris
if to-her pleases I-have learned
loiaument a amer.
loyally to love
A ce sunt mi penser
To this are my thoughts
et seront a touz dis;
and will-be at all days
ja nes en quier oster.
ever not-them thence I-seek to-remove

Ramembrance del vis
Remembrance of-the face
fres et vermeill et cler
fresh and rosy and bright
a mon cuer en tel mis,
has my heart in such put
que ne m'en puis tourner;
that not myself-thence I-can turn
et se j'ai les mauz quis,
and if I-have the ills sought
jes doi bien endurer.
I-them ought well to-endure
Or ai je trop mespris!
Now have I too-much erred
Ainz les doi mieuz amer!
Rather them I-ought better to-love
Conment que jes comper,
How-ever that I-them pay-for
n'i a rienz, ce m'est vis,
not-there is anything this to-me-is seeming
fors de merci crier.
except of mercy crying

Dieus! Pour coi m'ocirroit,
God For what me-would-she-kill
quant ainc ne li menti,
since ever not to-her I-lied

se ja joianz en soit
so ever joyful thereof may-be
li cuers, dont je la pri?
the heart whereby I her pray
Je l'aim tant et convoit,
I her-love so-much and covet
que je cuit bien de li,
that I think well of her
que chascuns, qui la voit,
that each who her sees
la doie amer ausi.
her ought to-love also
Qu'est ce, Dieus, que je di!
What-is this God that I say
Ce estre ne porroit:
This be not could
nus ne l'ameroit si.
anyone not her-would-love so

Lons travaus sanz esploit
Long toil without success
m'eüst mort et trahi,
me-would-have killed and betrayed
maiz mes cuers atendoit
but my heart awaited
ce, pour qu'il a servi.
this for what-he has served
Se pour li l'ai destroit,
If for her it-I-have distressed

de bon gre l'en merci.
with good will her-thereof I-thank
Je sai bien qu'ele a droit,
I know well that-she has right
c'ainc si bele ne vi.
for-ever so fair not I-saw
Entre mon cuer et li
Between my heart and her
l'avons fait si adroit,
it-we-have done so rightly
c'ainc de rienz n'en failli.
that-ever in anything not-thereof it-failed

Se pitiez ne l'en prent,
If pity not her-thereof takes
je sai qu'a estovoir
I know that-of necessity
m'ocirra finement;
me-she-will-kill utterly
ce doi je bien voloir.
this ought I well to-wish
Amé ai loiaument,
Loved I-have loyally
ce m'i doit bien valoir,
this me-there ought well to-avail
s'eürs de grever gent
if-fortune of grieving folk
n'eüst si grant pooir.
not-had so great power
Des granz mauz m'a fait oir,
Of-the great ills me-she-has made heir
dont Tristans soufri tant:
whereof Tristan suffered so-much
d'amer sanz decevoir.
of-loving without deceiving

Li plus se plaint d'Amours, maiz je n'os dire

VII · MOST COMPLAIN OF LOVE

Many blame Love, but he dares not say it ever deceived him; he begs his lady to ease his martyrdom. He was lord of great joy when he met her, and now bears pain. He asks Love why it has not told her of his grief. He serves every day, not by the month. Blondel thanks his heart that she was his first joy.

Li plus se plaint d'Amours, maiz je n'os dire,
The most themselves complain of-Love but I not-dare say
qu'ainc a nul jour me vousist engignier.
that-ever on any day me it-would-wish to-deceive
Se mes voloirs m'aïde a desconfire,
If my will me-helps to undo
je nel doi pas ma dame reprochier.
I not-it ought at-all my lady to-reproach
Ainz vueill proier, qu'ele aliet mon martire;
Rather I-wish to-pray that-she may-lighten my martyrdom
quar je l'aim tant loiaument sanz trichier:
for I her-love so loyally without cheating
de duel morrai, se m'i voi escondire.
of grief I-shall-die if me-there I-see refuse

Dieus, je fui ja de si grant joie sire,
God I was once of so great joy lord
quant sa biautez la me fist acointier.
when her beauty her me made meet
Or trai pour li painne et travail et ire,
Now I-bear for her pain and toil and anger

et nonpourquant trop i a dous mestier.
and nevertheless exceedingly there is sweet craft
Forment l'ai chier, mais li cors m'en empire.
Strongly her-I-have dear but the body to-me-thereby worsens
Dieus, qu'ai je dit! ne puet pas empirier
God what-have I said not can at-all worsen
de li amer, s'ele en veut estre mire.
from her loving if-she thereof wishes to-be physician

Maiz je ne sai, conment ma joie eslise,
But I not know how my joy I-may-choose
puis que par tout me fait s'amours doloir.
since that through all me makes her-love grieve
Quar je l'aim tant loiaument sanz faintise,
For I her-love so loyally without feigning
si comme cil, qui ne set decevoir.
so as he who not knows to-deceive
Greigneur pooir doit avoir vers franchise
Greater power ought to-have toward nobleness
ma loiautez, que proier sanz voloir,
my loyalty than praying without will
s'Amours est teus, comme chascuns la prise.
if-Love is such as each it prizes

Amours, de moi est vous il pitiez prise,
Love for me is to-you there pity taken
qui tant vous ai servie en bon espoir?
who so-much you have served in good hope

Bien deüssiez ma dame avoir aprise
Well you-ought my lady to-have taught
ceste doleur, que me faites avoir.
this grief that me you-make have
Autrement, voir, n'iert ja par moi requise;
Otherwise truly not-will-she-be ever by me entreated
se vous par ce ne li faites savoir,
if you by this not to-her make know
ja ne verrai la fin de mon servise.
ever not I-shall-see the end of my service

Je ne serf pas a mois ne a semainne,
I not serve at-all by month nor by week
maiz chascun jour, s'il li venist en gre.
but each day if-it to-her came in will
Si come cil, cui Amours trait et mainne
So as he whom Love draws and leads
a son plaisir et a sa volenté.
at its pleasure and at its will
Mout m'a grevé longement ceste painne.
Much me-has grieved long this pain
Et ce que j'ai si loiaument amé.
And this that I-have so loyally loved
De li sui pres, maiz s'amours m'est lointainne.
To her I-am near but her-love to-me-is distant

Puis que Blondiaus fu si en son demainne,
Since that Blondel was so in her domain
a il son cuer maintes fois mercïé,
has he his heart many times thanked
ce qu'ele fu sa joie premerainne;
this that-she was his joy first
je ne di pas, qu'il n'ait puis comperé
I not say at-all that-he not-may-have since paid-for
sa grant biauté chascun jour a estrainne;
her great beauty each day as gift
maiz ce l'en a doucement conforté,
but this him-thereof has sweetly comforted
c'onques ne vit courtoisie vilainne.
that-ever not he-saw courtesy churlish

Quant je pluz sui en paour de ma vie

VIII · WHEN I MOST FEAR FOR MY LIFE

When he should be least glad, Love tells him to rejoice; if she kills him, the sin is hers, and he asks only mercy. He has overcome the grief that tried to turn him from her, though he cannot buy her love without dying. Pride has entered her lovely heart. The envoy tells Conon that Blondel's love will never fail.

Quant je pluz sui en paour de ma vie,
When I most am in fear of my life
et je mains doi par raison estre liez,
and I least ought by reason to-be glad
lors me semont ma volentez et prie
then me summons my will and prays
et fine Amours, que je soie envoisiez.
and true Love that I be merry
S'ele m'ocit, suens en iert li pechiez;
If-she me-kills hers thereof will-be the sin
trop a douz nom pour faire vilenie;
too she-has sweet name for doing churlishness
maiz se je sui par mes ieus traveilliez,
but if I am by my eyes tormented
dont la vi,
whereby her I-saw
qu'en doi je li
what-thereof ought I her
demander fors merci?
to-ask except mercy
Puiz que par moi sui de joie eslongiez,
Since that by me I-am from joy distanced

je ne m'en doi plaindre mie;
I not myself-thereof ought to-complain at-all
conment qu'aie esté iriez,
how-ever that-I-may-have been angered
doucement sui engigniez.
sweetly I-am deceived

Amours mar vi ceus, qui vous ont trahie,
Love in-an-ill-hour I-saw those who you have betrayed
quant vous seur moi vostre duel en vengiez.
since you on me your grief thereof avenge
Et si n'ai pas envers vous desservie
And yet not-I-have at-all toward you deserved
nule chose, dont doie estre empiriez.
any thing whereby I-ought to-be worsened
Mon cuer avez, pieç'a n'en fui aidiez,
My heart you-have long-since not-thereby I-was helped
ainz m'a laissié pour vostre compaignie.
rather me-it-has left for your company
Mainz, s'il vous plaist, cruëlment m'assaiez
But if-it you pleases cruelly me-you-test
a ami;
as friend
quar ja de mi
for ever of me
ne ferez anemi.
not you-will-make enemy
Pour ce vous proi que merci en aiez,
For this you I-pray that mercy thereof you-may-have

quar se vous avec la vie,
for if you with the life
que je ai, m'i destraigniez,
that I have me-there constrain
mar vi biauté sanz pitiez.
in-an-ill-hour I-saw beauty without pity

Par grant esfort ai la dolour veincue,
By great effort I-have the grief vanquished
qui me cuida de ceste amour tourner;
which me thought from this love to-turn
maiz ne di pas, qu'ele en soit recreüe,
but not I-say at-all that-it thereof be recreant
que chascun jour ne me vieigne grever
that each day not me it-may-come to-grieve
ma douce dame, et pour moi esprouver,
my sweet lady and for me to-test
pour cui j'i ai toute autre amour perdue,
for whom I-there have all other love lost
si que je n'ai de coi autrui amer
so that I not-have of what another to-love
ne servir.
nor to-serve
Ne deservir
Nor to-deserve
ne puis par mal soufrir,
not I-can by ill suffering
que la painne vueille guerredouner,
that the pain she-may-wish to-reward

que je ai pour li eüe;
which I have for her had
ne sai, se merci trouver
not I-know if mercy to-find
porrai en son cuer aver.
I-shall-be-able in her heart avaricious

Nenil certes, ainz m'iert chiere vendue;
No certainly rather to-me-will-be dear sold
maiz ne la puis sanz morir achater.
but not it I-can without dying buy
Joie eu de li, si la m'a retolue,
Joy I-had from her so it me-she-has taken-back
rienz n'i a mis, qu'ele n'en vueille oster,
anything not-there she-has put that-she not-thence may-wish to-remove
fors volenté, qu'ele n'en puet jeter,
except will which-she not-thence can cast
dont l'amours est en mon cuer descendue,
whereby the-love is into my heart descended
qu'el m'a leissié, pour son cors desirrer.
which-she me-has left for her body to-desire
Si desir,
So I-desire
qu'a son plaisir
that-at her pleasure
puisse de li joïr;
I-may of her enjoy
quar autrement ne la quier enganer.
for otherwise not her I-seek to-deceive

Si m'en soit joie rendue
So to-me-thereof be joy rendered
et puisse amours recouvrer,
and may-I love recover
com je di voir sanz fausser.
as I say true without falsifying

Onques mais cuers en voloir n'en pensee
Ever before heart in will nor-in thought
envers dame si bien ne se prova;
toward lady so well not itself proved
maiz je ne sai, conment puist estre amee
but I not know how may be loved
cele d'autrui, qui son cuer n'amera.
she by-another who her heart not-will-love
De cel cuer l'aim, qui pour li me laissa;
With that heart her-I-love which for her me left
et nonpourquant ainc n'i ot dessevree,
and nevertheless ever not-there was separation
qu'entierement avec li me douna
for-entirely with her me it-gave
par mon gre.
by my will
S'or m'a grevé,
If-now me-it-has grieved
c'est par ma volenté.
this-is by my will
Ja ma dame reprochié ne sera;
Ever to-my lady reproached not it-will-be

et s'en iert espoir blasmee;
and so-thereof she-will-be perhaps blamed
maiz nului n'en pesera
but to-anyone not-thereof it-will-weigh
tant com moi, quant ce sera.
so-much as me when this will-be

Chançons, di li, que mar vi assamblee
Song tell her that in-an-ill-hour I-saw assembled
tante biauté, com ele me moustra
so-much beauty as she to-me showed
en sa face fresche et encoulouree,
in her face fresh and colored
dont li orgueus en son cuer avala,
whence the pride into her heart descended
qui son ami ocirre li fera.
which her friend kill her will-make
S'Amours me doint avoir longue duree, —
So-Love me may-grant to-have long duration
quar c'est la rienz en cest mont, qui plus a
for this-is the thing in this world which most has
tost sané
soon healed
home navré
man wounded
de si douce enferté,
of so sweet infirmity
come je sui, — bien ait qui me navra! —
as I am well may-have who me wounded

tost m'en iert guerredounee
soon to-me-thereof will-be rewarded
la painne, quant li plaira
the pain when to-her it-will-please
et pitiez l'en prendera.
and pity her-thereof will-take

Quennes, en Blondel est nee
Conon in Blondel is born
l'amours, qui ja ne faudra,
the-love which ever not will-fail
tant de mal ne li fera.
so-much of ill not to-him she-will-do

S'Amours veut que mes chans remaigne

IX · IF LOVE WANTS SILENCE

If Love and his lady forbid his song, he will be silent, though he wishes she would share his grief. He cannot hate her and accepts her war on him. Her eyes send sweet messages he chooses to believe. Blondel puts his heart in hostage where he has no claim, with only her fair looks and no granting.

