OLD FRENCH SERIES · VOLUME 49

The Romance of Thebes

Le Roman de Thèbes

The Romance of Thebes

Part One: Oedipus and the Seven

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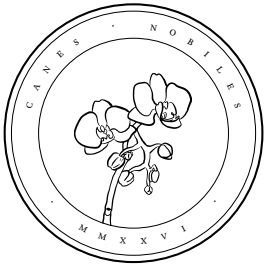
with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



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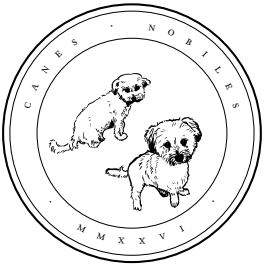

Volume 49 of the Canes Nobiles Old French interlinear texts

The Old French text follows L. Constans's text,
Le Roman de Thèbes, publié d'après tous les manuscrits (Société
des anciens textes français, Paris, 1890), t. I, verses 1–5172

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

The Romance of Thebes is printed as Constans establishes it from all the manuscripts, in the spelling he gives the poem; his verse paragraphs open on an indent, and the verse numbers in the margin, every fifth row, run on through both volumes. His square brackets supply a letter or word the manuscripts lack, and his parentheses mark one the verse does not sound. This first part runs from Oedipus to the death of Amphiaraus and the choice of his successor.

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Oedipus

I

The poet will tell, for clerks and knights only, of two brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, whom Oedipus begot on his own mother, and whose sin destroyed Thebes. King Laius, told by Apollo that a son will kill him, orders the newborn Oedipus killed. Jocasta laments. The serfs pity the smiling child and hang him by his pierced feet from an oak, where King Polybus of Phocis finds and raises him. Taunted as a foundling, Oedipus asks Apollo who his father is and is told he will learn it to his grief. At games near Phocis a quarrel breaks out, and Oedipus kills Laius, not knowing him. Near Thebes he answers the Sphinx's riddle of the beast that goes on four feet, then three, then two, then three and four again, and cuts off the monster's head.

Qui sages est nel deit celer,
Who wise is not-it ought conceal
ainz por ço deit son sen monstrer,
but for that ought his sense show
que, quant serra del siécle alez,
that when he-will-be from-the world gone
en seit pués toz jorz remembrez.
thereof he-be then all days remembered
Se danz Homers et danz Platon
If lord Homer and lord Plato
et Vergiles et Ciceron
and Virgil and Cicero
lor sapience celissant,
their wisdom had-concealed
ja ne fust d'eus parlé avant.
ever not would-have-been of-them spoken forward
Por ço ne vueil mon sen taisir,
For that not I-wish my sense to-keep-silent

ma sapience retenir;
my wisdom to-hold-back
ainz me delét a aconter
rather me pleases to recount
chose digne de remembrer.
thing worthy of remembering
Or s'en voisent de tot mestier,
Now themselves-thence let-go of all craft
se ne sont clerc o chevalier,
if not they-are clerk or knight
car aussi pueent escouter
for as-well they-can listen
come li asnes al harper.
as the ass to-the harper
Ne parlerai de peletiers,
Not I-shall-speak of furriers
ne de vilains, ne de berchiers;
nor of peasants nor of shepherds
mais de dous fréres vos dirai,
but of two brothers to-you I-shall-tell
et lor geste raconterai.
and their deeds I-shall-recount
Li uns ot non Ethioclès,
The one had name Eteocles
et li autres Polinicès.
and the other Polynices
Edipodès les engendra
Oedipus them begot
en la reïne Jocasta:
on the queen Jocasta

de sa mére les ot a tort,
of his mother them he-had at wrong
quant son pére le rei ot mort.
when his father the king he-had killed
Por le pechié dont sont criié,
For the sin whereof they-are born
furent felon et esragié:
they-were felon and maddened
Thèbes destruistrent lor cité
Thebes they-destroyed their city
et degastérent lor regné;
and laid-waste their realm
destruit en furent lor veisin,
destroyed thereby were their neighbors
et il ambedui en la fin.
and they both in the end
Des dous fréres ore a present
Of-the two brothers now at present
ne parlerai plus longement,
not I-shall-speak more long
car ma raison vueil comencier
for my tale I-wish to-begin
d'un lor aiuel dont vueil traitier.
of-a their grandfather of-whom I-wish to-treat
Lor aives ot non Laïus:
Their grandfather had name Laius
de Thèbes fu et reis et dus.
of Thebes he-was both king and duke

As deus ala por demander
To-the gods he-went for to-ask
qual fin li voudront destiner.
what end to-him they-would destine
Danz Apollo li a mandé,
Lord Apollo to-him has sent
par un respons que a doné,
by an answer which he-has given
que a present engenderra
that at present he-will-beget
un felon fil qui l'ocirra;
a felon son who him-will-kill
et ainz que fust li anz passez,
and before that were the year passed
Edipodès fu engendrez,
Oedipus was begotten
qui pués l'ocist a son pechié,
who then him-killed to his sin
si come il ert prophetizié.
so as it was prophesied
Li reis fu mout espoentez
The king was much terrified
por le respons qui fu donez;
for the answer which was given
ocirre comanda l'enfant
to-kill he-commanded the-child
tantost come il vendreit avant.
as-soon as he would-come forth
La mére plore et crie et brait,
The mother weeps and cries and wails

ses poinz detort, ses cheveus trait;
her fists she-wrings her hair she-pulls
pasmee chiet sor son enfant
swooned she-falls upon her child
et demeine dolor mout grant:
and leads grief very great
«Lasse, dolente, que ferai?
Weary grieving what shall-I-do
«Dolerose, que devendrai?
Grief-stricken what shall-I-become
«Chaitive rien, por quei nasquis?
Wretched thing for why was-I-born
«Pecheresse, por quei vesquis?
Sinner for why did-I-live
«Homecide coment serrai
Murderess how I-shall-be
«de mon enfant que jo portai?
of my child whom I carried
«Petiz enfes, por quei fus nez?
Little child for why wast-thou born
«Por quei fus onques engendrez?
For why wast-thou ever begotten
«Por qual forfait et por qual tort,
For what forfeit and for what wrong
«petiz enfes, recevras mort?
little child wilt-thou-receive death
«Ja n'iés tu pas fiz de putain,
Ever art-not thou at-all son of whore
«ne de moine, ne de nonain.
nor of monk nor of nun

«A! douce rien, mar te portai,
Ah sweet thing ill thee I-carried
«mar te norri, mar t'aletai!
ill thee I-nursed ill thee-I-suckled
«Et tis pére mar t'engendra,
And thy father ill thee-begot
«quant ocirre te comanda!
when to-kill thee he-commanded
«Blasmé serron tuit de ta mort,
Blamed we-shall-be all for thy death
«tis pére a dreit et jo a tort:
thy father at right and I at wrong
«Il t'a ocirre comandé,
He thee-has to-kill commanded
«cherisme[s] fiz, estre mon gré.
dearest son against my will
«Vers les deus vueut eschaucirer
Toward the gods he-wishes to-dodge
«et lor respons a faus prover,
and their answer as false to-prove
«mais il sont veir, si com je cuit:
but they are true so as I think
«Issi iert il come il ont dit.»
Thus will-be it as they have said
Sor son fil demeine ital plor
Over her son leads such weeping
la reïne et ital dolor:
the queen and such grief

ne la pueent home escouter,
not her can men listen-to
del duel qu'il li oent mener.
for-the grief which-they her hear lead
Li reis fu mout espoentez:
The king was much terrified
treis de ses sers a apelez;
three of his serfs he-has called
pramis lor a or et argent
promised to-them he-has gold and silver
et comandé priveement
and commanded privately
son fil tougent a sa moillier,
his son let-them-take from his wife
si li augent le chief trenchier.
so to-him let-them-go the head cut-off
Or s'en tornent cil o l'enfant,
Now themselves-thence turn those with the-child
la reïne remest plorant:
the queen remained weeping
sa chiére bat, ses poinz detort
her face she-beats her fists she-wrings
et depreie les deus por mort.
and prays the gods for death
Quant ot assez plaint et ploré,
When she-had enough lamented and wept
son cors debatu et lassé,
her body beaten and wearied

amenuisié sont si sospir
lessened are her sighs
et se començа a dormir.
and herself she-began to sleep
La mére est lasse, si s'endort,
The mother is weary so herself-falls-asleep
et sis fiz vait receivre mort.
and her son goes to-receive death
Mais or verron qui porra plus,
But now we-shall-see who will-be-able more
o Apollo o Laïus:
or Apollo or Laïus
se li enfes est decolez,
if the child is beheaded
donc est li deus a faus provez;
then is the god as false proved
s'il eschape des mains as treis,
if-he escapes from-the hands of-the three
poor en puet aveir li reis.
fear thereof can have the king
Quant furent loign de la cité,
When they-were far from the city
en un grant guaut en sont entré;
into a great wood thereinto are entered
descovert ont le fil le rei
uncovered they-have the son (of-)the king
d'un sidone qu'il ot sor sei.
from-a linen which-he had upon himself
Cil fu petiz: ne sot la sort,
He was little not knew the fate

ne ne s'aperçut de sa mort.
nor not himself-perceived of his death
Ses mains tendié et si lor rist,
His hands he-stretched and so at-them laughed
come a sa norrice feïst.
as to his nurse he-would-have-done
Empor le ris qu'il a geté,
For the laugh which-he has thrown
commeü sont de pieté,
moved they-are with pity
et dient tuit: «Pechié feron,
and say all Sin we-shall-do
«quant il nos rit, se l'ocïon.»
when he us laughs if him-we-kill
Andous les piez li ont fendu,
Both the feet to-him they-have split
a un haut chaisne l'ont pendu:
on a high oak him-they-have hung
por çol firent nel devorassent
for that they-did not-him should-devour
ors ne lëon, ne nel manjassent.
bear nor lion nor not-him should-eat
Or s'en tornent li serf tuit trei,
Now themselves-thence turn the serfs all three
pendant laissent le fil le rei.
hanging they-leave the son (of-)the king
Dient al rei: «Seürs seiez,
They-say to-the king Sure be
«dès ore mais vos esjoiez:
from now more yourself rejoice