S'Amours veut que mes chans remaigne
If-Love wishes that my song may-cease
et la bele le me desfent,
and the fair-one it me forbids
qui mon cuer angoisse et mahaigne,
who my heart anguishes and maims
je n'en quier maiz avoir talent;
I not-thereof seek more to-have desire
ainz vueill mieuz qu'ele me destraigne,
rather I-wish better that-she me may-constrain
s'ele voloit estre compaigne
if-she wished to-be companion
de la doleur, que pour li sent.
of the grief that for her I-feel
Or li proi que pitiez l'en praigne,
Now her I-pray that pity her-thereof may-take

et que de moi grever se faigne.
and that from me grieving herself she-may-hold-back
Trop m'aïre et painne souvent;
Too-much me-angers and pains often

maiz n'est pas drois, que je m'en plaigne,
but not-is at-all right that I myself-thereof complain
s'Amours fait son comandement.
if-Love does its command
Puiz que li a amer m'enseigne,
Since that her to love me-it-teaches
bien feroit, — maiz ele ne daigne —
well she-would-do but she not deigns
s'ele m'amoit si loiaument,
if-she me-loved so loyally
com si oeill m'en firent l'enseigne.
as her eyes me-thereof made the-sign

Certes, ja plus ne li querroie;
Certainly ever more not of-her I-would-ask
pour tant porroie je guerir
for so-much could I heal
de cest mal, qui si affebloie
of this ill which so enfeebles
mon cuer, qui ne la puet haïr.
my heart which not her can hate
Si m'est bel, qu'ele m'i guerroie,
Yet to-me-is fair that-she me-there wars
et se je cest mal refusoie,
and if I this ill refused
ja puis ne devroie joïr
ever then not I-ought to-enjoy
de ce, dont la doleurs est moie.
of this whereof the grief is mine

A ce qu'om sert de cuer et proie,
In this that-one serves with heart and prays
voit l'en mout pou de bien venir;
sees one very little of good come
ja Dieus ne doint que m'en recroie
ever God not may-grant that myself-thereof I-give-up
pour mal, qui m'en puist avenir.
for ill which to-me-thereof may befall
Se dous reguars ne m'i faunoie,
If sweet looks not me-there deceive
li bel oeill, que ses cuers m'envoie,
the fair eyes which her heart to-me-sends
s'il ne deçoivent par mentir,
if-they not deceive by lying
bien font samblant, que je les croie.
well make-they semblance that I them may-believe

Et je si fais; pluz dous message
And I so do more sweet message
ne me porroit ele envoier,
not to-me could she send
que ceus, qui sunt de son parage,
than those which are of her lineage
pour ma grant doleur alegier.
for my great grief to-lighten
Mout en sui liez en mon corage,
Very thereof I-am glad in my heart
et si puiz bien avoir damage,
and yet I-can well have harm

puiz qu'ensi sui en son dangier;
since that-thus I-am in her power
qu'ausi privé voit on sauvage.
for-as tame sees one wild

Qui d'Amours vauroit autre guage,
Who of-Love would-wish other pledge
que j'ai, s'amast de cuer entier,
than I-have if-he-loved with heart entire
si con je fais, en grant folage
so as I do in great folly
averoit mis son desirrier.
would-have put his longing
Blondiaus met son cuer en hostage
Blondel puts his heart in hostage
la, ou il n'a point de visnage,
there where he not-has a-whit of neighborhood
fors biau samblant sanz otroier;
except fair semblance without granting
maiz n'i claime point d'iretage.
but not-there claims a-whit of-inheritance

Se savoient mon tourment

X · IF THEY KNEW MY TORMENT

If those who ask how he makes so many songs knew his torment, they would say no one has better reason to stop; he sings only to die more sweetly. It kills him that his lady does not know what he feels. He sends her the proverb "Who comes of good smells sweet." Without pity, Blondel dies.

Se savoient mon tourment
If knew my torment
et auques de mon afaire
and somewhat of my affair
cil, qui demandent, conment
those who ask how
je puis tant de chançons faire,
I can so-many of songs make
il diroient vraiement,
they would-say truly
que nus a chanter n'entent,
that any to singing not-attends
qui mieuz s'en deüst retraire.
who better himself-thence ought to-withdraw
Maiz pour ce chant seulement,
But for this I-sing only
que je muir pluz doucement.
that I die more sweetly

Trop par me grieve forment,
Too much me grieves strongly
que cele est si debonaire,
that she is so gracious
qui tant de dolour me rent
who so-much of grief to-me renders
ce, qu'a tout le mont doit plaire.
this that-to all the world ought to-please
Maiz ne me grevast noient,
But not me would-grieve at-all
se la tresbele au cors gent
if the very-fair-one with-the body gracious
me feïst touz ces maus traire.
me made all these ills bear
Maiz ce m'ocit voirement,
But this me-kills truly
qu'el ne set que pour li sent.
that-she not knows what for her I-feel

Se seüst certeinnement
If knew certainly
mon martire et mon contraire
my martyrdom and my distress
cele, por cui je consent,
she for whom I consent
que Amours me tient et maire,
that Love me holds and masters

je croi bien, qu'alegement
I believe well that-relief
m'envoiast procheinnement;
to-me-she-would-send soon
quar par droit le deüst faire,
for by right it she-ought to-do
se reguars a escïent
if look with knowledge
de ses biaux ieus ne me ment.
of her fair eyes not me lies

Chançons, va isnelement
Song go quickly
a la bele au cler viaire,
to the fair-one with-the bright face
si li di tant seulement:
so to-her say so-much only
'Qui de bons est souef flaire'.
Who of good-ones is sweetly smells
Ne l'os proier autrement,
Not her-I-dare pray otherwise
quar trop pensai hautement,
for too I-thought highly
si n'en puis mon cuer retraire.
so not-thence I-can my heart withdraw
Et se pitiez ne l'en prent,
And if pity not her-thereof takes
Blondiaus muert, que pluz n'atent.
Blondel dies for more not-he-awaits

Tant ai en chantant proié

XI · SO MUCH I HAVE PRAYED

He has prayed in song so long that he might stop, but he will leave neither his song nor her friendship. Should she ever catch him betraying her, may she keep him bound without reward and never love him. She should not treat as an enemy one who never deserved it. The envoy sends word to Conon.

Tant ai en chantant proié,
So-much I-have in singing prayed
que bien peüst maiz remanoir,
that well it-could more cease
puiz que de moi n'a pitié
since that of me not-has pity
cele, qui bien set mon voloir;
she who well knows my will
maiz n'en puis avoir congié,
but not-thereof I-can have leave
quar j'ai fine Amour otroié:
for I-have true Love granted
tant com j'aie sens et force et pooir,
as-long as I-may-have sense and strength and power
ne laisserai mon chant ne s'amistié.
not I-shall-leave my song nor her-friendship

Conment qu'ele m'ait laissié
How-ever that-she me-may-have left
en ire et en doleur manoir,
in anger and in grief to-dwell

doucement m'a engignié,
sweetly me-she-has deceived
se je pluz n'en pooie avoir.
if I more not-thereof could have
Qui que m'en tieigne a trichié,
Who ever me-thereof may-hold for cheated
je di que bien ai emploié,
I say that well I-have employed
se ma dame le fait pour moi doloir,
if my lady it does for me to-grieve
les malz, qui pour s'amour m'ont traveillié.
the ills which for her-love me-have tormented

Ja ne quier que nus m'ensaint
Ever not I-seek that anyone me-may-teach
a issir fors de sa prison;
to go out of her prison
ainz vueill bien, s'ele m'ataint
rather I-wish well if-she me-catches
envers li faisant trahison,
toward her doing treason
que ja de moi ne se claint,
that ever of me not herself she-may-complain
maiz einsinc com or me destraint,
but thus as now me she-constrains
me destraigne sanz avoir guerredon,
me may-she-constrain without having reward
ne Dieus voloir ne li doint qu'ele m'aint.
nor God will not to-her may-give that-she me-may-love

Douce dame, en vo cuer maint
Sweet lady in your heart dwells
et en vostre clere façon
and in your bright fashion
la joie, qui me soufraint,
the joy which me fails
et li biens, dont j'atent le don,
and the good whereof I-await the gift
qu'a vo franchise m'amaint.
that-to your nobleness me-may-lead
Et s'il en vostre cuer remaint
And if-it in your heart remains
que je n'aie de vous se doleur non,
that I not-may-have from you except grief not
dont ne sai je, qui a joie me maint.
then not know I who to joy me may-lead

A mon cors ont assailli
To my body have assailed
li mal d'Amours, si m'ont grevé;
the ills of-Love so me-have grieved
c'onques ne m'i desfendi,
that-ever not myself-there I-defended
ne li cuers, qu'il i ont trouvé.
nor the heart which-they there have found
Dame, or en aiez merci!
Lady now thereof have mercy

Se j'ai fait de moi vostre ami
If I-have made of me your friend
a l'aïde de vostre grant biauté,
with the-help of your great beauty
ne m'en devez tenir a anemi;
not me-thereof you-ought to-hold for enemy

c'onques ne le desservi,
for-ever not it I-deserved
s'Amours me doint ma volenté
so-Love me may-grant my will
de vous, cui je serf et pri,
of you whom I serve and pray
s'il vous devoit venir a gre;
if-it to-you ought to-come to will
ainz ai tout cest mont guerpi
rather I-have all this world abandoned
pour vostre cors, que je mar vi,
for your body which I in-an-ill-hour saw
se par amour ne me sunt amendé
if by love not to-me are amended
li mal, qui m'ont de joie departi.
the ills which me-have from joy parted

Chançonete, a Quennon di,
Little-song to Conon say
que Blondiaus a de sa dame chanté
that Blondel has of his lady sung
et si te die pour l'amour de li.
and so to-thee may-he-say for the-love of her

Tant aim et vueill et desir

XII · SO MUCH I LOVE

He thinks only of his lady, and Love makes him sing against his will. If she forgets him, he will thank her will. He finds nothing in her to hate, and death seems life when he looks at her. A true lover cannot hide his love, for his color betrays him. Blondel prays his damsel to cheer him with good news.

Tant aim et vueill et desir,
So-much I-love and wish and desire
que ne puis ailleurs penser;
that not I-can elsewhere think
si me fait Amours languir
so me makes Love languish
et seur mon voloir chanter.
and against my will sing
Tant l'ai amee et servie,
So-much her-I-have loved and served
que la mort ai desservie,
that the death I-have deserved
s'a ce me convient faillir,
if-at this me behooves to-fail
que tant me fait desirrer.
which so-much me makes desire

Mout me delit a servir
Much myself I-delight to serve
amors et a moi grever;
love and to me grieve

si ne m'en puis repentir,
so not myself-thereof I-can repent
ne ce, que j'aim, oublïer.
nor this that I-love forget
Et se la bele m'oublie,
And if the fair-one me-forgets
dont sui amis sanz amie,
then I-am friend without friend
si me convendra soufrir
so me it-will-behoove to-suffer
et son voloir mercïer.
and her will to-thank

Rienz, qui m'aprende a haïr,
Anything which me-may-teach to hate
ne porroie en li trover.
not I-could in her find
Tantes biautez i remir,
So-many beauties there I-gaze-at
quant la me loist reguarder,
when her to-me it-is-allowed to-look-at
que la mors me samble vie.
that the death to-me seems life
Mout i faiz sage folie,
Very there I-do wise folly
se li deignoit souvenir
if to-her it-deigned to-remember
de moi, qui me muir d'amer.
of me who myself die of-loving

J'ai veü, pour pluz durer,
I-have seen for more to-last
mainte bone amour couvrir;
many-a good love cover
maiz ne la puet pas celer
but not it can at-all hide
cil, qui aime sanz faillir.
he who loves without failing
Se la bouche n'est hardie,
If the mouth not-is bold
la couleurs nel çoile mie:
the color not-it hides at-all
tainte li convient porter,
pallor him behooves to-bear
qui bien aime sanz mentir.
who well loves without lying

Ainc n'oi voloir de fausser,
Ever not-I-had will of falsifying
ne corage de trahir;
nor heart of betraying
si me laist Dieus recouvrer
so me may-let God recover
ceste amour, dont je souspir.
this love whereof I sigh
Je l'aim pluz que je ne die,
I her-love more than I — may-say
comment qu'ele m'escondie.
how-ever that-she me-may-refuse

Mes cuers ne s'en puet tourner,
My heart not itself-thence can turn
ne ja ne l'en quier partir.
nor ever not it-thence I-seek to-part

Blondiaus aime et sert et prie
Blondel loves and serves and prays
sa damoisele joïe,
his damsel enjoyed
qu'ele le face esjoïr
that-she him may-make rejoice
et bone novele oïr.
and good news hear

Ainz que la fueille descende

XIII · BEFORE THE LEAF FALLS

Before the leaves fall he will tell how Love has tested him. Good love cannot be bought, and his lady's color sets every viewer burning. Unless she lets him drink from her mouth, he will be a martyr without a crown. She refuses so many worthy men; the edition marks a gap there. He prays that she lead him before she destroys him.

Ainz que la fueille descende
Before that the leaf may-descend
des arbres seur la ramee,
from-the trees on the branches
dirai, — ne sai que j'atende —
I-shall-say not I-know what I-may-await
conment Amours s'est provee
how Love itself-is proved
vers moi, qui tant l'ai amee,
toward me who so-much it-I-have loved
et bel m'est, conment qu'il prende,
and fair to-me-is how-ever that-it may-take
que si bele mort aprende.
that so fair death I-may-learn

Bone Amours, qui que la vende,
Good Love who ever it may-sell
ne puet mie estre achatee;
not can at-all be bought

mes pou en voit l'en souz bende
but little thereof sees one under band
coulour tainte ne muee.
color pale nor changed
Ma dame est si coulouree:
My lady is so colored
pou la voit hom, n'en esprende
little her sees man not-thereby may-kindle
et qui a li ne se rende.
and who to her not himself may-render

Qui si douce amour seone,
Who so sweet love pursues
de grant joie se dessoivre,
from great joy himself separates
maiz nus ne s'i abandone,
but anyone not himself-there gives-over
qui puisse a sa bouche boivre.
who may at her mouth drink
Mes s'ele ne m'i aboivre
But if-she not me-there gives-drink
par amour et guerredoune,
through love and rewards
martyrs serai sanz couroune.
martyr I-shall-be without crown

Maiz ne sai conment la truise,
But not I-know how her I-may-find
quant tant preudome refuse
since so-many worthy-man she-refuses
s'amour ***
her-love (lacuna)
Se ses douz reguars m'encuse
If her sweet look me-accuses
et force et proiere aüse,
and force and prayer uses
Deus doint qu'ele m'i conduise,
God may-grant that-she me-there may-lead
ançoiz qu'ele me destruise.
before that-she me may-destroy

De ses proians sui menuise,
Of her suitors I-am small-fry
mes n'est drois, que ce me nuise.
but not-is right that this me may-harm

Chanter m'estuet, quar joie ai recouvree

XIV · I MUST SING

He sings because the lady who long scorned him has made peace with him. He praises the god of Love, who kills and saves, makes one languish and another laugh, and has made his enemy his friend. He begs his lady not to forget him, since Love has bound their hearts, and prays God to keep them both well.

Chanter m'estuet, quar joie ai recouvree,
To-sing me-behooves for joy I-have recovered
qui me soloit foïr et esloignier;
which me was-wont to-flee and to-avoid
ire et doleur ai maint jour comperee,
anger and grief I-have many-a day paid-for
bien est maiz tans, que la doie laissier;
well is now time that it I-ought to-leave
quar la bele, cui lonc tens ai amee,
for the fair-one whom long time I-have loved
qui de s'amour me soloit desfier,
who of her-love me was-wont to-deny
nouvelement s'est a moi acordee.
newly herself-is to me reconciled
Or me voudra douner et otroier
Now me she-will-wish to-give and to-grant
sa fine amour, que tant ai desirree,
her true love which so-much I-have desired
qui me faisoit jour penser, nuit veillier.
which me made day think night wake

He, Dieus d'amour! com as grant seignourie,
Ah God of-love how thou-hast great lordship
qui les amans pues ocirre et sauver!
who the lovers canst kill and save
L'un dounes mort, as autres dounes vie,
The-one thou-givest death to-the others thou-givest life
l'un fais languir, l'autre rire et joër.
the-one thou-makest languish the-other laugh and play
Tu m'as ocis, or m'as rendu la vie,
Thou me-hast killed now me-hast rendered the life
seur toutes rienz te doi je aourer;
above all things thee ought I to-adore
quar de cele, qui estoit m'anemie,
for of her who was my-enemy
m'as fait ami, dont mout te doi amer.
me-hast made friend whence much thee I-ought to-love
Or chanterai de toi toute ma vie,
Now I-shall-sing of thee all my life
si te voudrai servir et honourer.
so thee I-shall-wish to-serve and to-honor

Ha, douce rienz, ou je ai ma fiance!
Ah sweet thing where I have my trust
Pour Dieu vous pri, que ne m'entroubliez.
For God you I-pray that not me-you-forget
Puiz qu'ensi est, qu'Amours par sa puissance
Since that-thus it-is that-Love by its power
amsdeus nos cuers a ensamble liez,
both our hearts has together bound

pour Dieu, aiez le mien en remembrance;
for God have the mine in remembrance
quar li vostres est en mon cuer fichiez,
for the yours is in my heart fixed
qui me donra confort et soustenance.
which me will-give comfort and sustenance
Des ore maiz iere joianz et liez
From now on I-shall-be joyful and glad
et prïerai, que Dieus par sa puissance
and I-shall-pray that God by his power
nos guart touz jours sains et saus et haitiez.
us may-keep all days healthy and safe and cheerful

Cuer desirous apaie

XV · THE DESIROUS HEART

A kiss gave him sweetness but has killed him, and unless he gets another he will die. The first kiss is Love's wound inside the body, unseen outside, and Love betrayed him with that savor. He is the most loyal friend ever promised good. Had he loved God as he loves her, he would have found mercy; Love wounds and heals.

Cuer desirous apaie
Heart desirous appeases
douçours et confors;
sweetness and comfort
par joie d'amour vraie
through joy of-love true
sui en baisant mors.
I-am in kissing dead
S'encor ne m'est autres dounez,
If-still not to-me-is another given
mar fui onques de li privez.
in-an-ill-hour I-was ever with her intimate
A morir sui livrez,
To die I-am delivered
se trop le me delaie.
if too-long it to-me she-delays

Premiers baisiers est plaie
First kiss is wound
d'Amours dedenz cors;
of-Love within body

mout m'angoisse et esmaie,
much me-anguishes and dismays
si ne pert defors.
yet not it-appears outside
He, las! pour coi m'en sui vantez!
Ah alas for what myself-thereof am-I boasted
Ja ne me puet venir santez,
Ever not to-me can come health
se ce, dont sui navrez,
if this whereby I-am wounded
ma bouche ne rassaie.
my mouth not tastes-again

Amours, vous me feïstes
Love you me made
mon fin cuer trichier,
my true heart cheat
qui tel savour meïstes
who such savor put
en son douz baisier.
in her sweet kiss
A morir li avez apris,
To die to-it you-have taught
se pluz n'i prent qu'il n'i a pris,
if more not-there it-takes than-it there has taken
dont m'est il bien a vis,
then to-me-is it well in view
qu'en baisant me trahistes.
that-in kissing me you-betrayed

Certes, mout m'atraisistes
Certainly much me-you-drew
juene a cel mestier;
young to that craft
n'ainc nului n'i vousistes
nor-ever anyone not-there you-wished
fors moi engignier.
except me to-deceive
Je sui li plus loiauz amis,
I am the most loyal friend
cui onques fust nus biens pramis.
to-whom ever was any good promised
He, las! tant ai je pis!
Ah alas so-much have I worse
Amours, mar me nourristes!
Love in-an-ill-hour me you-nourished

Se je Dieu tant amaisse,
If I God so-much had-loved
com je fais celi,
as I do her
qui si me painne et lasse,
who so me pains and wearies
j'eüsse merci;
I-would-have mercy
qu'ainc amis de meilleur voloir
for-ever friend of better will
ne la servi pour joie avoir,
not her served for joy to-have

com j'ai fait tout pour voir
as I-have done all for true
sanz merite et sanz grasse.
without reward and without grace

Se de faus cuer proiaisse,
If with false heart I-had-prayed
dont je ne la pri,
whereby I not her pray
espoir je recovraisse;
perhaps I would-recover
maiz n'est mie einsi.
but not-is at-all thus
Amours, trop me faites doloir;
Love too-much me you-make grieve
et se vous serf sanz decevoir,
and if you I-serve without deceiving
ce me tient en espoir:
this me holds in hope
qu'Amours nevre et respasse.
that-Love wounds and heals

En tous tans que vente bise

XVI · WHEN THE NORTH WIND BLOWS

When the north wind blows, his heart turns black for a lady who is not taken with him. He has chosen the best in the world, and it would be too high an honor if she chose him. Yet destiny turns many thoughts, and he once saw a lady of high birth love a man of low kin. He will serve her until she grants a secret kiss.

En tous tans que vente bise,
In all times when blows north-wind
pour celi, dont sui soupris,
for her by-whom I-am seized
qui n'est pas de moi souprise,
who not-is at-all by me seized
devient mes cuers noirs et bis.
becomes my heart black and gray
De fine amour l'ai requise,
With true love her-I-have entreated
qui cuer et cors m'a espris,
which heart and body me-has kindled
et s'ele n'en est esprise,
and if-she not-thereby is kindled
pour mon grant mal la requis.
for my great ill her I-entreated

Mais la doleurs me devise,
But the grief to-me tells
qu'a la meilleur me sui pris,
that-to the best myself I-am taken

qui ainc fust en cest mont prise,
who ever was in this world prized
se j'estoie a son devis.
if I-were at her will
Tort a mes cuers, qui s'en prise;
Wrong has my heart which itself-thereof prizes
quar ne sui pas si eslis,
for not I-am at-all so chosen
s'ele eslit, qu'ele m'eslise;
if-she chooses that-she me-may-choose
trop seroie de haut pris.
too-much I-would-be of high worth

Et nequedent destinee
And nevertheless destiny
doune a la gent maint pensé.
gives to the folk many-a thought
Tost i metra sa pensee,
Soon there she-will-put her thought
s'Amours li a destiné.
if-Love to-her has destined
Je vi ja tel dame amee
I saw once such lady loved
d'ome de bas parenté,
by-man of low kindred
qui mieuz ert emparentee,
who better was kinned
et si l'avoit bien amé.
and yet him-she-had well loved

Pour c'est drois, s'Amours m'agree,
For this-is right if-Love me-pleases
que mon cuer li ai douné.
that my heart to-her I-have given
Se s'amour ne m'a dounee,
If her-love not to-me-she-has given
tant la servirai a gre,
so-much her I-shall-serve at will
se li plaist, la desirree,
if to-her pleases the desired-one
qu'un dous baisier a celé
that-a sweet kiss in secret
avrai de li a celee,
I-shall-have from her in secret
que je tant ai desirré.
which I so-much have desired

Li rossignous a noncié la nouvele

XVII · THE NIGHTINGALE'S NEWS

The nightingale announces spring, and all rejoice but him, cast into prison. Winter and summer he grieves. He wishes his lady knew his pain, for she alone holds the cure. Her gray eyes and bright face delight him, and he cannot withdraw his thoughts. He has served long and will now see whether she is loyal or false.

Li rossignous a noncié la nouvele,
The nightingale has announced the news
que la saisons del dous tans est venue,
that the season of-the sweet weather is come
que toute rienz renaist et renouvele,
that every thing is-reborn and renews
que li pre sont couvert d'erbe menue.
that the meadows are covered with-grass fine
Pour la saison, qui se change et remue,
For the season which itself changes and moves
chascuns fors moi s'esjoïst et revele.
each except me himself-rejoices and revels
Las! quar si m'est changiee la merele,
Alas for so to-me-is changed the game
qu'on m'a jeté en prison et en mue.
that-one me-has cast into prison and into coop

Tant com ivers et tant com estez dure,
As-long as winter and as-long as summer lasts
sui en doleur et en duel et en ire;
I-am in grief and in sorrow and in anger

assez et trop ai de male aventure,
enough and too-much I-have of ill fortune
nului, qui soit, ne le porroie dire.
to-anyone who may-be not it I-could tell
Quant me porpens, ne puis joër ne rire,
When myself I-bethink not I-can play nor laugh
s'aucune foiz n'avient par mespresure;
if-some time not-it-happens by mistake
quar il m'estuet a si grant desmesure
for it me-behooves with so great excess
soufrir adés si dolourous martire.
to-suffer ever so grievous martyrdom

Dieus! quar seüst ma dame la couvine
God would-that might-know my lady the state
de la doleur, que j'ai, et de la painne!
of the grief that I-have and of the pain
Quar ses cuers bien li dit et adevine
For her heart well to-her says and divines
conment s'amours me travaille et demainne.
how her-love me torments and drives
Seur toutes autres est el la souverainne,
Above all others is she the sovereign
quar mieuz conoist de mes maus la racine.
for better she-knows of my ills the root
Ne puis sanz li recouvrer medecine
Not I-can without her recover medicine
ne guerison, qui me soit preus ne sainne.
nor healing which to-me may-be profitable nor wholesome

Tant me delit en la douce samblance
So-much myself I-delight in the sweet semblance
de ses vairs euz et de son cler viaire,
of her gray eyes and of her bright face
et quant recort la bele contenance
and when I-recall the fair bearing
de son gent cors, touz li cuers m'en esclaire;
of her gracious body all the heart to-me-thereof brightens
qu'ele par est tant douce et debonaire
for-she indeed is so sweet and gracious
et tant loiaus, tant cortoise et tant franche,
and so loyal so courteous and so noble
que je ne puis avoir tant de puissance,
that I not can have so-much of power
que mon penser puisse de li retraire.
that my thought I-may from her withdraw

Ja Dieus ne doint, que mes cuers se retraie
Ever God not may-grant that my heart itself withdraw
de li amer touz les jours de ma vie.
from her loving all the days of my life
Non fera il, granz folie m'esmaie,
Not will-do it great folly me-dismays
quar sa biautez me semont et envie.
for her beauty me summons and invites
Mout longuement l'ai amee et servie,
Very long her-I-have loved and served
bien est maiz tans, que la desserte en aie.
well is now time that the reward thereof I-may-have
Or verrai bien, s'ele est loiaus et vraie,
Now I-shall-see well if-she is loyal and true
ou s'el m'est fausse et desloiaus amie.
or if-she to-me-is false and disloyal friend

Ma joie me semont

XVIII · MY JOY SUMMONS ME

His joy calls him to sing in the sweet season, and his heart agrees, for he does nothing against its wish; those who set their minds on it live well. Joy belongs to loving truly, to giving freely when the time comes, and to speaking courteously. Whoever keeps these three ways will never fare badly.

Ma joie me semont
My joy me summons
de chanter au dous tens,
to singing in-the sweet weather
et mes cuers li respont,
and my heart to-it answers
que droiz est que j'i pens;
that right it-is that I-thereon think
car nule rienz el mont
for any thing in-the world
ne fais seur son defens.
not I-do against its prohibition
Dieus! quel siecle cil ont,
God what life those have
qui i metent lor sens!
who there put their sense

A la joie apartient
To the joy belongs
d'amer mout finement,
of-loving very truly

et quant li lieus en vient,
and when the place thereof comes
li doners largement;
the giving largely
encor pluz i convient:
still more there behooves
parler cortoisement.
to-speak courteously
Qui ces trois voies tient,
Who these three ways holds
ja n'ira malement.
ever not-will-go badly

Mes cuers me fait conmencier

XIX · MY HEART BIDS ME BEGIN

His heart makes him begin to announce his grief to the lady who never knew his desire; hope and desire lighten his ills. He sends his song to her, and the song asks whether he will burden it further, while he warns it not to slander. Whoever loves without cheating should not despair, for love is both the ill and the physician.