«Se vos poez des vis guarder,
If you can from-the living guard
«ne vos estuet les morz doter.»
not you behooves the dead to-fear
Cil ont le rei asseüré,
These have the king reassured
mais traï l'ont et enjané;
but betrayed him-they-have and deceived
car li enfes qui en haut pent
for the child who on high hangs
après avra socorement.
after will-have succor
Par icel bos vait chevauchant,
Through that wood goes riding
com fortune le vait menant,
as fortune him goes leading
li reis de Phoche la cité
the king of Phocis the city
qui a l'enfant pendant trové;
who has the-child hanging found
despendu ont le fil le rei,
taken-down they-have the son (of-)the king
danz Polibus l'en porte o sei;
lord Polybus him-thence carries with himself
norrir le fait, si l'a tant chier,
to-nurture him he-makes so him-has so-much dear
com se l'eüst de sa moillier.
as if him-he-had of his wife
Et quant li enfes ot quinze anz,
And when the child had fifteen years

genz ert et proz, sages et granz.
noble he-was and valiant wise and tall
Li reis le queut en tal chierté
The king him holds in such dearness
son dru en fait et son privé;
his favorite thereof he-makes and his intimate
et por iço qu'il l'ot tant chier,
and for this that-he him-had so-much dear
si l'adoba a chevalier.
so him-dubbed as knight
Envie en ont si compaignon,
Envy thereof have his companions
sil laidissent de lor raison;
so-him insult with their speech
plus de cent feiz l'ont apelé
more than hundred times him-they-have called
fil a putain, bastart geté:
son of whore bastard thrown-out
«En grant baudece estes montez,
In great joy you-are mounted
«si ne savez dont estes nez;
so not you-know whence you-are born
«mais la pute le vos dira,
but the whore it to-you will-tell
«que al chaisne vos encroa.»
who on-the oak you hung
Li dameiseaus fu mout marriz
The young-lord was much grieved
des blastenges et des laiz diz;
by-the insults and by-the ugly words

a Apollo en vait parler,
to Apollo thence goes to-speak
cui fiz il est vueut demander;
whose son he is he-wishes to-ask
a Apollo en vait tot dreit
to Apollo thence goes all straight
demander qui sis pére esteit.
to-ask who his father was
Li deus li dist: «Por queil savras?
The god to-him said For what wilt-thou-know
«Car ja ton vuel nel conoistras.
For ever thy will not-it thou-wilt-know
«Taus jorz serra, por veir te di,
Such day will-be for truth to-thee I-say
«que tu diras: «Por quei jol vi?»
that thou wilt-say For why I-it saw
«Et d'une chose toz fiz seies,
And of-one thing all sure be
«que ja ton vuel nel conoistreies.
that ever thy will not-it thou-wouldst-know
«Por tant, se tu vers Thèbes vas,
For so-much if thou toward Thebes goest
«de ton pére nueves orras.»
of thy father news thou-wilt-hear
Cil ést del temple come ainz pot,
He issued from-the temple as soonest he-could
ne del respons cure nen ot;
nor of-the answer care not he-had
car dit li a par coverture,
for said to-him he-has under covering

por ço si n'a del respons cure:
for that so not-he-has of-the answer care
dreit a Thèbes sa veie aqueut,
straight to Thebes his way he-takes
por son pére, que veeir vueut.
for his father whom to-see he-wishes
Bien près de la cité de Phoche,
Very near to the city of Phocis
en un grant plain, lez une roche,
in a great plain beside a rock
aveit un temple bel et gent;
there-was a temple fair and noble
et si vos di, mon escïent,
and so to-you I-say my knowledge
le jor i ot grant aünee
the day there had great gathering
de plusors genz de la contrée;
of many folk of the country
car une feste celebroent
for a feast they-were-celebrating
d'un de lor deus que coutivoent.
of-one of their gods whom they-worshiped
Assez i ot contes et dus,
Enough there had counts and dukes
venuz i ert danz Laïus;
come there was lord Laius
et d'autre gent tant i aveit
and of-other folk so-many there was
nus hon le nombre n'en saveit:
any man the number not-thereof knew

jeus i faiseient genz et beaus.
games there made folk and fair
La vint errant li dameiseaus;
There came journeying the young-lord
talent li prist d'iluec ester,
will to-him took from-there to-stand
les joeors vueut esguarder.
the players he-wishes to-watch
Que vos direie longe chose?
What to-you would-I-tell long thing
N'aveit iluec esté grant pose,
Not-he-had there been great while
quant des jeus sorst une meslee,
when from-the games arose a melee
par l'encheison d'une plomee,
by the-occasion of-a leaden-ball
que dui danzel iluec getoent,
which two youths there were-throwing
et del jeter mout se penoent.
and in-the throwing much themselves strove
A tant montérent les tençons,
At this rose-up the quarrels
par l'aramie des bricons,
by the-hotheadedness of-the rascals
que s'en meslérent li seignor,
that themselves-therein mixed the lords
dont granz damages fu le jor.
whereof great harm was the day
Homes i ot assez maumis,
Men there had enough maimed

danz Laïus i fu ocis:
lord Laius there was killed
la teste i ot le jor coupee,
the head there he-had the day cut
et ne fu par autrui espee
and not it-was by other's sword
que par l'espee de son fil,
than by the-sword of his son
qui pués en jut en grant eissil.
who then thereof lay in great exile
Li reis de Thèbes quant fu morz,
The king of Thebes when he-was dead
ço fu damages granz et forz.
that was harm great and strong
Joste le temple, lez un arbre,
Beside the temple beside a tree
l'ont mis en un sarqueu de marbre.
him-they-have put in a coffin of marble
Mout demenérent grant dolor
Much they-led great grief
cil de Thèbes por lor seignor.
those of Thebes for their lord
Quant orent mis le cors en terre,
When they-had put the body in earth
chascuns s'en vait senz port de guerre;
each himself-thence goes without bearing of war
la gent le rei dolent s'en vont,
the folk (of-)the king grieving themselves-thence go
por lor seignor que perdu ont.
for their lord whom lost they-have

Quant la reïne ot la novèle
When the queen hears the news
de son seignor, ne li fu bèle;
of her lord not to-her was fair
mout fu dolente et corroçose:
much she-was grieving and angered
«Lasse», dist ele, «dolorose!
Weary said she grief-stricken
«Or sué je veve senz seignor,
Now am I widow without lord
«or n'ai enfant qui guart m'onor:
now not-I-have child who guard my-honor
«Se bataille me sort o guerre,
If battle to-me arises or war
«ne porrai pas tenir ma terre.»
not I-shall-be-able at-all to-hold my land
Edipus pas ne s'asseüre:
Oedipus at-all not himself-reassures
vers Thèbes vait grant aleüre,
toward Thebes goes great pace
et dist que ja ne finera
and said that ever not he-will-stop
jusque son pére trovera.
until his father he-will-find
Dejoste Thèbes, en un mont
Beside Thebes on a mount
haut et naïf et bien roont,
high and natural and well round
ert uns deables herbergiez,
was a devil lodged

qui mout ert fel et esragiez:
who very was félon and maddened
Spin l'apeloent el païs,
Sphinx him-they-called in-the country
maint gentil home aveit ocis.
many-a noble man he-had killed
Une devinaille aveit fait,
A riddle he-had made
qu'on ne devinot por nul plait;
which-one not divined for any pleading
et neporuec bien otreiot
and nevertheless well he-granted
que, se nus hon la devinot,
that if any man it divined
de lui preïst lors la venjance,
of him he-might-take then the vengeance
le chief perdist senz demorance;
the head he-might-lose without delay
s'il ne la puet deviner mie,
if-he not it can divine at-all
seürs seit de perdre la vie:
sure let-him-be to lose the life
lors li trenchot la soe teste,
then to-him he-cut-off the his head
si le manjot come autre beste.
so him he-ate as other beast
Joste le mont ert li chemins,
Beside the mount was the road
la ou esteit herbergiez Spins;
there where was lodged Sphinx

cil del païs tant le dotoent
those of-the country so-much him feared
que par iluec passer n'osoent.
that by there to-pass not-they-dared
Li dameiseaus mot n'en saveit:
The young-lord word not-thereof knew
par iluec vint errant tot dreit;
by there he-came journeying all straight
et quant le vit de loign li monstre,
and when him saw from far the monster
jus de la roche vint encontre.
down from the rock he-came against
Cil le vit grant, corsu et fort,
He him saw great big-bodied and strong
idonc ot il poor de mort;
then had he fear of death
poor ot grant, mais neporuec,
fear he-had great but nevertheless
vousist o non, estut iluec.
he-would or not he-behooved there
Premiérement l'aparla Spins:
First him-addressed Sphinx
«Amis,» fait il, «cist miens chemins
Friend says he this my road
«a ital lei com te dirai:
at such law as to-thee I-shall-say
«Se tu nel sés, jol t'aprendrai.
If thou not-it knowest I-it to-thee-shall-teach

«Tuit cil qui vienent et qui vont
All those who come and who go
«par cest chemin, delez cest mont,
by this road beside this mount
«une devinaille ont de mei,
a riddle have from me
«si vueil que saches par qual lei:
so I-wish that thou-know by what law
«Cil qui deviner ne la puet,
He who to-divine not it can
«senz raençon morir l'estuet;
without ransom to-die him-behooves
«et se nus a tant de veisdie
and if any has so-much of shrewdness
«que la devinaille me die,
that the riddle to-me he-tell
«tot ensement face de mei:
all likewise let-him-do of me
«Le chief me touge, bien l'otrei.»
The head from-me let-him-take well it-I-grant
Edipus fu corteis et proz:
Oedipus was courteous and valiant
«Amis,» fait il, «quant vos a toz
Friend says he when you to all
«del devinail faites tal lei,
of-the riddle make such law
«ne vueil que ja trespast par mei:
not I-wish that ever it-pass by me
«Pués que a tant venuz en sué,
Since that at so-far come thereto I-am

«li quaus que seit morra ancué.
the which that be will-die today
«Mais or dites, et jo l'orrai;
But now say and I it-shall-hear
«et pués après jo respondrai.
and then after I shall-answer
— Amis,» fait il, «ore entent bien
Friend says he now hear well
«la devinaille et la retien.
the riddle and it retain
«D'une beste ai oï parler:
Of-a beast I-have heard speak
«Quant primes vueut par terre aler,
When first it-wishes on ground to-go
«a quatre piez vait come uns ors;
on four feet it-goes like a bear
«et pués revient assez taus jors
and then comes-back enough such days
«que del quart pié nen a il cure,
that of-the fourth foot not-thereof has it care
«o les treis vait grant aleüre;
with the three it-goes great pace
«et quant graindre vertuz li vient,
and when greater strength to-it comes
«a dous piez vait et bien se tient;
on two feet it-goes and well itself holds
«et pués li ront mestier li trei,
and then to-it again-have need the three