Mes cuers me fait conmencier,
My heart me makes begin
quant je deüsse fenir,
when I ought to-end
pour ma grant doleur noncier
for my great grief to-announce
celi, qui me fait languir.
to-her who me makes languish
Maiz ainc ne sot mon desir,
But ever not she-knew my desire
si ne m'en doi merveillier,
so not myself-thereat I-ought to-marvel
se j'en ai angoisse et ire.
if I-thereof have anguish and anger

Uns autres deüst morir,
An other would-have-to die
s'il fust en tel desirrier,
if-he were in such longing

mais esperance et desir
but hope and desire
me font assez mainz gregier
me make much less grieve
et mes granz mauz alegier,
and my great ills lighten
dont ja ne me quier partir.
whence ever not myself I-seek to-part
Chançounete, va li dire.
Little-song go to-her tell

Par Dieu! trop i pues targier! —
By God too-long there thou-canst tarry
Biauz sire, a vostre plaisir!
Fair lord at your pleasure
Volez me vous pluz chargier? —
Wish me you more to-charge
O je, maiz ne l'os gehir;
Yes I but not it-dare confess
quar tant me fait mal sentir,
for so-much me makes ill feel
que ne m'en sai conseillier.
that not myself-thereof I-know to-counsel
Maiz guarde toi de mesdire.
But guard thyself from slandering

Qui bien aime sanz trichier
Who well loves without cheating
et bien veut Amours servir,
and well wishes Love to-serve
ne s'en doit mie esmaier,
not himself-thereof ought at-all to-dismay
ne pour painne repentir.
nor for pain to-repent
Bien a pooir de merir
Well has power of rewarding
la dolour et l'encombrier
the grief and the-trouble
amours, qu'ele est mauz et mire.
love for-she is ill and physician

Mout se feïst bon tenir de chanter

XX · BETTER TO REFRAIN

It would be good to stop singing, since every word and tune has been used, yet he cannot, for Love kills him with a pleasant martyrdom. His lady's body and laughing eyes put love in his heart, and in that torment is delight. Many feign love and then boast; a look, a laugh, or a kiss from her would deliver him.

Mout se feïst bon tenir de chanter,
Very oneself would-make good to-hold from singing
quar en chantant ne set l'on maiz que dire;
for in singing not knows one more what to-say
ne mot ne chant ne puet l'on maiz trouver,
nor word nor tune not can one more find
tant i sache hom esguarder ne eslire,
so-much there may-know man look or choose
que maintes foiz ne soit estez redis;
that many times not may-be been resaid
s'en est chanters pluz maz et desconfis,
so-thereof is singing more downcast and discomfited
ne ja pour ce ne sera l'amours pire.
nor ever for this not will-be the-love worse

Endroit de moi ne m'en puis consirrer;
In-regard of me not myself-thereof I-can deprive
qu'Amours m'ocit d'un si plaisant martire,
for-Love me-kills with-a so pleasing martyrdom

qu'ele me fait en aventure amer
that-she me makes in hazard love
cele, ou je puis ma douce mort eslire.
her where I can my sweet death choose
Ne ja vers li ne serai si hardis,
Nor ever toward her not I-shall-be so bold
que mes tourmenz li soit par moi gehis,
that my torment to-her be by me confessed
s'en chantant non, pour tant me puet ocirre.
except-in singing not for so-much me it-can kill

Li tresgenz cors ma dame et si oeill cler,
The very-gracious body (of-)my lady and her eyes bright
qui tant sevent amourousement rire,
which so-much know lovingly to-laugh
firent l'amour dedenz mon cuer entrer,
made the-love within my heart enter
que nule autre ne li puet escondire;
that any other not to-it can refuse
qu'en ceste amour m'est li tourmenz delis:
for-in this love to-me-is the torment delight
quant pluz ai mal, lors cuit estre gueris.
when more I-have ill then I-think to-be healed
Il n'aime pas, qui contre Amour s'aïre.
He not-loves at-all who against Love himself-angers

Certes, dame, bien vous devez prisier,
Certainly lady well yourself you-ought to-prize
qu'il est en vous pluz biauté et vaillance,
for-there is in you more beauty and worth
qu'en nule autre, qu'Amours puist justisier;
than-in any other whom-Love can govern
en vous n'a rien, que ne vieigne en plaisance.
in you not-there-is anything that not may-come in pleasure
Dame en vous sont tot li bien, que je di,
Lady in you are all the good-things that I say
si m'a Amours certes trop esbahi:
so me-has Love certainly too-much dismayed
quant a vous pens, n'en fais nule samblance.
when of you I-think not-thereof I-make any semblance

Mainz en i a, qui font au conmencier
Many thereof there are who make at-the beginning
samblant d'amour et riche contenance,
semblance of-love and rich bearing
puiz les en voi partir si de legier,
then them thence I-see part so with ease
que il n'en vont querant fors la vantance.
that they not-thereof go seeking except the boasting
Et cil, qui sont fin et loial ami,
And those who are true and loyal friends
sont par tel gent deceü et trahi,
are by such folk deceived and betrayed
s'en devroit bien Amours prendre vengeance.
so-thereof ought well Love to-take vengeance

Maiz tant i a, que bien me puet aidier,
But so-much there is that well me can help
qu'en pou d'oure doune Dieus grant cheance.
that-in little of-hour gives God great chance
D'un dous reguart, d'un rire ou d'un baisier
With-a sweet look with-a laugh or with-a kiss
m'avroit Amours tourné a delivrance
me-would-have Love turned to deliverance
et de mes mauz respassé et gueri.
and of my ills restored and healed
Dame, aidiez moi, que je n'i muire einsi,
Lady help me that I not-there die thus
qu'onques vers vous n'en oi fausse esperance.
for-ever toward you not-thereof I-had false hope

Onques maiz nus hom ne chanta

XXI · NO MAN EVER SANG

No one ever sang as he sings, with more grief and less show. When his lady has killed him, she will find no one who loves her so much. He asks God that if she ever loves, he be first. He dares not look at her, yet his eyes will not leave her. She lacks nothing except remembering the man who serves her.

Onques maiz nus hom ne chanta
Ever before any man not sang
en la maniere, que je chant,
in the manner that I sing
ne ja maiz nus ne chantera,
nor ever more anyone not will-sing
pluz ait d'ire a mains de samblant,
more has of-anger with less of semblance
et quant ma dame ocis m'avra,
and when my lady killed me-will-have
sachiez de voir, qu'a li me vant,
know of truth that-of her myself I-boast
que ja maiz nul n'en trovera,
that ever more any not-thereof she-will-find
qui tant l'aint en tout son vivant.
who so-much her-may-love in all his lifetime
Merci deüst avoir pluz grant
Mercy she-ought to-have more great
de moi, qui si vois languissant.
of me who so go languishing

Biaus sire Deus, s'ele aime ja,
Fair lord God if-she loves ever
dounez, que ce soit moi avant;
grant that this be me first
quar je sai bien, c'onques n'ama,
for I know well that-ever not-she-loved
tant en est mes cuers pluz en grant.
so-much thereof is my heart more in eagerness
Mout a envis i aprendra,
Very with reluctance there she-will-learn
je m'en vois bien apercevant,
I myself-thereof go well perceiving
quant ele encore senti n'a
since she yet felt not-has
nul des mauz d'amer, dont j'ai tant.
any of-the ills of-loving whereof I-have so-many
Ses clers vis, qu'ele a si riant,
Her bright face which-she has so laughing
fait le mien mat, triste et pensant.
makes the mine downcast sad and pensive

Li lons delais d'a li parler
The long delay of-to her speaking
me fait souvent taindre et palir.
me makes often lose-color and pale
Quant g'i sui, ne l'os esguarder,
When I-there am not her-I-dare look-at
tant en dout mes eus a partir.
so-much thereof I-fear my eyes to part

Tant i aiment le sejourner,
So-much there they-love the staying
qu'il ne s'en sevent revenir,
that-they not themselves-thence know to-come-back
ne je ne les en puis tourner
nor I not them thence can turn
pour chastoier, pour mieuz couvrir;
for correcting for better covering
quar ce, dont on a grant desir,
for this whereof one has great desire
fait bien mesure tressaillir.
makes well measure overleap

Tant a en li a racorder
So-much is in her to recount
biauté, pour qu'on la doit servir:
beauty for which-one her ought to-serve
se tuit cil, qui sevent parler,
if all those who know to-speak
voloient ces taches gehir,
wished these qualities to-confess
ne porroient il resconter,
not could they recount
que en li deüst rienz faillir,
that in her ought anything to-fail
fors tant qu'il ne l'en veut membrer
except so-much that-it not to-her-thereof wishes to-remember
de son home, ne souvenir.
of her man nor to-recall
Ançois me convendra languir,
Rather me it-will-behoove to-languish
tant com li vendra a plaisir.
so-long as to-her it-will-come at pleasure

Puiz qu'Amours donc m'otroie a chanter

XXII · SINCE LOVE GRANTS ME SONG

Since Love allows him to sing, he dares not refuse; two verses are lost in the edition. He pays for his loyalty while braggarts mock. Love has won a loyal lover in him, but he loses Love for his good faith while flatterers keep it by falsehood. He urges Love to hate its enemies and trust its friends.

Puiz qu'Amours donc m'otroie a chanter,
Since that-Love then me-grants to sing
si que n'os refuser son otroi,
so that not-I-dare refuse its grant
* * *
(lacuna)
En vain, maiz ce qu'adés chant et proi
In vain but this that-ever I-sing and pray
* * *
(lacuna)
A la foiz m'i feïst detrïer,
At the time me-there it-would-make delay
s'en Amour n'eüst si loial foi.
if-in Love not-there-were so loyal faith
Las! loiauté m'estuet comperer,
Alas loyalty me-behooves to-pay-for
dont li bufeor font lor cifloi.
whereof the braggarts make their mockery

Amours, qui que te sueille enganer,
Love who ever thee may-be-wont to-deceive
loial amant as conquis en moi,
loyal lover thou-hast won in me
ne pour ce ne me dois pluz pener;
nor for this not me thou-oughtest more to-pain
si fais, maiz ce tieng je a desroi,
so thou-dost but this hold I for outrage
que je te pert pour ma bone foi
that I thee lose for my good faith
et cil losengier t'ont par fausser.
and those flatterers thee-have by falsifying
He, Amours, Amours, porpense toi!
Ah Love Love bethink thee
Tes anemis he et fai grever
Thy enemies hate and make grieve
et tes loiaus amis aime et croi!
and thy loyal friends love and believe

Qui que soit de joie partis

XXIII · WHOEVER HAS LOST JOY

Though others may have lost joy, he wants his song spread through the world, for he has been a true lover and will not repent. As long as he lives he will love. He has only served his lady; if she does not care, let her not say so, but let him love. He cannot leave her, since he was made to love her.

Qui que soit de joie partis,
Who ever may-be from joy parted
je vueill encore, que mes chans
I wish still that my song
soit par tout le mont departis
be through all the world spread
contre la verdure du tanz;
toward the greenery of-the season
quar mout ai esté fins amans,
for very I-have been true lover
n'encore m'en sui repentanz
nor-yet myself-thereof I-am repentant
pour mal, ne ja ne m'en repente.
for ill nor ever not myself-thereof may-I-repent

Ne ja tant com je soie vis,
Nor ever as-long as I be alive
ne serai d'amer recreans,
not I-shall-be of-loving recreant
quar j'en ai la doleur apris,
for I-thereof have the grief learned

les angoisses et les ahanz,
the anguishes and the toils
pour coi je sui si mal soufranz.
for which I am so ill suffering
Ha, Dieus! com puis estre joianz,
Ah God how can-I be joyful
se mes sejours li atalente.
if my staying to-her pleases

Dame, ainc ne vous seu guerroier,
Lady ever not you I-knew to-war
maiz servir bien a mon pooir.
but to-serve well to my power
C'est ce que me deüst aidier
This-is this which me ought to-help
a vostre amour et pluz valoir.
to your love and more to-avail
S'il ne vous en deigne chaloir,
If-it not to-you thereof deigns to-matter
nel me faites mie (a) savoir;
not-it to-me make at-all to know
maiz leissiez m'amer sanz amie.
but let me-love without friend

Autre ne me puet conseillier,
Other not me can counsel
fors vous, ne faire mon voloir,
except you nor do my will

ne la doleur assouagier,
nor the grief soothe
que j'ai de vous sanz joie avoir.
which I-have of you without joy having
Souvent me faites triste et noir;
Often me you-make sad and dark
on se puet bien apercevoir,
one oneself can well perceive
que mestier ai de vostre aïe.
that need I-have of your help

Je ne me puis de vous partir,
I not myself can from you part
et si ne vous tieg ne ne lais.
and yet not you I-hold nor not leave
Ce poise moi, n'en quier mentir,
This weighs me not-thereof I-seek to-lie
et mout m'en est bons li delais;
and very to-me-thereof is good the delay
quar pour vous amer fui je fais,
for for you to-love was I made
ne ja n'en quier estre desfaiz,
nor ever not-thence I-seek to-be undone
pour vous engignier ne deçoivre.
for you to-trick nor to-deceive

Encore en soit li maus mesfaiz,
Yet thereof be the ill misdone
n'en sui je rienz vers li fourfaiz,
not-thereof am I anything toward her forfeit
s'el me voloit en gre reçoivre.
if-she me wished in favor to-receive

LE CHÂTELAIN DE COUCY

The Songs

A vos, amant, plus k'a nule autre gent

I · TO YOU, LOVERS

He laments to lovers that he must part from his lady and go to a foreign land. He asks God how he can bear losing her company and sweet words; God makes him pay dearly for past delights. Slanderers will rejoice. He commends her to God, not knowing whether he will return, and begs her to keep her promises.

A vos, amant, plus k'a nule autre gent
To you lovers more than-to any other folk
est bien raisons, ke ma dolor complaigne,
is well reason that my grief I-lament
quant il m'estuet partir outreement
since it me-behooves to-part utterly
et desevrer de ma loial compaigne,
and to-separate from my loyal companion
et quant li pert, n'est riens ki me remaigne.
and when her I-lose not-is anything which to-me may-remain
Et sachies bien, amors, seurement:
And know well love surely
s'ainc nus morut por avoir cuer dolent,
if-ever anyone died for having heart sorrowful
jamais par moi n'iert meus vers ne lais.
ever by me not-will-be composed verse nor lay

Biaus sire dius, k'iert il donc, et coment
Fair lord God what-will-be it then and how
convenra il, k'en la fin congie praigne?
will-behoove it that-in the end leave I-may-take

Oil par diu, ne puet estre autrement,
Yes by God not can be otherwise
sens li m'estuet aler en terre estraigne.
without her me-behooves to-go into land foreign
Or ne cuit mais ke grans mals me sofraigne,
Now not I-think more that great ills me may-fail
quant de li n'ai confort n'alegement,
since from her not-I-have comfort nor-relief
ne de nule autre amor ioie n'atent,
nor from any other love joy not-I-await
fors ke de li: ne sai se ch'iert iamais.
except that from her not I-know if this-will-be ever

Biaus sire dius, k'iert il del consirrer,
Fair lord God what-will-be it of-the doing-without
del grant solas et de la compaignie,
of-the great solace and of the company
et des deduis, ke me soloit mostrer
and of-the delights which to-me was-wont to-show
chele ki m'ert dame, compagne, amie?
she who to-me-was lady companion friend
Et quant recort sa simple cortoisie,
And when I-recall her simple courtesy
et les dous mos ke suet a moi parler,
and the sweet words that she-was-wont to me to-speak
coment me puet li cuers el cors durer?
how to-me can the heart in-the body last
Quant ne s'en part, chertes, moult est mauvais.
When not itself-thence it-parts certainly very is wicked

Ne me veut pas dius por noient doner
Not me wishes at-all God for nothing to-give
tous les deduis k'ai eus en ma vie,
all the delights that-I-have had in my life
ains les me fait cierement comparer,
rather them me makes dearly pay-for
s'ai grant paor, ches loiers ne m'ochie.
so-I-have great fear this wage — me-may-kill
Merchi amors! S'ainc dius fist vilenie,
Mercy love If-ever God did churlishness
ke vilains fait, bone amor desevrer:
as churl does good love to-separate
ne ie ne puis l'amor de moi oster,
nor I not can the-love from me remove
et si m'estuet ke ie ma dame lais.
and yet me-behooves that I my lady leave

Or seront lie li faus losengeor
Now will-be glad the false flatterers
cui tant pesoit des biens k'avoir soloie;
to-whom so-much weighed of-the goods that-to-have I-was-wont
mais ia de che n'iere pelerins ior,
but ever of this not-I-shall-be pilgrim day
ke ia vers aus bone volente aie:
that ever toward them good will I-may-have
por tant porrai perdre tote ma voie;
for so-much I-shall-be-able to-lose all my way
ke tant m'ont fait de mal li traitor.
for so-much me-have done of ill the traitors

Se dius voloit k'il eussent m'amor,
If God wished that-they had my-love
ne me poroit cargier plus pesant fais.
not me could load more heavy burden

Je m'en vois, dame; a diu le creator
I myself-thence go lady to God the creator
comant vo cors, en kel liu ke ie soie:
I-commend your body in what place that I may-be
ne sai, se ia verrai mais mon retour:
not I-know if ever I-shall-see more my return
aventure est ke iamais vos revoie.
chance it-is that ever you I-see-again
Par diu vos pri, kel part ke li cors traie,
By God you I-pray what way that the body may-draw
ke vos convens tenes, vegne ou demor,
that your covenants you-keep I-come or stay
et ie pri diu k'ensi me doinst honor,
and I pray God that-thus me he-may-give honor
com ie vos ai este amis verais.
as I to-you have been friend true

Bele dame me prie de canter

II · MY FAIR LADY ASKS A SONG

His lady asks him to sing, and he cannot refuse, for she holds his heart, which has put to sea without an oar. He would rather suffer for her than have all he could ask of another. He weeps and wakes for her; she is cruel to him and kind to others, but when her eyes look at him he is free of pain.

Bele dame me prie de canter,
Fair lady me begs of singing
si ch'est bien drois ke ie fache canchon:
so this-is well right that I may-make song
je ne m'en sai ne ne puis detorner;
I not myself-thence know nor not can turn-away
car n'ai pooir de moi se par li non:
for not-I-have power of me except by her not
ele a mon cuer ke ia n'en quier oster,
she has my heart which ever not-thence I-seek to-remove
et sai de voir k'il n'i trait se mal non,
and I-know of truth that-it not-there bears except ill not
or le doint dius a droit port ariver
now it may-grant God to right port to-arrive
car il s'est mis en mer sens aviron.
for it itself-is put at sea without oar

Preus et sage, ie ne vos os conter
Worthy and wise I not to-you dare tell
la grant dolor ke i'ai, s'en cantant non,
the great grief that I-have except-in singing not

et sachies bien, plus n'en orres parler:
and know well more not-thereof you-will-hear speak
car ie n'i voi nule droite raison.
for I not-there see any right reason
J'aim mius ainsi sofrir et endurer
I-love better thus to-suffer and to-endure
ches tresdous mals, sens avoir garison,
these very-sweet ills without having cure
ke d'une autre quan k'en puet demander:
than of-an other as-much that-one can ask
che sachies bien, debonaire au dous non.
this know well gracious-one with-the sweet name

De cheste amor ki tant me fait pener
From this love which so-much me makes suffer
ne voi ie pas, com ie puisse partir;
not see I at-all how I may part
car ie n'i voi raison del eschiver,
for I not-there see reason of-the avoiding
ne n'est pas drois ke i'en doie ioir.
nor not-is at-all right that I-thereof ought to-enjoy
Mais fols desirs fait sovent cuer penser
But foolish desire makes often heart think
en si haut liu, k'il n'i puet avenir,
in so high place that-it not-there can attain
et fine amor si ne doit pas grever
and true love so not ought at-all to-grieve
cheus ki painent tos iors de li servir.
those who labor all days of it serving

S'onkes amis ot ioie por amer,
If-ever friend had joy for loving
je sai de voir ke n'i doi pas faillir;
I know of truth that not-there I-ought at-all to-fail
car riens fors moi ne porroit endurer
for anything except me not could endure
les grans travaus ke i'ai por li servir.
the great toils that I-have for her serving
A son plaisir me fait plaindre et plorer
At her pleasure me she-makes lament and weep
et sospirer et veillier sens dormir:
and sigh and wake without sleeping
mes itant fu a moi reconforter,
but so-much it-was to me comfort
ke nuit et ior en plorant la remir.
that night and day in weeping her I-gaze-at

Je ne me sai tenir ne conforter,
I not myself know to-hold nor to-comfort
de vos, biaus cuers, servir entierement;
from you fair heart to-serve entirely
et quant ie plus vos doi merchi crier,
and when I more to-you ought mercy to-cry
lors vos truis ie cruel si durement,
then you find I cruel so harshly
ke ia a moi ne feres bel semblant,
that ever to me not you-will-make fair semblance
ains les faites autrui por moi grever:
rather them you-make to-another for me to-grieve
mais quant vostre ueil me vuelent regarder
but when your eyes me wish to-look-at
tant sui ie hors de paine et de torment.
so-much am I out of pain and of torment

Bien cuidai vivre sens amor

III · I THOUGHT TO LIVE WITHOUT LOVE

He thought to live in peace without love, but his heart has drawn him into a greater folly than a child crying for a star. He longs to make Love pay. Folly drives him by force, like a ship the wind drives until it breaks. He asks his lady for mercy and sends his song to pray that she never act as a traitor.

Bien cuidai vivre sens amor
Well I-thought to-live without love
desore-en pais tot mon ae,
henceforth-in peace all my life
mais retrait m'a en la folor
but drawn-back me-has into the folly
mes cuers dont l'avoie escape.
my heart whence it-I-had escaped
Empris ai greignor folie,
Undertaken I-have greater folly
ke li fols emfes ki crie,
than the foolish child who cries
por la bele estoile avoir
for the fair star to-have
k'il voit haut et cler seoir.
which-he sees high and bright sit

Coment ke ie me desespoir,
How-ever that I myself despair
bien m'a amors gueredonne
well me-has love rewarded
che ke ie l'ai a mon pooir
this that I it-have to my power
servie sens desloiaute.
served without disloyalty
Ki roi m'a fait de folie
Who king me-has made of folly
si se gart bien ki s'i fie,
so himself may-guard well who himself-therein trusts
ke si haut don set merir
for so high gift it-knows to-reward
cheus ki servent sens trair.
those who serve without betraying

Nen est merveilles se m'air
Not is marvel if myself-I-anger
vers amor ki tant m'a greve,
toward love which so-much me-has grieved
Dius, car la peusse tenir
God would-that it I-could hold
un seul ior a ma volente!
one single day at my will
El comperroit sa folie,
It would-pay-for its folly
si me fache dius aie:
so me may-make God help

a morir li covenroit,
to die to-it it-would-behoove
se ma dame ne vainkoit.
if my lady not won

Aï frans cuers ki tant connoit,
Ah noble heart which so-much knows
ne bees a ma folete!
not gape at my little-folly
Bien sai k'en vos amer n'ai droit,
Well I-know that-in you loving not-I-have right
s'amours ne m'i eust done;
if-love not me-there had given
mais esforchier fait folie,
but forcing does folly
si com fait nes ke vens guie,
so as does ship which wind guides
ki va la ou vens l'empaint,
which goes there where wind it-drives
ke toute esmie et fraint.
that all it-crumbles and breaks

Ma dame ou nus biens ne soffraint,
My lady where any good not lacks
merchi par francise et par gre,
mercy by nobleness and by will
puis k'en vos sont tuit mal estaint,
since that-in you are all ills quenched

et tuit bien a droit alume,
and all good-things at right lit
connissies, dont la folie
know then the folly
me vient ki me tout la vie:
to-me comes which from-me takes the life
ou en doi faire clamor,
where thereof ought-I to-make complaint
s'a vos non, de ma dolor?
except-to you not of my grief

Canchon, ma bele folie
Song my fair folly
me salue et si li prie,
for-me greet and so her pray
ke por diu et por s'onor
that for God and for her-honor
n'ait ia l'us de traitor.
not-she-may-have ever the-usage of traitor

Coment ke longue demeure

IV · AFTER LONG DELAY

After long silence he sings, for Love has made him forget his trouble, and each stanza ends on "Mercy." He asks Love to make his lady feel pain until she deigns to have mercy, for mercy and beauty are parted in her. False lovers lie well, while he, who loves to death, knows one word.

Coment ke longue demeure
How-ever that long delay
aie faite de canter,
I-may-have made of singing
ore est bien raisons et eure,
now is well reason and hour
ke m'i doie atorner;
that myself-thereto I-ought to-turn
k'amors m'a fait oblier
for-love me-has made forget
l'enui ki lonc tens m'a mort
the-trouble which long time me-has killed
et done novel confort,
and given new comfort
dame por cui cant et deport Merchi.
lady for whom I-sing and disport Mercy

Chertes, dame molt s'oneure,
Certainly lady much himself-honors
ki cortois est contre tort,
who courteous is against wrong

k'ainc de cruel au deseure
for-ever from cruel-one at-the uppermost
n'oi dire bon confort.
not-I-heard tell good comfort
Et puis amors ke ie port
And since love that I bear
me fait plus ke moi amer,
me makes more than me love
vos per diu doit il membrer,
you by God ought it remind
k'en gentil cuer doit on trover Merchi.
that-in noble heart ought one to-find Mercy

En perilleuse aventure
In perilous adventure
m'aves, amors, atorne,
me-have-you love turned
quant por vos n'a de moi cure
since for you not-has of me care
chele ou vos m'aves done.
she where you me-have given
Mors me sui par vostre gre;
Dead myself I-am by your will
grant honte i ares por voir,
great shame there you-will-have for true
se ne la faites doloir
if not her you-make grieve
tant ke degnast de moi avoir Merchi.
so-much that she-would-deign on me to-have Mercy

La merchis m'est si oscure,
The mercy to-me-is so obscure
ke ie ne la puis veoir;
that I not it can see
ke tant desir sa faiture
that so-much I-desire her form
et sa maniere a savoir,
and her manner to know
ke ie cuit au mien espoir,
that I think at-the mine hope
k'entre merchi et biaute
that-between mercy and beauty
sont por moi desassemble,
are for me separated
quant en vos dame n'ai trove Merchi.
since in you lady not-I-have found Mercy

Grans pechies est et grans paine,
Great sin it-is and great pain
d'amours servir faintement,
of-love to-serve feignedly
si com la fausse gent vaine
so as the false folk vain
ki font semblant sens talent.
who make semblance without desire
Et dius, por coi le consent,
And God for what it consents
k'il sevent si bel mentir?
that-they know so fair to-lie

Et ie ki aim a morir,
And I who love to die
ne sai c'un mot, tant la desir: Merchi!
not know but-one word so-much her I-desire Mercy

Moult fait l'amors ke vilaine
Much does the-love as churlish
ki comenche por faillir;
which begins for to-fail
car plus ke mors est grevaine,
for more than death is grievous
quant il la convient guerpir.
when it her behooves to-abandon
Mius ne puet ele traïr
Better not can it betray
chelui ou ele se prent,
him where it itself takes
roi en fait et puis noient:
king thereof it-makes and then nothing
dame por che k'a vos me rent: Merchi!
lady for this that-to you myself I-render Mercy

En aventure commens

V · IN HAZARD I BEGIN

He begins what may be his last song, not knowing whether he lives or loves, yet he thinks without regret of the best lady in France. Felons pry, so he will hide his distress. He never loved in order to repent, and he has given her his heart, body, strength, and power; she can fulfill his will.