«et pués li quatre. Amis, di mei
and then the four Friend tell me
«se tu onques veïs tal beste;
if thou ever sawest such beast
«se tu nel sés, perdras la teste.»
if thou not-it knowest thou-wilt-lose the head
Edipus fu de parfont sens,
Oedipus was of deep sense
a sei meïsme ot son porpens;
to himself self he-had his thought
il li respont come afaitiez:
he to-him answers as well-bred
«Va, fous,» fait il, «tot iés jugiez;
Go fool says he all thou-art judged
«ore me lai parler a tei.
now me let speak to thee
«Cist devinauz fu faiz por mei:
This riddle was made for me
«Quant fui petiz et j'aletoe,
When I-was small and I-was-suckled
«a quatre piez par terre aloe;
on four feet on ground I-went
«et quant ço fu que dous anz oi,
and when it was that two years I-had
«qu'un petit sostenir me poi,
that-a little to-support myself I-could
«un bastoncel me baillot l'on,
a little-stick to-me gave one
«dont aloe par la maison;
whereby I-went through the house

«al bastoncel bien me teneie:
on-the little-stick well myself I-held
«Ço ert li tierz piez que aveie.
That was the third foot which I-had
«Et quant me vint graindre vertuz
And when to-me came greater strength
«et jo fui auques parcreüz,
and I was somewhat grown-up
«que sor mes piez me poi drecier,
that on my feet myself I-could raise
«de sozpoial n'oi pués mestier.
of prop not-I-had then need
«Un bastoncel, quant serrai vieuz,
A little-stick when I-shall-be old
«me coviendra por aler mieuz;
me will-behoove for to-go better
«et pués, quant jo serrai fronciz
and then when I shall-be wrinkled
«et de vieilléce afebleïz,
and from old-age enfeebled
«se donques vueil aler par terre,
if then I-wish to-go on ground
«dous bastonceaus m'estovra querre;
two little-sticks me-will-behoove to-seek
«a dous bastons par terre irai:
with two sticks on ground I-shall-go
«Ço sont li quatre pié qu'avrai.
These are the four feet which-I-shall-have
«Ore as la devinaille oïe:
Now thou-hast the riddle heard

«Fiz iés que ja perdras la vie.»
Sure thou-art that already thou-wilt-lose the life
Del fuerre a trait la bone espee,
From-the scabbard he-has drawn the good sword
del bu li a la teste ostee;
from-the trunk to-him he-has the head taken
en plusors lous trencha le cors,
in many places he-cut the body
li sans vermeuz en raia fors.
the blood red thereof gushed out

The Sons of Oedipus

II

Thebes rejoices at the Sphinx's death and brings Oedipus to the widowed queen. She asks who killed her husband, and he confesses it was he. She forgives him, the barons urge the match, and he marries Jocasta and is crowned. In twenty years they have two sons and two daughters. In a bath Jocasta sees his scarred feet, learns the story from Polybus's account and the three serfs, and knows he is her son. Oedipus blinds himself and goes down into a pit. His sons trample his eyes, and he prays Jupiter and Tisiphone to set a mortal discord between them.

En la cité vint la novèle,
Into the city came the news
sachiez qu'a ceus dedenz fu bèle;
know that-to those within it-was fair
entre eus en meinent mout grant plait
among themselves thereof they-lead very great debate
et demandent qui a ço fait:
and ask who has that done

«Par qual engiegn puet estre morz
By what device can be dead
«cil deables, que si ert forz?
that devil which so was strong
«Cil qui l'a mort est mout corteis:
He who him-has killed is very courteous
«Bien serreit dignes d'estre reis.»
Well he-would-be worthy to-be king
De la cité mout grant gent ést,
From the city very great folk issues
et vont veeir la ou Spins gést.
and they-go to-see there where Sphinx lies
D'une part truevent le danzel
On-one side they-find the youth
armé sor son destrier isnel,
armed upon his charger swift
de l'autre part veient gesant
on the-other side they-see lying
le deable hisdos et grant.
the devil hideous and great
Petit et grant mout s'en esjoent,
Small and great much themselves-thereof rejoice
la proéce del danzel loent;
the prowess of-the youth they-praise
en la cité o eus l'ameinent,
into the city with them him-they-lead
del retenir forment se peinent;
of-the keeping greatly themselves they-strive
a la reïne en vont tot dreit,
to the queen thence they-go all straight

en son palaiz ou ele esteit;
in her palace where she was
a une voiz tuit li escrient,
with one voice all to-her cry
si li préent et si li dient
so her they-pray and so to-her say
que li loent en dreite fei
that to-her they-counsel in right faith
que le danzel retienge o sei.
that the youth she-keep with herself
«Seignor,» dist ele, «volentiers
Lords said she willingly
«iert retenuz li chevaliers;
will-be kept the knight
«bien vueil que seit de ma maisniée,
well I-wish that he-be of my household
«mais ço sachiez ne sué pas liée,
but that know not I-am at-all glad
«car l'autr'ier fu mis sire morz,
for the-other-day was my lord dead
«dont granz damages est et torz.»
whereof great harm it-is and wrong
A tant s'en tornent cele nuét,
At this themselves-thence turn that night
et cil remest a grant delét.
and he remained at great delight
Li sopers fu apareilliez:
The supper was prepared
assez i ot mes et deintiez.
enough there had dishes and dainties

Edipus fu proz et corteis,
Oedipus was valiant and courteous
lez la reïne sist al deis;
beside the queen he-sat at-the dais
et quant del soper levé sont,
and when from-the supper risen they-are
li plusor as ostaus en vont.
the most to-the lodgings thence go
Jocaste esguarde le danzel,
Jocasta looks-at the youth
corteis le vit et sage et bel;
courteous him she-saw and wise and fair
bien semble home de grant parage,
well he-seems man of great lineage
mout li plaist bien en son corage:
much to-her he-pleases well in her heart
«Amis,» fait ele, «dites mei,
Friend says she tell me
«jo vos conjur par vostre fei,
I you conjure by your faith
«se as jous fustes l'autre jor,
if at-the games you-were the-other day
«ou l'on ocist le mien seignor;
where one killed the my lord
«se saveie par qui fu morz,
if I-knew by whom he-was killed
«ço me serreit mout granz conforz.
that to-me would-be very great comfort
— Dame,» fait il, «conjuré m'as.
Lady says he conjured me-thou-hast

«Saches ne t'en mentirai pas:
Know not thee-thereof I-shall-lie at-all
«As jous fui jo et a la feste,
At-the games was I and at the feast
«ou tis sire perdié la teste.
where thy lord lost the head
«Se demandes le non celui
If thou-askest the name (of-)that-one
«par cui fu morz, bien le conui;
by whom he-was dead well him I-knew
«mais se tu vueus le non saveir,
but if thou wishest the name to-know
«trive et fiance en vueil aveir
truce and pledge thereof I-wish to-have
«que il n'avra de tei haïne.
that he not-will-have from thee hatred
— Tolez, amis!» fait la reine.
Leave-off friend says the queen
«Que me vaudreit de lui haïr?
What to-me would-it-avail of him to-hate
«Cil qui morz est ne puet guarir.
He who dead is not can recover
«Jo vos plevis la meie fei
I you pledge the my faith
«que ja haïz nen iert par mei.
that ever hated not he-will-be by me
— Dame,» fait il, «o ceste espee,
Lady says he with this sword

«dont Spins ot la teste coupee
whereby Sphinx had the head cut
«qui si esteit hardiz et forz,
who so was bold and strong
«fu vostre sire li reis morz.
was your lord the king dead
«Sachiez que veirement l'ocis,
Know that truly him-I-killed
«bien sai que donques i mesfis:
well I-know that then therein I-misdid
«Mout volentiers dreit vos en faz.»
Very willingly right to-you thereof I-do
Le pan de son bliaut a laz
The flap of his tunic with lace
pleie en sa main, le dreit li tent;
folded in his hand the right to-her he-stretches
Jocaste volentiers le prent.
Jocasta willingly it takes
Ore a cil tant son plait mené,
Now has he so-much his plea led
que andui se sont acordé:
that both themselves are accorded
car femne est tost menée a tant
for woman is soon led to so-far
que on en fait tot son talant.
that one thereof does all his will

Al main, par son l'aube del jor,
In-the morning at top the-dawn of-the day
rassemblérent tuit en la tor
assembled all in the tower
et li baron et li chasé
both the barons and the vassals
et li borgeis de la cité:
and the burghers of the city
a la reïne vont parler,
to the queen they-go to-speak
conseil requerre et demander:
counsel to-seek and to-ask
«Dame,» dient il, «ne savon
Lady say they not we-know
«s'otreiereiz que fait avon.
if-you-will-grant what done we-have
«Ço loent tuit grant et petit,
That counsel all great and small
«que il n'i a nul contredit,
that it not-there has any gainsaying
«que Edipus seit nostre sére:
that Oedipus be our lord
«A rei le vuelent tuit eslére;
As king him they-wish all to-elect
«tuit vuelent que il ait le regne,
all wish that he have the realm
«et si que il vos ait a femne;
and so that he you have as wife
«le regne aiez ensemble andui,
the realm you-have together both

«si qu'il vos ait, nos aion lui.
so that-he you have we have him
«Ne poon pas trover meillor,
Not we-can at-all find better
«ne qui si bien tienge l'onor.»
nor who so well hold the-domain
La reïne quant ço oï,
The queen when that she-heard
forment li plot, si s'esjoï:
greatly to-her it-pleased so she-rejoiced
senz nul conseil le lor otreie
without any counsel it to-them she-grants
et por le dameisel enveie
and for the young-lord she-sends
en une chambre ou il geseit
into a chamber where he was-lying
et de tot ço mot ne saveit.
and of all that word not he-knew
Quant il oï qu'el le mandot,
When he heard that-she him summoned
il leva sus com plus tost pot;
he rose up as most soon he-could
enz en la sale en vint tot dreit,
in into the hall thence he-came all straight
ou la reïne l'atendeit.
where the queen him-awaited
Iluec aveit, mon escïent,
There there-was to-my knowledge
que dus, que contes, plus de cent,
both dukes and counts more than hundred

qui de lui firent lor seignor
who of him made their lord
et li jurérent tote honor;
and to-him swore all honor
la reïne li ont donée,
the queen to-him they-have given
en es le pas l'a esposée.
in at-once the step her-be-has wedded
Les nueces font a grant baudor:
The nuptials they-make with great joy
la veïssiez maint jogleor,
there you-would-have-seen many-a minstrel
qui chantoent o lor vïeles
who sang with their viols
et o rotes et o harpèles;
and with rotes and with little-harps
ainz que passast, ço cuit, li jors,
before that passed that I-think the day
i ot beté plus de cent ors;
there had baited more than hundred bears
granz batailles i ot de vers,
great battles there had of boars
chevrueus i ot et dains et cers;
roebucks there had and fallow-deer and stags
mout i ot cignes et poons,
much there had swans and peacocks
oies et grues et hairons.
geese and cranes and herons
Un meis entier dura li plaiz:
A month entire lasted the feast

onc por mil livres ne fust faiz.
ever for thousand pounds not it-would-be made
Li dueus del rei est oblïez,
The grief of-the king is forgotten
cil qui mort l'a est coronez
he who killed him-has is crowned
et la reïne a moillier prent:
and the queen as wife takes
vers les deus erre malement.
toward the gods he-errs badly
Ensemble furent pués vint anz,
Together they-were then twenty years
si orent quatre beaus enfanz:
so they-had four fair children
vaslet furent li dui graignor
boys were the two elder
et meschines li dui menor.
and maidens the two younger
Aussi lonc tens qu'ensemble furent,
As long time as-together they-were
onques de rien ne se conurent,
ever of anything not themselves they-knew
ne ne sorent le grant pechié
nor not knew the great sin
dont il esteient entechié,
whereof they were stained
jusqu'en un baign ou il esteit,
until-into a bath where he was

ou la reïne le serveit
where the queen him served
et vit les piez qu'il ot fenduz,
and she-saw the feet which-he had split
quant fu petiz el guaut penduz.
when he-was small in-the wood hung
Ele li dist: «Nel me celez:
She to-him said Not-it from-me conceal
«Por quei fustes es piez navrez?»
For why were-you in-the feet wounded
El l'encercha fort et enquist,
She him-searched hard and inquired
et deprea tant qu'il li dist:
and prayed so-much that-he to-her said
«Reïne dame, n'en sai plus,
Queen lady not-thereof I-know more
«mais tant com m'en dist Polibus:
but so-much as me-thereof told Polybus
«Il me dist ço qu'il me trova
He me told that that-he me found
«en mé un bos, dont m'aporta,
in midst a wood whence me-he-brought
«pendant en haut a un chassan,
hanging on high on an oak
«ou jo reçui icest ahan.
where I received this pain
«Ço ne sai jo qui m'i pendié,
That not know I who me-there hung
«ne qui les plantes me fendié,
nor who the soles to-me split

«mais ço sai bien que tant me dist
but that I-know well that so-much to-me said
«Polibus, qui norrir me fist.»
Polybus who to-nurture me made
La reïne bien sospeça
The queen well suspected
que c'ert sis fiz qu'ele porta,
that it-was her son whom-she carried
que li tolirent ja li trei
whom from-her took already the three
par le comandement le rei.
by the command (of-)the king
Querre les fist et amener,
To-seek them she-made and to-bring
et sairement lor fist jurer
and oath to-them she-made swear
qu'en verité li deïssant
that-in truth to-her they-should-tell
que il firent de son enfant.
what they did with her child
Cil ne se sont pas parjuré,
They not themselves are at-all perjured
ainz li dient come ont ovré.
but to-her they-tell how they-have worked
Donc sot Jocaste par les treis
Then knew Jocasta by the three
qu'a estros ert sis fiz li reis;
that-in sooth was her son the king
plore et li dit: «Mar fumes né,
she-weeps and to-him says Ill we-were born

«car ambedui somes damné:
for both we-are damned
«Tis pére esteit cil que as mort,
Thy father was he whom thou-hast killed
«ta mére sué, si m'as a tort.»
thy mother I-am so me-thou-hast at wrong
Li reis se tint a mal mené,
The king himself held for ill led
quant vit qu'il ot issi ovré;
when he-saw that-he had thus worked
por la merveille que fait a,
for the marvel which done he-has
dit que son cors afolera.
says that his body he-will-maim
Il meïsmes s'est essorbez,
He himself himself-is blinded
en une fosse en est entrez;
into a pit thereinto he-is entered
jure que ja mais n'en estra,
he-swears that ever more not-thence he-will-issue
por son pechié que plorera.
for his sin which he-will-weep
Si felon fil, qui ja sont grant,
His felon sons who already are grown
de lui se vont escharnissant;
of him themselves go mocking
andous ses ueuz, qu'il ont trovez,
both his eyes which-they have found
desoz lor piez les ont folez.
under their feet them they-have trampled

Del pechié qu'ont fait et del tort
Of-the sin which-they-have done and of-the wrong
se plaint li reis as deus mout fort
himself complains the king to-the gods very strongly
et lor prée mout piement
and them prays very piously
qu'il en prengent lor vengement:
that-they thereof take their vengeance
«Puissanz reis des cieus, Jupiter,
Mighty king of-the heavens Jupiter
«Tesiphoné, fure d'enfer,
Tisiphone fury of-hell
«les orgoillos me destruisiez
the proud-ones me destroy
«qui mes ueuz mistrent soz lor piez.
who my eyes put under their feet
«Entre eus vienge descorde taus,
Among them come discord such
«a ambesdous pesme et mortaus,
to both very-bad and mortal
«que le regne qu'ont a baillir
that the realm which-they-have to govern
«ne lor leise guaires tenir.»
not them let much hold
Tant simplement les apela
So simply them he-called
tot li firent ço qu'il prea.
all to-him did that which-he prayed

Polynices in Argos

III

The brothers agree to rule a year each while the other goes into exile, and the court gives the first year to Eteocles. Polynices rides alone through a great storm to Argos, where King Adrastus rules. Sheltering in the palace porch, he meets Tydeus of Calydon, exiled for killing his brother, and they fight over the shelter until the noise wakes the king. Adrastus parts them and sees in their shields of lion and boar the husbands a goddess promised his daughters.

Mais or lairon del rei ester:
But now we-shall-leave of-the king to-be
car des fiz fait bien a parler.
for of-the sons it-does well to speak
Entre eus se vont ja descordant
Among them themselves go already discording
et de lor regne contendant,
and over their realm contending
si com les ont amonesté
so as them have admonished
Jupiter et Tesiphoné.
Jupiter and Tisiphone
Novèle lei trovérent tal,
New law they-found such
que lor revertira a mal,
which to-them will-turn to ill
que, quant li uns d'eus regnereit,
that when the one of-them would-reign
li autres en essil serreit,
the other in exile would-be

et quant li anz serreit passez,
and when the year would-be passed
li essilliez fust coronez,
the exiled were crowned
et par ital devisement
and by such division
regnereient tot egaument:
they-would-reign all equally
entre eus acordent que senz guerre
among them they-agree that without war
eüst chascuns son an la terre.
should-have each his year the land
Chascuns vueut aveir l'an premier:
Each wishes to-have the-year first
li ainznez le vueut desraisnier,
the elder it wishes to-claim
li autres dit que il l'avra,
the other says that he it-will-have
o ço que non guerre en fera;
or that than not war thereof he-will-make
li graindre en requiert jugement
the greater thereof requires judgment
et semont l'en par sairement
and summons him-thereof by oath
que, de tant com la corz direit,
that of so-much as the court would-say
del premier an li tenist dreit.
of-the first year to-him he-should-hold right
Il aveient juré ainceis,
They had sworn before

sor lor idres et sor lor leis,
upon their idols and upon their laws
que, se entre eus sordeit descorde,
that if among them arose discord
par jugement et par acorde,
by judgment and by accord
tant com direient li baron,
so-far as would-say the barons
fust acordé senz contençon.
it-were accorded without contention
Tuit li baron jostent ensemble:
All the barons join together
chascuns en dit ço que li semble;
each thereof says that which to-him seems
por nes un d'eus la corz ne ment
for not-even one of-them the court not lies
que ne facent dreit jugement.
that not they-make right judgment
A l'ainzné ont jugié l'onor,
To the-elder they-have judged the-domain
l'autre an la jugent al menor:
the-other year it they-judge to-the younger
tandis esguart environ sei
meanwhile let-him-look around himself
ou il auge servir un rei;
where he may-go to-serve a king
auge servir, cest premier an,
let-him-go to-serve this first year
al rei de Gréce o al Persan;
to-the king of Greece or to-the Persian

o s'en past outre en Babilone,
or himself-thence let-him-pass beyond into Babylon
o a ses parenz en Sidone.
or to his kinsmen in Sidon
Quant li jugemenz fu toz faiz,
When the judgment was all done
cil s'en ést plorant del palaiz;
that-one himself-thence issues weeping from-the palace
le regne tient Etioclès,
the realm holds Eteocles
en essil vait Polinicès:
into exile goes Polynices
o bien li peist, o mal li place,
or well to-him weigh or ill to-him please
ne puet muer que il nel face.
not he-can change that he not-it do
Al rei de Gréce, qui fu près,
To-the king of Greece who was near
dist que ireit Polinicès.
said that would-go Polynices
Plusor vourent o lui aler,
Many wished with him to-go
mais il ne vout onc nul mener.
but he not wished ever any to-lead
Onc n'i ot plus: cil se conreie,
Ever not-there had more he himself equips
al rei de Gréce tint sa veie;
to-the king of Greece he-held his way
et ne fist guaires grant conrei,
and not made much great equipment

car il ne mena home o sei,
for he not led man with himself
ne escuier ne compaignon,
nor squire nor companion
se solement son cheval non.
if only his horse not
Ço fu en mai, par un matin,
That was in May on a morning
Polinicès tint son chemin;
Polynices held his road
Polinicès chevauche sous,
Polynices rides alone
mout fu pensis et poorous;
much he-was thoughtful and fearful
car il ne sét certainement
for he not knows certainly
ou puésse aler seürement.
where he-can go surely
Son frére crent qu'en larrecin
His brother he-fears that-in stealth
li mete aguait en son chemin,
to-him put ambush on his road
car ja n'avront parfite amor
for ever not-will-have perfect love
dui compaignon d'ital honor.
two companions of-such domain
D'ore en avant s'est comandez
From-now in forward himself-is commended
a fortune, cui s'est donez;
to fortune to-whom himself-is given