En aventure commens
In hazard I-begin
ma daerraine canchon,
my last song
si ne sui lies ne dolens,
so not I-am glad nor sorrowful
ne ne sai, se vif ou non,
nor not I-know if I-live or not
ou se i'ai tort ou raison,
or if I-have wrong or right
ou se i'aim ou ch'est noiens;
or if I-love or this-is nothing
mais iteus est mes talens,
but such is my desire
ke sens nule repentanche
that without any repentance
pens a la millor de Franche.
I-think of the best of France

Et li tres dous pensemens
And the very sweet thought
de sa tres clere fachon
of her very bright fashion
me fait renovelemens
me makes renewals
de tote ioie sens non;
of all joy without name
mais tant enquierent felon,
but so-much inquire felons
losengier et males gens:
flatterers and evil folk
mais ensi l'ai en porpens,
but thus it-I-have in purpose
ke por mal ne por grevanche
that for ill nor for grievance
ne saront ma mesestanche.
not they-will-know my distress

Ainc n'amai a repentir,
Ever not-I-loved to repent
et ia ne le quier savoir,
and ever not it I-seek to-know
ains ai mis en li servir
rather I-have put in her serving
cuer et cors, forche et pooir;
heart and body strength and power
et s'ele me fait doloir,
and if-she me makes grieve
bien le me porra merir;
well it to-me she-will-be-able to-reward
k'ele a pooir d'acomplir
for-she has power of-accomplishing
mon voloir tote ma vie,
my will all my life
ma tres douche ciere amie.
my very sweet dear friend

Je cantasse volentiers liement

VI · I WOULD SING GLADLY

Love wants him to love and not attain. Love chose the most beautiful lady, whose fault is to turn her eyes from him; her pride kills him, for she was born without mercy. He cannot leave her, since Love holds his will. Nothing is as cruel as a fair face over a felon heart, and he will leave Love's prison only dead or loved.

Je cantasse volentiers liement,
I would-sing willingly gladly
se ie trovasse en mon cuer l'ocaison;
if I found in my heart the-occasion
mais ie ne puis dire, se ie ne ment,
but I not can say if I not lie
k'aie d'amors nule riens s'ire non:
that-I-have from-love any thing except-anger not
por che ne puis faire lie canchon;
for this not I-can make glad song
k'amors le me desensaigne,
for-love it me unteaches
ki veut ke i'aim et ne veut ke i'ataigne;
which wishes that I-love and not wishes that I-attain
ensi me tient amors en desespoir,
thus me holds love in despair
ke ne m'ochit ne ne lait ioie avoir.
that not me-it-kills nor not lets joy have

Je ne doi pas amors grant mal voloir,
I not ought at-all love great ill to-wish
s'a la plus bele del mont mon cuer rent;
if-to the most fair of-the world my heart it-renders
c'onkes biautes ne fist si son pooir,
for-ever beauty not did so its power
d'estre en un liu si esmereement,
of-being in one place so purely
com ele a fait en son tres bel cors gent:
as it has done in her very fair body gracious
ne riens k'a grant biaute taigne
nor anything that-to great beauty may-pertain
ne truis, k'en li n'en sa fachon sofraigne,
not I-find that-in her nor-in her fashion may-lack
fors c'un petit li messiet — che m'est vis —
except that-a little to-her it-misbecomes this to-me-is seeming
che ke trop tient ses ieus de moi eskis.
this that too-much she-holds her eyes from me averted

Quant ie regart son debonaire vis,
When I look-at her gracious face
et ie la pri sens bel respons avoir,
and I her pray without fair answer to-have
n'est merveille s'en l'esgart m'esbahis,
not-is marvel if-in the-looking myself-I-dismay
quant g'i conois ma mort et sai de voir.
when I-there know my death and know of truth
Puis ke merchis ne m'i deigne valoir,
Since that mercy not me-there deigns to-avail

ne sai ou nul confort praigne;
not I-know where any comfort I-may-take
car ses orgueus m'ochit et li mehaigne.
for her pride me-kills and it maims
Ha douche riens crueus, tant mar vos vi,
Ah sweet thing cruel so in-an-ill-hour you I-saw
quant por ma mort nasquistes sens merchi!
since for my death you-were-born without mercy

Ke ferai dius, partirai moi de li,
What shall-I-do God I-shall-part myself from her
ains ke s'amor me par ait tot ochis?
before that her-love me indeed may-have wholly killed
Nenil voir las! il ne puet estre ensi:
No truly alas it not can be thus
k'amors me tient et ma volente pris,
for-love me holds and my will taken
ki a mon cuer en li por amer mis.
which has my heart in her for loving put
Ne iamais tant ne mespraigne,
Nor ever so-much not may-she-err
ke sens merchi ou sens mort en revaigne!
that without mercy or without death thence I-may-return
K'asses aim mius morir en douc consir,
For-much I-love better to-die in sweet privation
ke vivre iries et ma vie hair.
than to-live angered and my life to-hate

Des ke mes cuers ne s'en veut revenir
Since that my heart not itself-thence wishes to-return
de vos, dame, por cui il m'a guerpi,
from you lady for whom it me-has abandoned
aumosne ares, sel degnies retenir:
alms you-will-have if-it you-deign to-retain
car s'il revient, a moi a il failli.
for if-it returns to me has it failed
Por vostre honor et por diu vos en pri,
For your honor and for God you thereof I-pray
ke de lui pitie vos praigne;
that of it pity you may-take
k'il n'afiert pas a vos ke riens s'en plaigne,
for-it not-befits at-all to you that anything itself-thereof may-complain
k'el mont n'a voir si cruel traïson,
for-in-the world not-there-is truly so cruel treason
com bel semblant et corage felon.
as fair semblance and heart felonious

Dame, coment k'il m'en praigne,
Lady how-ever that-it to-me-thereof may-take
merchi amor de cho k'ele me daigne
I-thank love for this that-she me deigns
tenir a suen, ne ia de sa prison
to-hold as hers nor ever from her prison
ne quier issir, se mors ou ames non.
not I-seek to-go-out except dead or loved not

La douche vois del rosignol salvage

VII · THE NIGHTINGALE'S VOICE

The nightingale's song makes him sing for the lady he serves as liege. Her beauty takes away his speech, and not even Tristan, who drank the potion, loved so heartily. His eyes chose her, and his heart stayed with her as a hostage. He sends the song where he dares not go and curses the suspicious slanderers.

La douche vois del rosignol salvage
The sweet voice of-the nightingale wild
k'oi nuit et ior chointoier et tentir
which-I-hear night and day warble and resound
me radouchist mon cuer et rassoage:
to-me sweetens my heart and soothes
lors ai talent ke cant por esbaudir.
then I-have desire that I-sing for to-rejoice
Bien doi canter, puis k'il vient a plaisir
Well I-ought to-sing since that-it comes to pleasure
chele cui i'ai de cuer fait lige homage,
to-her to-whom I-have with heart done liege homage
si doi avoir grant ioie en mon corage,
so I-ought to-have great joy in my heart
s'ele me veut a son oes retenir.
if-she me wishes to her use to-retain

Onkes vers li n'oi faus cuer ne volage,
Ever toward her not-I-had false heart nor fickle
si m'en devroit per cho mius avenir,
so to-me-thereof ought by this better to-befall

ains l'aim et serf et aor par usage,
rather her-I-love and serve and adore by usage
si ne li os mon penser descovrir;
yet not to-her I-dare my thought to-uncover
car sa biautes me fait si esbahir,
for her beauty me makes so be-dismayed
ke ie ne sai devant li nul langage,
that I not know before her any language
ne regarder n'os son simple visage:
nor look-at not-I-dare her simple face
tant en redout mes ieus a departir.
so-much thereof I-fear my eyes to part

Tant ai vers li ferm assis mon corage,
So-much I-have toward her firm set my heart
k'aillors ne pens, et dius m'en laist ioir!
that-elsewhere not I-think and God me-thereof may-let enjoy
K'onkes Tristans, chil ki but le buvrage,
For-ever Tristan he who drank the potion
si coraument n'ama sens repentir;
so heartily not-loved without repenting
ke g'i met tot, cuer et cors et desir,
for I-there put all heart and body and desire
sens et savoir, ne sai se fas folage;
sense and knowledge not I-know if I-do folly
encor me dout, k'en trestot mon eage
still myself I-fear that-in all-wholly my life
ne puisse asses li et s'amour servir.
not I-may enough her and her-love serve

Je ne di pas, ke ie fache folage,
I not say at-all that I may-do folly
nis se por li me devoie morir;
even if for her myself I-were-to die
k'el mont ne truis si bele ne si sage,
for-in-the world not I-find so fair nor so wise
ne nule riens n'est tant a mon plaisir.
nor any thing not-is so-much to my pleasure
Moult aim mes ieus ki m'i firent choisir:
Much I-love my eyes which me-there made choose
lues ke la vi, li laissai en ostage
as-soon that her I-saw to-her I-left in hostage
mon cuer ki puis i a fait lonc estage,
my heart which since there has made long stay
ne iamais ior ne l'en quier departir.
nor ever day not it-thence I-seek to-part

Canchon, va t'en, por faire mon message,
Song go thee-thence for to-make my message
la ou ie n'os trestorner ne guencir:
there where I not-dare turn-aside nor swerve
ke tant redout la male gent ombrage
for so-much I-fear the evil folk suspicious
ki devinent, ains ke puist avenir,
who guess before that it-may happen
les biens d'amors. Dius les puist maleir!
the good-things of-love God them may curse
K'a maint amant ont fait ire et outrage,
For-to many-a lover they-have done anger and outrage
mais de ch'ai ie tos iors mal avantage,
but of this-have I all days ill advantage
k'il les m'estuet sur mon gre obeir.
that-it them me-behooves against my will to-obey

L'an ke rose ne fuelle

VIII · WHEN NO ROSE APPEARS

When no rose or birdsong appears, his heart flowers in a love he will never leave. He loves what he cannot have, and reason forbids it unless Love conquers. He cannot live without his lady. Love frightens and cheers him by turns, perhaps to test him. Far from her, he comforts himself with her words.

L'an ke rose ne fuelle
The-year when rose nor leaf
ne flor ne voi paroir,
nor flower not I-see appear
ke n'oi canter par bruelle
when not-I-hear sing through wood
oisiaus n'au main n'au soir,
birds nor-at-the morning nor-at-the evening
adonc florist mes cuers en un voloir,
then flowers my heart in one will
en bone amor ki m'a en son pooir,
in good love which me-has in its power
dont ia ne quier issir;
whence ever not I-seek to-go-out
et s'il est nus ki m'en vuelle partir,
and if-there is anyone who me-thence may-wish to-part
nel quier ie ia savoir, ne dius nel vuelle!
not-it seek I ever to-know nor God not-it may-wish

Bien est drois ke m'en duelle,
Well is right that myself-thereof I-grieve
quant ma dolor desir;
when my grief I-desire
ke i'aim plus ke ne suelle
for I-love more than — I-am-wont
che dont ne puis ioir:
this whereof not I-can enjoy
et bien conois ke n'i doi avenir;
and well I-know that not-there I-ought to-attain
s'amors ne vaint raison, g'i doi faillir:
if-love not conquers reason I-there ought to-fail
che sai ie tot de voir.
this know I wholly of truth
Por diu, amors, faites en noncaloir
For God love make in neglect
metre raison, tant k'ele mi acuelle!
put reason so-much that-she me may-receive

Dame, nus maus ke i'aie
Lady any ill that I-may-have
ne criem fors alegier;
not I-fear except lightening
car sens vos ne porroie
for without you not I-could
vivre, ne ie nel quier.
live nor I not-it seek
Sens vos amer n'a ma vie mestier,
Without you loving not-has my life use

se ie ne vueil tot le mont enuier,
if I not wish all the world to-weary
ou aler mort vivant.
or to-go dead living
Ja damedius ne m'i laist vivre tant,
Ever Lord-God not me-there may-let live so-long
k'au siecle enui et perde amor veraie!
that-to-the world I-be-irksome and lose love true

Par mainte fois m'effroie
By many-a time me-frightens
amors et foit pensant,
love and makes pensive
et sovent me rapaie
and often me appeases-again
et done cuer ioiant:
and gives heart joyful
ensi me fait vivre mesleement
thus me makes live mingledly
d'ire et de ioie; ne sai s'ele a talent,
of-anger and of joy not I-know if-it has desire
ke me vuelle essaier,
that me it-may-wish to-test
ou se le fait de gre por moi irier,
or if it does by will for me to-anger
por esprover, se por mal recreroie.
for to-prove if for ill I-would-give-up

Mainte longue semaine
Many-a long week
trai, quant sui loing de li,
I-bear when I-am far from her
et passant a grant paine:
and passing with great pain
sovent les en maudi.
often them thereof I-curse
Je n'en puis riens, las; car ie desir si
I not-thereof can anything alas for I desire so
a rechevoir cheli dont pas n'obli
to receive her whom at-all not-I-forget
les mos ne les semblans,
the words nor the semblances
ains m'i recort et m'i sui remembrans,
rather myself-there I-recall and myself-there am remembering
si m'i confort quant ele m'est lointaine.
so myself-there I-comfort when she to-me-is distant

Li noviaus tens et mais et violete

IX · THE NEW SEASON

Spring bids him sing, and he prays to hold his lady once in his arms before he goes over the sea. Her gray eyes captured him, and she will not release him from a single sigh. She, his false friend, laughs while he weeps, and just as he was to have his reward, felons exposed his love. May they never be pardoned.