et deprée les deus forment
and prays the gods greatly
qu'il le conduient sauvement.
that-they him conduct safely
Tant chevaucha par les montaignes,
So-much he-rode through the mountains
par les combes et par les plaignes,
through the valleys and through the plains
que par chemins, que par sentiers,
both by roads and by paths
set jorz chevaucha toz entiers.
seven days he-rode all entire
Joste une mer vait chevauchant,
Beside a sea goes riding
mais la mer vait si tempestant
but the sea goes so storming
que nus hon ne savreit conter
that any man not could tell
que ele esteit ne porpenser.
what it was nor think
Tote la nuét plut et gela,
All the night it-rained and froze
gresle chaï et neif vola,
hail fell and snow flew
et corurent li doze vent
and ran the twelve winds
par tot le monde a lor talent.
through all the world at their will
Onc nes pot tenir Eolus,
Ever not-them could hold Aeolus

qui esteit lor sire et lor dus:
who was their lord and their duke
par mé cel air vont torneiant,
through midst that air they-go wheeling
combatent sei et vont bruiant.
they-fight themselves and go roaring
De totes parz tone fortment,
From all sides it-thunders strongly
foudres chiéent espessement;
thunderbolts fall thickly
chancelant vait li firmamenz
tottering goes the firmament
et la terre que est dedenz;
and the earth which is within
li grant arbre sont debrisié
the great trees are shattered
et li petit sont esrachié;
and the small are uprooted
li flueve sont tuit fors eissu
the rivers are all out issued
et par les chanz tuit acoru.
and through the fields all run-over
Polinicès por le tempier
Polynices for the storm
ne laisse pas son chevauchier,
not leaves at-all his riding
ainceis atent presente mort,
rather he-awaits present death
por le tempier qu'il veit si fort.
for the storm which-he sees so strong

Par mé un bos vait chevauchant,
Through midst a wood goes riding
fiéres bestes vait encontrant:
fierce beasts he-goes meeting
grifons, serpenz, guivres, dragons,
griffins serpents vipers dragons
leparz et tigres et leons.
leopards and tigers and lions
Mais li tempiers les a dantez
But the storm them has tamed
et debatuz et flaielez,
and beaten and flailed
que de quant que il encontra
that of as-many as he met
uns trestoz sous ne l'en tocha.
one all alone not him-thereof touched
D'un pué mout haut que vait poiant,
From-a hill very high which he-goes climbing
ou sis chevaus vait recreant,
where his horse goes failing
vit resplendir une clarté
he-saw shine a brightness
en la tor d'Arges la cité;
in the tower of-Argos the city
de la cité vit le danjon,
of the city he-saw the keep
l'escharbocle qui luist el son:
the-carbuncle which shines on-the top
uns escharbocles i luist fort,
a carbuncle there shines strongly

qui monstre as notoners le port,
which shows to-the sailors the port
quant vont de nuét najant par mer
when they-go by night sailing by sea
et ne sévent ou arriver.
and not know where to-arrive
Por ço l'i mist Phoroneüs,
For that it-there put Phoroneus
de cui linage est Adrastus,
of whose lineage is Adrastus
qui ore est reis de la cité,
who now is king of the city
les Greus i tient par poesté.
the Greeks there he-holds by might
Cil chevauche tot dreitement
He rides all straight
a l'escharbocle qui resplent;
to the-carbuncle which shines
jusqu'a Arges est parvenuz,
until-to Argos he-is arrived
ou Adrastus ert li chanuz:
where Adrastus was the white-haired
idonc i ert icist bons reis,
then there was this good king
qui esteit princes des Grezeis.
who was prince of-the Greeks
En la cité toz sous entra,
Into the city all alone he-entered
onques home n'i encontra,
ever man not-there he-met

qui de rien le mete a raison,
who of anything him put to speech
ne quil herbert en sa maison:
nor who-him might-lodge in his house
trestuit dormeient en lor lét,
all slept in their bed
car por poi esteit mée nuét.
for by little it-was mid night
Venuz est al perron reial,
Come he-is to-the block royal
la descendié de son cheval;
there he-dismounted from his horse
desoz la tor descent el porche,
under the tower he-alights in-the porch
de fust n'i aveit une broche:
of wood not-there had a peg
rien n'i aveit que onc fust d'arbre,
anything not-there had which ever were of-tree
car il ert trestoz faiz de marbre.
for it was all made of marble
Il fu mout las de chevauchier,
He was very weary of riding
si comença a someillier.
so began to drowse
A tant astes vos Tydeüs,
At this behold you Tydeus
qui de Calidone fu dus;
who of Calydon was duke
et cil rert eissuz de sa terre,
and he again-was issued from his land

al rei veneit ça por conquerre.
to-the king he-was-coming here for to-conquer
Iluec meïsmes vint fuiant,
There self came fleeing
por le tempier quel vait chaçant.
for the storm which-him goes chasing
Li proz chevaliers Tydeüs,
The valiant knight Tydeus
qui esteit fiz Oeneüs,
who was son (of-)Oeneus
por un son frére qu'ot ocis
for a his brother whom-he-had killed
en Calidone son païs,
in Calydon his country
eissilliez est et vait fuiant
exiled he-is and goes fleeing
et sa penitence faisant.
and his penance doing
Il a chevauchié a la lune,
He has ridden by the moon
si com l'a amené fortune:
so as him-has brought fortune
n'i ot ne per ne escuier,
not-there had nor peer nor squire
ne mais que sei et son destrier.
nor more than himself and his charger
A l'olivier, desoz la tor,
At the-olive under the tower
la aregna son milsoudor;
there he-reined his thousand-sou-horse

il vait avant, entre en l'arvol.
he goes forward enters into the-vault
Polinicès le tint por fol:
Polynices him held for fool
en piez se drece el pavement,
on feet himself raises on-the pavement
si l'araisone fiérement:
so him-addresses fiercely
«Qui iés, qui ci t'embaz sor mei?
Who art-thou who here thyself-thrustest upon me
«Par toz les deus en cui jo crei,
By all the gods in whom I believe
«ainceis que vos ci herbergiez,
before that you here lodge
«en iert li quaus que seit iriez;
thereof will-be the which that be angered
«alez avant herberge prendre,
go forward lodging to-take
«car ci ne poez vos descendre.
for here not can you dismount
«Pués que jo ai mon ostal pris,
Since that I have my lodging taken
«pesera mei, sel vos guerpis.»
it-will-weigh-on me if-it you I-leave
Tydeüs respont franchement
Tydeus answers frankly
et senz un point de marrement:
and without a point of dismay
«De folie,» fait il, «vos peise:
Of folly says he you weighs

«Ne vos en quier que une teise;
Not of-you thereof I-ask but one fathom
«herbergiez mei ça enz mon cors,
lodge me here within my body
«et mis chevaus seit la defors.
and my horse be there outside
«Entre nos dous a grant espace,
Between us two there-has great space
«ne sai le mal que jo vos face:
not I-know the ill that I to-you do
«Se mei avez a compaignon,
If me you-have for companion
«ne vos puet estre se bel non,»
not to-you can be if fair not
Polinicès de ço n'ot cure,
Polynices of that not-had care
ainz s'en afiche fort et jure
rather himself-thereto fixes hard and swears
que a sei ne a son cheval
that for himself nor for his horse
ne prendra il iluec ostal.
not will-take he there lodging
Tydeüs ot et entent bien
Tydeus hears and understands well
par preiére n'i fera rien:
by prayer not-there he-will-do anything
l'espée trait qu'il ot al lez
the-sword he-draws which-he had at-the side
et mit l'escu devant le pez:
and put the-shield before the breast

astes le vos enz herbergié,
behold him you within lodged
ne l'en querra mais hué congié:
not of-him he-will-ask more today leave
«Com plus,» fait il, «vos preiereie,
As more says he you I-should-pray
«ço sai que meins avengereie:
that I-know that less I-should-gain
«Tot tens puet l'on preier felon,
All time can one pray felon
«ja n'en fera se noauz non.
ever not-thereof he-will-do if worse not
«O bien vos peist, o bien vos place,
Or well you weigh or well you please
«astes mei ci en ceste place;
behold me here in this place
«o il vos peist trés bien o non,
or it you weigh very well or not
«tot m'i avreiz a compaignon.»
all me-there you-will-have for companion
Polinicès les sauz li vint
Polynices the leaps to-him came
et en son poign son espié tint;
and in his fist his spear held
venu en sont a l'escremie:
come thereto they-are to the-fencing
as vos bataille por folie.
behold you battle for folly

Al porche sont li dui baron,
At-the porch are the two barons
combatent sei come dragon:
they-fight themselves like dragons
cil qui premier s'i herberja
he who first himself-there lodged
jure que l'autre en jetera,
swears that the-other thence he-will-throw
et li autres jure por veir
and the other swears for truth
nel guerpira a son poeir.
not-it he-will-forsake at his power
Granz ont les cuers, fiers les talanz,
Great they-have the hearts fierce the wills
mais les cors ont mout dessemblanz:
but the bodies they-have very unlike
ja, se s'entreconeüssant,
ever if each-other-had-known
ne cuit que s'entradesissant.
not I-think that each-other-had-touched
Polinicès ert genz et granz,
Polynices was noble and tall
cheveus ot blois recercelanz;
hair he-had blond curling
cler ot le vis et coloré,
bright he-had the face and colored
espaules larges et pez lé,
shoulders broad and breast wide
les costez lons, les flans sotiz,
the sides long the flanks slender

les hanches grosses et barniz;
the haunches thick and well-formed
enforcheüre ot droite et grant:
crotch he-had straight and long
rien n'ot en lui mesavenant.
anything not-he-had in him unbecoming
Jovenceaus est, n'a pas vint anz,
Youth he-is not-has at-all twenty years
chevaliers est proz et vaillanz.
knight he-is valiant and worthy
D'aage est maire Tydeüs,
Of-age is greater Tydeus
cors a menor, mais forz est plus;
body he-has smaller but strong he-is more
cheveus ot neirs, barbe et grenon,
hair he-had black beard and mustache
fier ot le vis come uns leon;
fierce he-had the face like a lion
le cors ot brief et le cuer grant,
the body he-had short and the heart great
de proece sembla Rollant.
of prowess he-resembled Roland
Et empor si vile acheison
And for so vile occasion
se combatent li dui baron:
themselves fight the two barons
s'il eüssent juré lor mort,
if-they had sworn their death
ne se combatissent plus fort.
not themselves they-would-fight more strongly

Andui sont mout de fier talant,
Both are very of fierce will
li uns ne prése l'autre un guant.
the one not prizes the-other a glove
Espiez ont granz et esmoluz,
Spears they-have great and sharpened
de fiéres bestes ont escuz:
of fierce beasts they-have shields
d'un leon ot une pel grant,
of-a lion he-had a hide great
que li covreit le pez devant,
which to-him covered the breast before
li eissilliez Polinicès,
the exiled Polynices
que li dona Edipodès;
which to-him gave Oedipus
et Tydeüs l'ot d'un sangler,
and Tydeus it-had of-a boar
qui le païs soleit guaster,
which the country was-wont to-lay-waste
que la deesse li dona:
which the goddess to-him gave
por sei vengier li otreia.
for himself to-avenge to-him granted
Ensemble jostent li baron,
Together joust the barons
requiérent sei come leon;
attack each-other like lions

li dui baron si se requiérent
the two barons so themselves attack
onques de rien ne s'espargniérent;
ever in anything not themselves-spared
il se fiérent de tal aïr
they themselves strike with such fury
le fou vermeil en font saillir;
the fire red thereof they-make leap
il s'entrefiérent si granz cous,
they each-other-strike so great blows
qu'en retentist toz li arvous:
that-thereof resounds all the vault
la veïssiez granz chapleïz
there you-would-have-seen great hacking
sor les heaumes des branz forbiz,
on the helmets with-the blades furbished
que li carreis en retentist
that the paving thereof resounds
et li arvous en rebondist.
and the vault thereof rebounds
Ço sai que ja ne remansist
That I-know that ever not it-would-have-stopped
jusque li uns l'autre oceïst,
until the one the-other had-killed
mais Adrastus li reis s'esveille,
but Adrastus the king himself-wakes
toz esfreez por la merveille;
all frightened for the marvel
por la noise li reis s'esfreie,
for the noise the king himself-frightens

un chamberlenc a val enveie
a chamberlain to below he-sends
a saveir dont la noise sort,
to know whence the noise arises
et a lui dire sempres tort.
and to him tell at-once let-him-turn
Li chamberlens eissi en l'atre,
The chamberlain issued into the-court
les chevaliers i vit combatre;
the knights there he-saw fight
al rei torna vïaz arriére,
to-the king he-turned quickly back
conta lui la bataille fiére,
told him the battle fierce
qu'il ot veü el porche aval,
which-he had seen in-the porch below
ou se combatent li vassal;
where themselves fight the vassals
Li reis se liéve isnèlement:
The king himself raises swiftly
onc n'i prist drap ne garnement,
ever not-there he-took cloth nor garment
que solement sor sa chemise
but only over his shirt
vesti une pelice grise;
he-clothed a pelisse gray
tant coveita a val descendre
so-much he-desired to below to-come
ne li membra d'afublail prendre.
not to-him remembered of-cloak to-take

Mais uns danzeaus a val devale,
But a youth to below comes-down
qui vient corant par mé la sale;
who comes running through midst the hall
ainceis que fust li reis en l'atre,
before that were the king in the-court
li afubla ses peaus de martre.
on-him cloaked his skins of marten
Li reis eissi fors al serein:
The king issued out in-the night-air
une verge tint en sa main.
a rod he-held in his hand
Aporter fait cierges ardanz
To-bring he-makes candles burning
la ou trueve les combatanz;
there where he-finds the fighters
quant les vit combatre en la place,
when them he-saw fight in the place
entre eus se met, fort les menace:
between them himself he-puts strongly them threatens
«S'il se forfont de rien mais hué,
If-they themselves misdo in anything more today
«demain les pendra a cel pué.»
tomorrow them he-will-hang on that hill
Pués se comence a porpenser
Then himself begins to bethink
et lor armes a esguarder,
and their arms to look-at

que ço sont cil que li pramist
that these are those whom to-him promised
la deesse, que ço li dist,
the goddess who that to-him said
qu'uns sanglers et uns leon fiers
that-a boar and a lion fierce
prendront ses filles a moilliers.
will-take his daughters as wives
Pués lor demande qui il sont,
Then of-them he-asks who they are
dont il vienent et ou il vont:
whence they come and where they go
«Por quei combatez a ceste hore?
For why fight-you at this hour
«Quaus pechiez vos est coruz sore?
What sin to-you is run upon
«Quant tote creature dort,
When all creature sleeps
«entre vos dous querez la mort!
between you two you-seek the death
«Se vos de mon regne fussiez,
If you of my realm were
«ja ici ne vos meslissiez.»
ever here not you would-quarrel
Respondent lui: «Alez dormir:
Answer him Go sleep
«N'avon o vos rien a partir;
Not-we-have with you anything to share

«ne nos leist pas ore fabler,
nor us is-permitted at-all now to-chat
«car d'autre rien volon parler.»
for of-other thing we-wish to-speak

The Daughters of Adrastus

IV

The two men tell who they are. Adrastus disarms and robes them, feasts them in a richly hung chamber, and has his two daughters brought in, and the poet describes their beauty. In the morning he offers them his daughters and his realm. Polynices takes the elder, Argia, and Tydeus Deipyle, and the weddings last fifteen days.

Li reis ne s'est pas corociez,
The king not himself-is at-all angered
ainceis les a tant gent preiez,
rather them he-has so nobly prayed
qu'il li dient la verité
that-they to-him tell the truth
de ço que lor a demandé.
of that which them he-has asked
Li vassal conurent le rei,
The vassals knew the king
respondent li chascuns de sei,
answer him each of himself
de qual gent sont et de qual terre
of what folk they-are and of what land
et que il sont ça venu querre.
and what they are here come to-seek

Danz Tydeüs respont premier:
Lord Tydeus answers first
«De Calidone eissi l'autr' ier:
From Calydon I-issued the-other day
«Fiz sué Oeneüs le rei,
Son I-am (of-)Oeneus the king
«ça sué venuz por estre o tei.»
here I-am come for to-be with thee
Adrastus vers l'autre se torne,
Adrastus toward the-other himself turns
car celui en vit le plus morne.
for that-one thereof he-saw the most gloomy
Il li demande: «Beaus amis,
He to-him asks Fair friend
«dont iés tu et de qual païs?»
whence art thou and of what country
Cil ne dist pas le non son pére,
He not said at-all the name (of-)his father
por ço qu'il ert fiz de son frére;
for that that-he was son of his brother
ainz dist que de Thèbes est nez,
rather said that of Thebes he-is born
il et trestoz sis parentez.
he and all his kindred
«Di, va,» dist li reis, «por quei ceiles?
Say go said the king for why concealest-thou
«Ja savons nos bien les merveilles
Already know we well the marvels
«que Edipus fist de son pére,
which Oedipus did of his father

«quant il l'ocist et prist sa mére.
when he him-killed and took his mother
«Mout me sembles bon chevalier:
Much to-me thou-seemest good knight
«Ja ne t'avrai por ço meins chier;
Ever not thee-I-shall-have for that less dear
«car, se tu iés d'icel linage,
for if thou art of-that lineage
«tu iés assez de haut parage.»
thou art enough of high lineage
Li reis conut bien lor linage,
The king knew well their lineage
sot que il sont de haut parage:
knew that they are of high lineage
lor chevaus fait trés bien guarder,
their horses he-makes very well tend
et eus comande a desarmer;
and them he-commands to unarm
et en après forment les baise,
and in after greatly them kisses
les chevaliers entre eus apaise;
the knights between them he-appeases
il les acorde et departist
he them accords and parts
et mout doucement les joïst.
and very sweetly them welcomes
Mout est forment en son cuer liez
Very is greatly in his heart glad
des fiz as reis qu'a herbergiez;
of-the sons of-the kings whom-he-has lodged

pués lor fait jurer et plevir
then them he-makes swear and pledge
et par fiance bien tenir
and by pledge well to-keep
que, tant come il ja mais vivront,
that so-long as they ever more will-live
ami et compaignon serront.
friends and companions they-will-be
Al perron, desoz l'olivier,
At-the block under the-olive
se desarment li chevalier;
themselves unarm the knights
il se desarment: assez fu
they themselves unarm enough was
qui lor armes a receü.
who their arms has received
Il n'orent males ne conrei.
They not-had bags nor equipment
Desfublé sont davant le rei,
Uncloaked they-are before the king
mais les cors ont genz et bien faiz,
but the bodies they-have noble and well made
bien resemblent contes palaiz;
well they-resemble counts palatine
et orent senglement vestu
and had singly clothed
l'uns un samit, l'autre un bofu,
the-one a samite the-other a bofu

et sont bien chaucié li meschin
and are well shod the youths
chascuns d'un paile alixandrin.
each of-a silk Alexandrian
Dous manteaus vairs, larges et freis
Two mantles vair wide and fresh
lor afubla li riches reis
on-them cloaked the rich king
et reçut les mout richement
and received them very richly
a mont el maistre mandement;
at up in-the master dwelling
en la soe chambre demeine
into the his chamber own
li reis les chevaliers en meine.
the king the knights thence leads
Mout par fu gente cele chambre:
Very much was noble that chamber
li pavemenz en fu de lambre,
the pavement thereof was of amber
bien entailliez a marenitre;
well carved with marquetry
el front davant ot une litre
on-the front before it-had a band
d'esmeraudes et de jagonces:
of-emeralds and of jacinths
d'or i aveit plus de mil onces.
of-gold there was more than thousand ounces
Tendu i ot une cortine,
Hung there had a curtain

que li tramist une reïne:
which to-him sent a queen
Semiramis l'oï nomer,
Semiramis her-I-heard name
d'Egipte l'enveia par mer.
from-Egypt it-she-sent by sea
La cortine fu merveillose:
The curtain was marvelous
onc hon ne vit tant preciose,
ever man not saw so-much precious
ne onques rien tant bien teissue
nor ever thing so-much well woven
ne que tant fust d'uevre menue.
nor which so-much were of-work fine
Cele la fist que fu pendue
She it made who was hanged
por la deesse qu'ot vencue.
for the goddess whom-she-had conquered
Li sopers fu apareilliez
The supper was prepared
de plusors mes et de daintiez.
of many dishes and of dainties
Al n'i a plus a aconter:
Else not-there has more to recount
li reis fait l'eve demander,
the king makes the-water ask
dui danzel la vont aporter,
two youths it go to-bring