Li noviaus tens et mais et violete,
The new season and May and violet
et rosignols me semont de canter,
and nightingale me summons to singing
et mes fins cuers me fait d'une amorete
and my true heart me makes of-a little-love
si douc present, ke ne l'os refuser.
so sweet present that not it-I-dare refuse
Or me laist dius en tel honor monter,
Now me may-let God into such honor rise
ke chele ou i'ai mon cuer et mon penser,
that her where I-have my heart and my thought
tiegne une fois entre mes bras nuete,
I-may-hold one time between my arms naked
ains ke voise outre mer!
before that I-go beyond sea

Au comenchier la trovai si douchete,
At-the beginning her I-found so sweet
ja ne cuidai por li mal endurer,
ever not I-thought for her ill to-endure

mais ses dous vis et sa bele boucete,
but her sweet face and her fair little-mouth
et si bel oil vair et riant et cler
and her fair eyes gray and laughing and bright
m'orent ains pris ke ne m'i soi doner;
me-had before taken that not myself-there I-knew to-give
se ne mi veut retenir et quiter,
if not me she-wishes to-retain and release
mius aim a li faillir, si me promete,
better I-love with her to-fail so me she-may-promise
k'a une autre acever.
than-with an other to-achieve

De mil sospirs ke ie li doi par dete
Of thousand sighs that I to-her owe by debt
ne me veut ele un seul cuite clamer,
not me wishes she one single quit to-declare
ne fausse amors ne laist ke s'entremete,
nor false love not lets that itself-it-meddle
ne ne mi laist dormir ne reposer.
nor not me lets sleep nor rest
S'ele m'ochist, mains aura a garder,
If-she me-kills less she-will-have to guard
je ne m'en sai vengier fors au plorer;
I not myself-thereof know to-avenge except by-the weeping
car cui amors destruit et desirete
for whom love destroys and disinherits
ne s'en set on clamer.
not himself-thereof knows one to-complain

Sor tote ioie est chele coronee,
Above all joy is that-one crowned
ki d'amors vient: dius, i faudrai ie don?
which from-love comes God there shall-fail I then
Oil par dieu, tels est ma destinee,
Yes by God such is my destiny
car tel destin m'i donent li felon;
for such destiny to-me-there give the felons
si sevent bien k'il font grant mesprison:
yet they-know well that-they do great wrong
car ki che tout, dont ne puet faire don,
for who this takes whereof not he-can make gift
il en conquiert anemis et mellee,
he thereby wins enemies and strife
n'i fait se perdre non.
not-there does except to-lose not

Las, por coi l'ai de mes ieus regardee,
Alas for what her-I-have with my eyes looked-at
la douche riens ki fausse amie a non?
the sweet thing who false friend has name
Ele me rit, et ie l'ai tant ploree,
She at-me laughs and I her-have so-much wept
si douchement ne fu traïs nus hon.
so sweetly not was betrayed any man
Tant con fu miens, ne me fist se bien non,
As-long as it-was mine not to-me it-did except good not

mais or sui suens, si m'ochist sens raison
but now I-am its so me-it-kills without reason
et por itant ke de cuer l'ai amee:
and for so-much that with heart her-I-have loved
n'i set autre acoison,
not-there knows other occasion

si coiement est ma dolors chelee,
so quietly is my grief hidden
k'a mon semblant ne la reconnoist on,
that-by my semblance not it recognizes one
se ne fussent la gent maleuree,
if not were the folk ill-fated
n'eusse pas sospire en pardon,
not-I-would-have at-all sighed in vain
amors m'eust done son gueredon.
love me-would-have given its reward
Mais en cel point ke dui avoir mon don,
But in that point when I-was-to to-have my gift
lor fu m'amors ensegnie et mostree,
then was my-love pointed-out and shown
ja n'aient il pardon!
ever not-may-have they pardon

Merchi clamans de mon fol errement

X · CRYING MERCY

Crying mercy for his folly, he ends his songs, for his own heart has betrayed him, and his songs fail with his joy. He asks lovers which deserves love more, the loyal lover or the cunning deceiver. His lady seeks only his harm. Dying, he forgives her and returns his heart to her.

Merchi clamans de mon fol errement
Mercy crying for my foolish wandering
ferai la fin de mes canchons oir;
I-shall-make the end of my songs hear
car traï m'a et mort a escient
for betrayed me-has and killed with knowledge
mes iolis cuers ke ie doi tant haïr:
my merry heart which I ought so-much to-hate
chest mal m'a fait por le gre d'autre gent,
this ill me-has done for the will of-other folk
tot sont parti de moi ioious talent,
all are parted from me joyful desires
et quant ioie me faut, bien est raisons,
and when joy me fails well is reason
k'avec ma ioie faillent mes canchons.
that-with my joy fail my songs

Bien sai, k'il est lius et poins et saisons,
Well I-know that-it is place and point and season
k'a tos les biens d'amors doie faillir;
that-at all the good-things of-love I-ought to-fail

car porquis l'ai, et moie est l'acoisons,
for sought-out it-I-have and mine is the-occasion
et ki mal quiert, il doit bien mal soffrir.
and who ill seeks he ought well ill to-suffer
Dius doint ke mors en soit mes gueredons,
God may-grant that death thereof be my reward
ains ke de moi fache lies les felons,
before that of me he-may-make glad the felons
mais por mon pis vivrai et por veoir
but for my worse I-shall-live and for to-see
ma bele perte et por plus mal avoir.
my fair loss and for more ill to-have

A tos amans pri k'il dient le voir:
To all lovers I-pray that-they tell the truth
liquels doit mius par droit d'amors ioir,
which ought better by right of-love to-enjoy
ou chil ki aime de cuer a son pooir
either he who loves with heart to his power
et ne s'en set mie tres bien covrir,
and not himself-thereof knows at-all very well to-cover
ou chil ki prie sens cuer por dechevoir,
or he who prays without heart for to-deceive
et bien s'en set partir par son savoir?
and well himself-thence knows to-part by his knowledge
Dites, amant, ki vaut mius par raison,
Say lovers which is-worth better by reason
loial folie ou sage traison?
loyal folly or wise treason

S'ainc nus amans ot de mesfait pardon,
If-ever any lover had for misdeed pardon
dont m'i devroit amors bon liu tenir;
then me-there ought love good place to-hold
car ie forfis en bone entention
for I trespassed in good intention
et bien cuidai, ke m'en deust merir.
and well I-thought that me-thereof she-ought to-reward
Mais ma dame ne quiert se mon mal non,
But my lady not seeks except my ill not
por che si hac moi et ma garison,
for this so I-hate me and my cure
et quant mi mal li sont bel et plaisans,
and since my ills to-her are fair and pleasing
por ceu me hac et sui mes mal vueillans.
for this myself I-hate and am my ill wisher

He france riens, por cui ie muir amans,
Ah noble thing for whom I die loving
faites amors en vos plus bel fenir!
make love in you more fairly end
Sur totes fins est che la mius vaillans,
Above all ends is this the best worth
et neporquant s'en puis ie bien mentir:
and nevertheless so-thereof can I well lie
car fins d'amors ne puet estre avenans,
for end of-love not can be fitting
se mors nes part; por che morrai souffrans,
if death not-them parts for this I-shall-die suffering

et canterai senz ioie et sens finer,
and I-shall-sing without joy and without ending
ke plus ne doi a fin d'amors penser.
for more not I-ought of end of-love to-think

De pou me sert ki me veut conforter
Of little me serves who me wishes to-comfort
d'autrui amer, mius l'en varoit taisir;
of-another to-love better to-him-thereof would-be-worth to-keep-silent
car en mon cuer ne porroie trover,
for in my heart not I-could find
ke ie de li partisse mon desir.
that I from her might-part my desire
Se che me fait, ke me vueille grever,
If this me she-does that me she-may-wish to-grieve
puis ke s'amor m'a faite comparer,
since that her-love me-she-has made pay-for
tot li perdoin a mon definement,
all to-her I-pardon at my ending
et quant mon cors li toil, mon cuer li rent.
and when my body from-her I-take my heart to-her I-render

Moult m'est bele la douche comencanche

XI · THE SWEET BEGINNING

In spring he adores his fair death or his high fortune, not knowing which, and sings where he weeps. If her looks lie, she will kill him like a traitor; her eyes struck his heart without a challenge. He will never give up loving her. A small gift given promptly is worth more than a hundred given grudgingly.

Moult m'est bele la douche comencanche
Very to-me-is fair the sweet beginning
del novel tens a l'entrant de pascor,
of-the new season at the-entry of springtime
ke bois et pre sont de mainte semblanche,
when woods and meadows are of many-a semblance
vert et vermeil, covert d'erbe et de flor.
green and red covered with-grass and with flower
Et ie sui, las, de che en tel balanche,
And I am wretched of this in such balance
k'a mains iointes aor
that-with hands joined I-adore
ma bele mort ou ma haute richor,
my fair death or my high riches
ne sai lekel, s'en ai ioie et paor,
not I-know which so-thereof I-have joy and fear
si ke sovent cant la ou de cuer plor;
so that often I-sing there where with heart I-weep
car lons respis m'esmaie et mesceanche.
for long respite me-dismays and mischance

Ja de mon cuer n'istra mais la semblanche,
Ever from my heart not-will-go more the semblance
dont me conquist as mos plains de doucor
whereby me won with-the words full of sweetness
chele cui i'ai tos iors en remembranche,
she whom I-have all days in remembrance
si ke mes cuers ne sert d'autre labor.
so that my heart not serves of-other labor
Ha douche riens, en cui i'ai ma fianche,
Ah sweet thing in whom I-have my trust
merchi por vostre honor!
mercy for your honor
Car s'en vos truis le semblant menteor,
For if-in you I-find the semblance lying
mort m'averies a loi de traitor,
killed me-you-would-have in manner of traitor
si en vaudroit noaus vostre valor,
so thereby would-be-worth worse your worth
se m'ochiies ensi per dechevanche.
if me-you-killed thus by deceit

Dius, con m'a mort de debonaire lanche,
God how me-has killed with gracious lance
s'ensi me fait morir a tel dolor!
if-thus me she-makes die in such grief
De ses biaus ieus me vint sens deffianche
With her fair eyes me she-came without defiance
ferir el cuer, ke n'i ot autre tor:
to-strike in-the heart for not-there was other turn

moult volentiers en presisse venianche,
very willingly thereof I-would-take vengeance
par diu le creator!
by God the creator
Tel ke mil fois la peusse le ior
Such that thousand times her I-could the day
ferir el cuer d'autretele savor,
strike in-the heart with-such-another savor
ne ia chertes n'en feïsse clamor,
nor ever certainly not-thereof I-would-make complaint
se i'eusse de moi vengier poissanche.
if I-had of me avenging power

Ne cuidies pas, dame, ke ie recroie
Not think at-all lady that I may-give-up
de vos amer, se mors nel me defent;
of you loving if death not-it me forbids
car fine amors tient mon cuer et maistroie
for true love holds my heart and masters
ki tot me done a vos entierement,
which all me gives to you entirely
si ke ie n'ai de moi confort ne ioie,
so that I not-have of me comfort nor joy
et k'il m'avient sovent,
and that-it to-me-happens often
ke ie m'obli pensant entre la gent;
that I myself-forget thinking among the folk

et tel delit ai en mon pensement
and such delight I-have in my thinking
de vos, dame, a cui amors me rent,
of you lady to whom love me renders
ke, s'a vous n'ert, ia parler ne querroie.
that if-to you not-were ever to-speak not I-would-seek

He! france riens, puis k'en vostre manaie
Ah noble thing since that-in your power
me sui tos mis, trop me secores lent;
myself I-am wholly put too me you-succor slowly
car dons n'est pas cortois c'on trop delaie,
for gift not-is at-all courteous that-one too-much delays
si s'en esmaie chil ki s'i atent;
so himself-thereof dismays he who himself-thereto waits
k'uns petis biens vaut mius, se dius me voie,
for-a little good is-worth better so God me may-see
k'on fait cortoisement,
which-one does courteously
ke cent greignor fait enuiousement:
than hundred greater done irksomely
car ki le sien done retraianment,
for who the his gives grudgingly
son gre en pert, et si coste ensement,
his thanks thereof loses and yet costs likewise
come fait chil ki bonement otroie.
as does he who gladly grants

Canchon, va t'en la ou mes cuers t'envoie,
Song go thee-thence there where my heart thee-sends
— ne l'os dire autrement —
not it-I-dare say otherwise
la troveras, se mes sens ne me ment,
there thou-wilt-find if my sense not me lies
cors sens merchi, graille et gras, blanc et gent,
body without mercy slender and plump white and gracious
simple et cortois, de bel contenement,
simple and courteous of fair bearing
et vis riant et grant biaute veraie.
and face laughing and great beauty true

Novele amor, ou i'ai mis mon penser

XII · NEW LOVE

A new love makes him sing of the most gracious lady in the world. If she proves proud and gives no reward, he will hate all joy, but please God it will not happen. He blames only her eyes and face, though nothing in her displeases him. She can read his love in him, and his heart lies in her gracious prison.