et li chevalier vont laver
and the knights go to-wash
en dous bacins que sont d'or mier:
in two basins which are of-gold pure
cil lavérent et vont mangier.
they washed and go to-eat
Un faudestou ot iluec mis,
A faldstool he-had there put
Polinicès s'i est assis;
Polynices himself-there is seated
de l'autre part sist Tydeüs
on the-other side sat Tydeus
desor un bufet de benus.
upon a stool of ebony
Des mes ne vos quier faire fable:
Of-the dishes not to-you I-seek to-make fable
pro en aportent a la table;
plenty thereof they-bring to the table
danzel lor servent plus de dez,
youths them serve more than ten
n'i a celui ne seit de prez.
not-there has that-one not be of worth
Por lor amor lava li reis,
For their love washed the king
et si manja d'un braon freis.
and so ate of-a brawn fresh
Quant il orent assez mangié,
When they had enough eaten
et vins tasté, plusors changié,
and wines tasted many changed

les napes traistrent li serjant,
the cloths drew-off the sergeants
les chandelers laissent ardant:
the candlesticks they-leave burning
en la chambre ot si grant clarté,
in the chamber had so great brightness
come se fust uns jorz d'esté.
as if it-were a day of-summer
Li reis por ses filles enveie,
The king for his daughters sends
mande a la maistre ques conreie,
he-sends to the mistress that-them she-equip
que gentement les apareit
that nobly them she-prepare
et en la chambre les enveit.
and into the chamber them she-send
Li reis fait ses filles lever,
The king makes his daughters rise
apareillier et conreer,
prepare and equip
por les monstrer as chevaliers:
for them to-show to-the knights
tient que les avront a moilliers.
he-holds that them they-will-have as wives
Eles vindrent lor chiés enclins,
They came their heads bowed
treciées de fil d'or lor crins;
braided with thread of-gold their hair
lor bliaut furent d'orcassin,
their tunics were of-orcassin

lor peliçon desoz hermin.
their pelisses under of-ermine
Totes nuz piez, eschevelées,
All bare foot unbound-haired
en la chambre vindrent les fées;
into the chamber came the fays
car monstrer voleient lor cors
for to-show they-wished their bodies
as chevaliers qui sont de fors.
to-the knights who are from outside
Quant eles virent les marchis,
When they saw the marquises
que a veeir n'orent apris,
whom to see not-they-had learned
vergoigne orent, ne fu merveille;
shame they-had not was marvel
la face lor devint vermeille.
the face to-them became red
Eles ne sévent qui il sont:
They not know who they are
quant les veient, vergoigne en ont.
when them they-see shame thereof they-have
Colors comencent a muer
Colors they-begin to change
et a lor pére a esguarder;
and at their father to look
eles vindrent tot dreit al rei,
they came all straight to-the king
il les assist dejoste sei.
he them seated beside himself

Mout furent gentes les pucèles,
Very were noble the maidens
en nul païs n'en ot tant bèles:
in any country not-thereof had so-many fair
onques Pallas ne Diana
ever Pallas nor Diana
la lor beauté ne sormonta.
the their beauty not surpassed
Ne sont petites ne trop granz,
Not they-are small nor too tall
meiénes sont et avenanz,
middling they-are and comely
d'une grandor et d'un semblant:
of-one height and of-one likeness
rien n'i aveit mesavenant.
anything not-there had unbecoming
Cheveus ont blois, lons et deugiez,
Hair they-have blond long and fine
si lor ateignent jusqu'as piez;
so to-them they-reach as-far-as-the feet
les fronz aperz et hauz et blans,
the foreheads open and high and white
bien eschevies par les flans;
well slender by the flanks
les ueuz ont vairs et amoros,
the eyes they-have gray and loving
ainc hon ne vit tant merveillos;
ever man not saw so-much marvelous
les nés ont dreiz et bien seanz,
the noses they-have straight and well seated

nes ont trop petiz ne trop granz;
not-them they-have too small nor too large
bouches ont dreites et reiaus,
mouths they-have straight and royal
les denz menuz, blans et egaus;
the teeth small white and even
mieuz vaut lor ris et lor baisiers
more is-worth their laugh and their kissing
que ne fait Londres ne Peitiers;
than not does London nor Poitiers
clers ont les vis et colorez
bright they-have the faces and colored
et de beauté bien aornez;
and with beauty well adorned
mentons orent bien faiz et lons,
chins they-had well made and long
hon ne sét dire lor façons.
man not knows-how to-tell their fashions
Les autres cors ont assez granz,
The other bodies they-have enough tall
graisles, soés et avenanz:
slender soft and comely
guari serront et retenu,
saved will-be and kept
quis porront tenir nu a nu.
who-them will-be-able hold naked to naked
Quant nature les aorna,
When nature them adorned

tal doelise lor dona
such delight to-them she-gave
que jo nel vos pués reconter,
that I not-it to-you can recount
si le lairai a tant ester.
so it I-shall-leave at so-much to-be
Ne fu mie vilains li reis:
Not was at-all boorish the king
de ses filles ne fist defeis
of his daughters not he-made forbidding
que n'i parolent li danzel;
that not-there speak the youths
pas ne l'en peise, ainz l'en est bel.
at-all not to-him-thereof weighs rather to-him-thereof is fair
Cil parolent corteisement
They speak courteously
et ne font pas lonc parlement:
and not make at-all long talk
al pére crement qu'il enuét,
to-the father they-fear that-it weary
car auques passe de la nuét.
for somewhat passes of the night
Li reis parole as chevaliers,
The king speaks to-the knights
que vit corteis, proz et legiers:
whom he-saw courteous valiant and nimble
«Prodome estes mout par semblant
Worthy-men you-are very by seeming
«et chevalier estes vaillant:
and knights you-are valiant

«De ço que vos vei eissilliez,
Of that that you I-see exiled
«me prent granz dueus et granz pitiez;
me takes great grief and great pity
«mais ne vos chaut ja esmaier,
but not you concerns ever to-dismay
«car Deus vos puet trés bien aidier.
for God you can very well aid
«Et pués qu'a mei estes torné,
And since that-to me you-are turned
«ne serreiz pas trop esguaré:
not you-will-be at-all too astray
«Ces meies filles vos dorrai
These my daughters to-you I-shall-give
«et ma terre vos liverrai.»
and my land to-you I-shall-deliver
Cil se tinrent mout a guariz
They themselves held very as saved
et respondent: «Moutes merciz.
and answer Many thanks
«Cist dons nos plaist, si l'otreion
This gift us pleases so it-we-grant
«et grez et graces vos rendon.»
and gratitude and thanks to-you we-render
Li reis fait demander le vin:
The king makes ask the wine
l'on li aporte a nés d'or fin.
one to-him brings in ship of-gold fine
Quant ont beü li chevalier,
When have drunk the knights

qui sont tuit las de chevauchier,
who are all weary of riding
li lét sont fait, si vont dormir,
the beds are made so they-go to-sleep
et les pucèles as covrir:
and the maidens to-the covering
cil dorment mout asseüré,
they sleep very reassured
car travaillié sont et pené.
for toiled they-are and pained
Les pucèles s'en retornérent,
The maidens themselves-thence returned
dedenz lor chambres s'en alérent.
within their chambers themselves-thence went
Mais qui que dorme, Adrastus veille:
But who that sleep Adrastus wakes
a sei meïsmes se conseille
with himself self himself counsels
que ses filles mariera,
that his daughters he-will-marry
a ces dous princes les dorra.
to these two princes them he-will-give
Il fu vices, si se porpense:
He was shrewd so himself bethinks
marier les puet senz despense;
marry them he-can without expense
ne lor vueut aillors seignors querre,
not for-them he-wishes elsewhere lords to-seek
quant ceus a trovez en sa terre;
when these he-has found in his land

d'eus coveita le mariage,
of-them he-coveted the marriage
car mout sont proz et de parage.
for very they-are valiant and of lineage
Par main liévent li soudeier,
By morning rise the soldiers
al temple vont les deus preier.
to-the temple they-go the gods to-pray
Quant eissirent de la chapèle,
When they-issued from the chapel
li reis gentement les apèle:
the king nobly them calls
il n'i ot home que eus treis,
it not-there had man but them three
il dui i furent et li reis:
they two there were and the king
«Seignor,» fait il «ço sont mi heir
Lords says he these are my heirs
«que vos veïstes ci hier seir:
whom you saw here yester evening
«A mes filles m'onor lairai,
To my daughters my-domain I-shall-leave
«de qual hore que jo morrai.
of what hour that I shall-die
«Se vos plaiseit, jes vos dorreie,
If you it-pleased I-them to-you would-give
«entre vos m'onor partireie:
between you my-domain I-would-share
«A mon vivant seiez seignor,
At my living be lords

«jo vos otrei tote m'onor.
I to-you grant all my-domain
«Jo sué vieuz hon, reposer vueil:
I am old man to-rest I-wish
«Tant ai travaillié toz m'en dueil,
So-much I-have toiled all me-thereof I-grieve
«et ne porrai mais chevauchier,
and not I-shall-be-able more to-ride
«ne mal sofrir, ne traveillier.
nor ill to-suffer nor to-toil
«Vos estes juefne bacheler,
You are young bachelors
«si poez bien mal endurer
so you-can well ill endure
«et mon regne bien justicier,
and my realm well govern
«que jo ai et large et plenier.
which I have both wide and full
«Vos qui poez sofrir travail,
You who can suffer toil
«pernez mon regne tot en bail,
take my realm all in charge
«et demenez les granz esforz,
and lead the great forces
«et faites les dreiz et les torz.
and do the rights and the wrongs
«Mei, qui sué vieuz et qui sué fraiz,
Me who am old and who am broken
«laissiez durer et vivre en paiz;
let last and live in peace