Novele amor, ou i'ai mis mon penser,
New love where I-have put my thought
me fait canter de la plus debonaire
me makes sing of the most gracious
k'on puist el mont ne veoir ne trover,
that-one may in-the world either see or find
si m'en semont mes cuers de ioie faire;
so me-thereof summons my heart of joy to-make
et quant i'ai mis en li m'entention,
and since I-have put in her my-intention
dont ne doi ie canter se de li non,
then not ought I to-sing except of her not
tuit mi penser sont a ma douche amie,
all my thoughts are to my sweet friend
puis ke ie sai mon cuer en sa baillie.
since that I know my heart in her keeping

Et quant mes cuers s'est mis en li amer,
And since my heart itself-is put in her loving
je ne m'en puis mie tres bien retraire,
I not myself-thence can at-all very well withdraw

ains me covient otroier et graer
rather me behooves to-grant and to-agree
les volentes de mon cuer sens desfaire.
the wills of my heart without undoing
Et se ie truis ma dame o le douc non
And if I find my lady with the sweet name
plaine d'orguel, sens nis un gueredon,
full of-pride without even one reward
donkes ai ie tote ioie enhaie,
then have I all joy hated
mais, se diu plaist, che ne m'avenra mie.
but if God pleases this not to-me-will-happen at-all

Se ie trai mal, ie n'en sai cui blasmer,
If I bear ill I not-thereof know whom to-blame
fors ses dous ieus et son simple viaire,
except her sweet eyes and her simple face
dont mi oeil sont trai en esgarder;
whereby my eyes are betrayed in looking
mais n'i voient riens ki fache a desplaire,
but not-there they-see anything which may-be to displease
n'en cors n'en bras, n'en boce n'en menton,
nor-in body nor-in arm nor-in mouth nor-in chin
fors sol itant k'ele ne me fait don
except only so-much that-she not to-me makes gift
de li amer por alongier ma vie:
of her loving for to-lengthen my life
s'ele le fait, che sera cortoisie.
if-she it does this will-be courtesy

Douche dame, ie ne vos os rover
Sweet lady I not you dare ask
che dont amors ne me roeve pas taire,
this whereof love not me asks at-all to-keep-silent
mais se vostre oeil, ou l'on se puet mirer,
but if your eyes where one oneself can mirror
— ki tant sont cler — ne mi sont deputaire,
which so are bright not to-me are ignoble
vos poes bien veoir a ma fachon
you can well see by my fashion
et a mes dis, ke ie n'aim se vos non,
and by my words that I not-love except you not
et ke mes cuers au vostre s'umelie
and that my heart to-the yours itself-humbles
ki de tote sa dolor vos merchie.
which of all its grief you thanks

De la dolor vos doi ie merchier,
For the grief you ought I to-thank
et des pensers ke vos m'i faites traire,
and for-the thoughts that you me-there make bear
k'ausi con vos le me poes doner
for-as as you it to-me can give
quant vos plaira, le me porres retraire;
when you it-will-please it from-me you-will-be-able to-withdraw
et quant ie sai en vos ma garison,
and since I know in you my cure
se ie vos aim, g'i ai asses raison,
if I you love I-there have much reason

mais quant i'arai de vos hair envie,
but when I-shall-have of you hating desire
ja puis honor n'aie ior de ma vie!
ever then honor not-may-I-have day of my life

Douche dame, debonaire prison
Sweet lady gracious prison
aves done mon fin cuer ki vos prie,
you-have given my true heart which you prays
ke vostres soit sens point de vilonie.
that yours it-may-be without a-whit of churlishness

Quant li estes et la douche saisons

XIII · WHEN SUMMER COMES

When summer brings birdsong, others sing and he weeps, though he means only to serve his lady. Even with Solomon's wisdom, Love would make him a fool. He blames the slanderers she believes. He never flattered her and asks only that she think of rewarding him, as he thinks of serving her.

Quant li estes et la douche saisons
When the summer and the sweet season
fait fuelle et flor et les pres raverdir,
makes leaf and flower and the meadows grow-green-again
et li dous cans des menus oisillons
and the sweet song of-the little birds
fait as plusors de ioie sovenir,
makes to-the most of joy remember
las, cascuns cante et ie plor et sospir,
alas each sings and I weep and sigh
et si n'est pas droiture ne raisons,
and yet not-is at-all right nor reason
ains est ades tote m'ententions,
rather is ever all my-intention
dame, de vos honorer et servir.
lady of you honoring and serving

Se i'avoie le sens k'ot Salemons,
If I-had the sense that-had Solomon
si me feroit amors por fol tenir;
yet me would-make love for fool be-held

car tant est fors et crueus sa prisons
for so is strong and cruel its prison
k'ele me fait essaier et sentir.
which-it me makes try and feel
Bien me deust repasser et garir,
Well me she-ought to-restore and to-heal
et enseignier kels est ma garisons,
and to-teach what is my cure
car i'ai servi longuement en perdons,
for I-have served long in vain
et servirai ades sens repentir.
and I-shall-serve ever without repenting

Moult me merveil, kels est li ocoisons,
Much myself I-marvel what is the occasion
k'ele me fait si longuement languir:
that-she me makes so long languish
je sai moult bien, k'ele croit les felons,
I know very well that-she believes the felons
les losengiers cui dius puist maleir!
the flatterers whom God may curse
Tote lor paine ont mis en moi trair,
All their pain they-have put in me betraying
mais ne lor vaut lor mortels traisons,
but not to-them avails their mortal treason
quant il sauront keus iert li gueredons,
when they will-know what will-be the reward
dame, de vos cui ainc ne seu mentir.
lady from you to-whom ever not I-knew to-lie

Ainc ne la seu losengier ne flater,
Ever not her I-knew to-cajole nor to-flatter
ne ia dius sens ne m'en doint ne talent,
nor ever God sense not me-thereof may-give nor desire
mais ma dame servir et honorer
but my lady to-serve and to-honor
et faire ades tot son comandement.
and to-do ever all her command
Et sachies bien, se biaus servirs ne ment,
And know well if fair serving not lies
ou li miens cuers ki bien me puet grever,
or the mine heart which well me can grieve
ke tos les biens c'on puet avoir d'amer
that all the good-things that-one can have of-loving
ara mes cuers ki ades s'i atent.
will-have my heart which ever itself-thereto waits

Se vos deignies ma priere escouter,
If you deign my prayer to-hear
douche dame, ie vos pri et demant,
sweet lady I you pray and ask
ke vos penses de moi gueredoner,
that you think of me rewarding
je penserai de bien servir avant.
I shall-think of well serving forward
De tos les biens ke i'ai ne m'est noiant;
Of all the goods that I-have not to-me-is anything
douche dame, se me voles amer,
sweet lady if me you-wish to-love
en poi de tens poes gueredoner
in little of time you-can reward
les biens d'amors ke i'ai attendus tant.
the good-things of-love that I-have awaited so-long

Quant voi venir le bel tens et la flor

XIV · WHEN I SEE FAIR WEATHER

When fair weather comes, he remembers a sweet grief and the place his heart yearns for; the farther he is, the nearer his heart. Her gray eyes and face have bound him. He asks her for mercy and not vengeance, since he is hers forever. He asks God how to win her mercy, which she would grant if she knew how her love governs him.

Quant voi venir le bel tens et la flor,
When I-see come the fair season and the flower
ke l'erbe vert s'espant aval la pree,
when the-grass green itself-spreads down the meadow
lors me sovient d'une douche dolor,
then to-me comes-to-mind of-a sweet grief
et del douc liu, ou mes cuers tent et bee.
and of-the sweet place where my heart tends and yearns
S'ai tant de ioie et s'ai tant de doucor,
So-I-have so-much of joy and so-I-have so-much of sweetness
ke ie partir n'en porroie nul ior;
that I to-part not-thence could any day
et quant ie sui plus loins de sa contree,
and when I am more far from her country
tant est mes cuers plus pres et ma pensee.
so-much is my heart more near and my thought

Voir, il n'est riens dont ie soie en tristor,
Truly there not-is anything whereof I may-be in sadness
quant me sovient de la tres bele nee,
when to-me comes-to-mind of the very fair born-one

et si cuit bien ke ie fac grant folor,
and yet I-think well that I do great folly
ke mainte fois l'aurai dure trovee.
for many-a time her-I-shall-have hard found
Mais biaus semblans me remet en vigor,
But fair semblance me puts-back in vigor
s'emploierai moult bien la grant amor
so-I-shall-employ very well the great love
dont ie l'ai tant dedens mon cuer amee,
wherewith I her-have so-much within my heart loved
se loiautes m'i puet avoir duree.
if loyalty me-there can have endurance

Dius, tant mar vi ses vairs ius et son vis,
God so in-an-ill-hour I-saw her gray eyes and her face
por coi mes cuers se mist en l'acointanche,
for which my heart itself put in the-acquaintance
che est la riens dont ie sui plus espris;
this is the thing whereby I am most kindled
se devers li ne vient ma delivranche,
if from her not comes my deliverance
douchement sui engignies et conquis;
sweetly I-am deceived and won
car s'ele veut, longuement serai pris.
for if-she wishes long I-shall-be taken
Nel di por che k'en soie en repentanche,
Not-it I-say for this that-thereof I-may-be in repentance
ne dius voloir ne m'en doint ne puissanche!
nor God will not me-thereof may-give nor power

Dame, merchi! se ie sui fins amis,
Lady mercy if I am true friend
n'esproves pas sor moi vostre venianche!
not-prove at-all on me your vengeance
Car vostres sui et serai a tos dis,
For yours I-am and I-shall-be at all days
n'en requerrai por mal ne por grevanche.
not-thereof I-shall-ask for ill nor for grievance
Et se ie sui de vostre amor espris,
And if I am by your love kindled
douche dame, ne m'en doit estre pis,
sweet lady not to-me-thereof ought to-be worse
et se por vos ai paine et pesanche,
and if for you I-have pain and heaviness
ne me doit pas trop torner a grevanche.
not to-me ought at-all too-much to-turn to grievance

Biaus sire dius, coment porrai avoir
Fair lord God how shall-I-be-able to-have
cheste merchi ke tant aurai requise?
this mercy that so-much I-shall-have entreated
Ja nel deust ne sofrir ne voloir
Ever not-it she-ought nor to-suffer nor to-wish
la douche riens, ki tant est bien apprise.
the sweet thing who so is well taught
Puis k'ele m'a du tot a son voloir,
Since that-she me-has of-the all at her will
ke me feist si longuement doloir?
that me she-should-make so long grieve
S'ele seust com s'amors me iostise,
If-she knew how her-love me governs
ja ne fausist pities ne l'en fust prise.
ever not would-fail pity — her-thereof would-be taken

Tant ne me sai dementer ne complaindre

XV · I CANNOT LAMENT ENOUGH

No lament eases his grief or quenches his heart's flame. He does penance for a lady who knows his love and lets him languish, and only she can deliver him. He finds only resistance, yet he hopes, since water wears through stone. Her face of rose and lily dismays him, and he begs her to let pity overcome justice.

Tant ne me sai dementer ne complaindre,
So-much not myself I-know to-lament nor to-complain
ke puisse avoir de ma dolor solas,
that I-may have of my grief solace
ne de mon cuer ne puis la flame estaindre,
nor of my heart not I-can the flame quench
dont tante fois me claim dolent et las.
whereof so-many times myself I-call sorrowful and wretched
Chele m'ochit vers cui ne me sai faindre,
She me-kills toward whom not myself I-know to-hold-back
ains sui tos tens en paine et en porcas,
rather I-am all time in pain and in pursuit
se ia porai iusk'a s'amor ataindre.
if ever I-shall-be-able unto her-love to-attain

Tant fac por li greveuse penitanche,
So-much I-do for her grievous penance
ke tos iors sui en plor et en sospir,
that all days I-am in weeping and in sighing
et si set bien ke ie l'aim sens doutanche,
and yet she-knows well that I her-love without doubt

tant com li plaist, me puet faire languir.
as-long as to-her pleases me she-can make languish
Ja par autrui n'i arai delivranche,
Ever by another not-there I-shall-have deliverance
se n'est par li ke tant aim et desir,
if not-it-is by her whom so-much I-love and desire
ke tot i met mon cuer et m'esperanche.
for all there I-put my heart and my-hope

Ades amors me semont et atise,
Ever love me summons and stirs
de li amer, mais n'i truis fors dangier,
of her loving but not-there I-find except resistance
et si l'aim tant de fin cuer sens faintise,
and yet her-I-love so-much with true heart without feigning
ke ne me puis tenir de li priier.
that not myself I-can hold from her entreating
Ne sai se ia l'arai a moi conquise,
Not I-know if ever her-I-shall-have to me won
et ne por quant che me fait rehaitier,
and not for all-that this me makes cheer-again
ke l'aive seut perchier la pierre bise.
that the-water is-wont to-pierce the stone gray

Dame, mar vi le cler vis et la fache,
Lady in-an-ill-hour I-saw the bright face and the countenance
ou rose et lis florissent cascun ior!
where rose and lily flower each day

Tant m'esbahis ke ne sai ke ie fache,
So-much myself-I-dismay that not I-know what I may-do
quant ie regart vostre fresce color
when I look-at your fresh color
et vo dous front ki plus est clers ke glache.
and your sweet brow which more is bright than ice
Dame merchi, car a trop grant dolor
Lady mercy for in too great grief
muir et longuis: vostre pitie le sache!
I-die and languish your pity it may-know

Vainke pitie, douche dame, droiture,
May-conquer pity sweet lady justice
ne mi laissies morir a tel torment;
not me let die in such torment
tant par vos truis tos tens salvage et dure,
so much you I-find all time wild and hard
ke m'ochires se vos vient a talent.
that me-you-will-kill if to-you it-comes to desire
De vos penser ne puis faire mesure,
Of you thinking not I-can make measure
dame merchi, trop me secores lent,
lady mercy too me you-succor slowly
si me merveil con vostre cuers l'endure!
so myself I-marvel how your heart it-endures