«toz mis deporz iert en riviéres
all my sports will-be on rivers
«et en forez, que j'ai pleniéres:
and in forests which I-have full
«Si demenrai ma vie a joie,
So I-shall-lead my life in joy
«car jo sai bien qu'ele iert mais poie.»
for I know well that-it will-be more little
Premier li respont Tydeüs:
First to-him answers Tydeus
«Cest plait,» fait il, «pas ne refus,
This plea says he at-all not I-refuse
«que volentiers n'en prenge l'une;
that willingly not-thereof I-take the-one
«mais, por ço qu'il n'i ait rancune,
but for that that-it not-there have rancor
«mis compainz eslise avant mei:
my companion let-choose before me
«L'ainznée prenge, et jo l'otrei.»
The-elder let-him-take and I it-grant
Polinicès issi l'agrée
Polynices thus it-agrees
que la graindre li seit donée,
that the greater to-him be given
et Tydeüs le li otreie:
and Tydeus it to-him grants
et il de rien ne s'i foleie,
and he in anything not himself-therein fools
car, si com dient li plusor,
for so as say the most

l'ainznée esteit mout la gençor,
the-elder was very the nobler
mais jo dirai, que jo ne mente,
but I shall-say that I not lie
n'esteit de rien l'autre meins gente.
not-was in anything the-other less noble
Li reis manda por ses chasez,
The king sent for his vassals
por ses druz et por ses privez;
for his intimates and for his familiars
ses barons fait li reis mander
his barons makes the king summon
et ses homes toz aüner.
and his men all to-gather
Quant il les ot toz assemblez,
When he them had all assembled
grant fu la corz et li barnez:
great was the court and the baronage
assez i ot dus et contors
enough there had dukes and counts
et demeines et vavassors.
and lords and vavasors
Par lor los done as chevaliers
By their counsel gives to-the knights
li reis ses filles a moilliers;
the king his daughters as wives
a grant honor ses filles done,
with great honor his daughters he-gives
la vile en bruit tote et resone;
the town thereof roars all and resounds

et jogleor mout s'en esjoent:
and minstrels much themselves-thereof rejoice
tant i chantent que tuit esroent.
so-much there they-sing that all grow-hoarse
Polinicès receü a
Polynices received has
cele que a non Argia;
her who has name Argia
tot ensement sont assemblé
all likewise are joined
Tydeüs et Deïphilé.
Tydeus and Deipyle
Pleniérement dura la corz
Fully lasted the court
que tint li reis par quinze jorz,
which held the king for fifteen days
et les nueces tot ensement,
and the nuptials all likewise
que ne pristrent definement:
which not took ending
por ses gendres que vueut haitier
for his sons-in-law whom he-wishes to-gladden
et o ses homes aleier,
and with his men to-ally
les fait durer tant longement,
them he-makes last so long
a grant honor, mout hautement.
with great honor very highly

The Embassy of Tydeus

V

At Thebes Eteocles hears of the marriage, takes his barons' counsel, strengthens the city, wins his neighbors, and plots to kill his brother. When Polynices's year comes, Tydeus, warning that Eteocles will kill him, goes in his stead, rides into the hall with an olive branch, and demands the realm under the brothers' oath. Eteocles mocks his brother's rich wife and refuses, and Tydeus defies him: a host of a hundred thousand will come before the year is out.

La fame en va par les contrées
The fame thence goes through the countries
que les pucèles sont donées;
that the maidens are given
a Thèbes en vint la novèle,
to Thebes thence came the news
auquanz i ot cui ne fu bèle,
some there had to-whom not it-was fair
que Polinicès a pris femne:
that Polynices has taken wife
apruef voudra aveir son regne.
after he-will-wish to-have his realm
Ethioclès n'en fu giens liez,
Eteocles not-thereof was at-all glad
onc de rien ne fu tant iriez;
ever of anything not he-was so-much angered
mout par hét icel mariage,
very much he-hates that marriage
car il i entent son damage.
for he therein understands his harm

Son frére sét d'amis si fort,
His brother he-knows of-friends so strong
que ne li porra faire tort,
that not to-him he-will-be-able to-do wrong
s'il le li fait, qu'il ne s'en venge
if-he it to-him does that-he not himself-thereof avenge
et sa terre ne li bestenge.
and his land not to-him trouble
Il a mandé toz ses privez,
He has summoned all his familiars
en son vergier les a jostez;
in his orchard them he-has gathered
conseil demande de cel plait
counsel he-asks of that plea
que sis frére a contre lui fait,
which his brother has against him made
car il sét bien qu'encontre sei
for he knows well that-against himself
sis frére a pris la fille al rei,
his brother has taken the daughter (of-)the king
et par la force a ceus de la
and by the force of those of there
cuide raveir l'onor de ça;
he-thinks to-have-again the-domain of here
mais il n'est fins de la li rendre,
but he not-is ready of it to-him to-render
car il sei laireit ainceis pendre,
for he himself would-let rather hang
ainz se pendreit que la guerpist,
rather himself he-would-hang than it he-forsake

ne que son frére i acoillist.
nor that his brother there he-received
Cil li dient: «Or t'esvertue
Those to-him say Now thyself-exert
«et contre ço requier aiue;
and against that seek aid
«acorde o tei tes enemis
accord with thee thy enemies
«et quier socors a tes amis. 1130
and seek succor from thy friends
«Ceste vile fai esforcier,
This town make strengthen
«les tors et les murs redrecier;
the towers and the walls raise-again
«car nen a tor en ta cité
for not has tower in thy city
«que ne chiée d'antiquité.
which not fall from-antiquity
«Esguarde bien sor tote rien 1135
Look well above all thing
«que tuit ti home t'aiment bien;
that all thy men thee-love well
«aime le grant et le menor,
love the great and the lesser
«car par iço tendras t'onor.
for by this thou-wilt-hold thy-domain
«En ta terre justise meine,
In thy land justice lead
«de dreiture tenir te peine, 1140
of right to-hold thyself take-pains

«et ne laissier pas le plus fort
and not leave at-all the more strong
«le plus fiéble mener a tort.
the more feeble lead at wrong
«Larges seies a tote gent,
Generous be to all folk
«n'amasser ja or ne argent;
not-amass ever gold nor silver
«as chevaliers depart ton or,
to-the knights share thy gold
«car soz ciel n'a meillor tensor;
for under heaven not-has better treasure
«et quant tu n'avras que doner,
and when thou not-wilt-have what to-give
«si va o eus rire et gaber;
so go with them laugh and jest
«pramet lor quant que tu avras
promise them whatever that thou wilt-have
«et done lor quant que tu as:
and give them whatever that thou hast
«S'issi nel fais, tu as perdu
If-thus not-it thou-doest thou hast lost
«et nos te verron confondu.»
and we thee shall-see confounded
Li reis respont: «Issi ferai,
The king answers Thus I-shall-do
«ja cest conseil ne guerpirai.»
ever this counsel not I-shall-forsake
Mout fu li reis sages et proz:
Very was the king wise and valiant

ses veisins acorde o sei toz;
his neighbors he-accords with himself all
il nen a si povre veisin
he not has so poor neighbor
cui il ne prét de faire fin;
whom he not prays of to-make peace
vers toz prent trives et fiance,
toward all he-takes truces and pledge
encontre son frére aleiance.
against his brother alliance
Maisniée ot, onc ne vi meillor
Household he-had ever not I-saw better
a rei ne a empereor:
to king nor to emperor
tuit sont noble home de parage,
all are noble men of lineage
mil en veïssiez d'un linage,
thousand thereof you-would-have-seen of-one lineage
que de bachelers, que d'enfanz,
both of bachelors and of-youths
toz li plus vieuz nen ot trente anz.
all the most old not had thirty years
Chascuns coveite por s'amie
Each covets for his-beloved
los de faire chevalerie.
praise of doing chivalry
Maudient trives que tant durent,
They-curse truces which so-long last
et dient tuit que mare furent,
and say all that ill they-were

quant por dormir et por mangier
when for sleeping and for eating
sont josté tant bon chevalier.
are joined so-many good knights
Li plusor s'en vuelent aler,
The most themselves-thence wish to-go
car mal lor est tant sojorner.
for ill to-them it-is so-much to-tarry
Ceus qui s'en vont, Ethioclès
Those who themselves-thence go Eteocles
a esporons les siut après;
with spurs them follows after
que par amor, que par preiére,
both by love and by prayer
en la cité les torne arriére,
into the city them he-turns back
jo qu'en direie? Tant les tint
I what-thereof would-say So-long them he-held
que li termes son frére vint.
that the term (of-)his brother came
Quant vint al terme, uét jorz ainceis,
When it-came to-the term eight days before
sa cort a fait joster li reis,
his court has made gather the king
et priveement se conseille
and privately himself counsels
de traïson et de merveille;
of treason and of marvel
se sis frére vers lui repaire,
if his brother toward him returns

grant traïson porparle a faire:
great treason he-plans to do
o a emblé o a veüe,
or by stealth or by sight
ocirra lui, s'il a aiüe.
he-will-kill him if-he has aid
Li frans hon ert en autre terre,
The noble man was in other land
ne saveit mot de ceste guerre;
not knew word of this war
ne se gardot pas del felon,
not himself guarded at-all from-the felon
qui porparlot la traïson.
who was-plotting the treason
Quant a son terme se fu pris,
When at his term he was come
si vout aler en son païs;
so he-wished to-go into his country
mout vout a Thèbes retorner
much he-wished to Thebes to-return
por son covenant demander.
for his covenant to-ask
Son frére de rien ne mescreit,
His brother in anything not he-mistrusts
aler en vueut querre son dreit:
to-go thence he-wishes to-seek his right
congié en demande le rei,
leave thereof he-asks the king
et il en a doné l'otrei.
and he thereof has given the-grant

De mautalent et de pute ire
From ill-will and from foul wrath
Tydeüs s'encomence a rire:
Tydeus himself-begins to laugh
«Par Deu,» fait il, «se tu i vais,
By God says he if thou there goest
«tu n'en retorneras ja mais:
thou not-thence wilt-return ever more
«Tis frére est fel, si t'ocirra,
Thy brother is felon so thee-will-kill
«por le regne qu'aveir voudra.
for the realm which-to-have he-will-wish
«Mais tu remaign et jo irai,
But thou remain and I shall-go
«ton message bien li dirai,
thy message well to-him I-shall-tell
«car, ço m'est vis, par ton message
for that to-me-is seeming by thy message
«deis primes saveir son corage
thou-must first know his heart
«que t'i embates senz conduit:
than thee-there thou-thrust without safe-conduct
«Car, jo l'oi dire et bien le cuit,
For I it-heard say and well it I-think
«ainceis en sofferra grant guerre
rather thereof he-will-suffer great war
«que il te laist issi la terre.»
than he thee let thus the land
Polinicès le li otreie,
Polynices it to-him grants

et Tydeüs se met en veie;
and Tydeus himself puts on way
Polinicès a tant remést,
Polynices at this remained
et Tydeüs de la chambre ést.
and Tydeus from the chamber issues
Par les degrez descent a val,
By the steps he-descends to below
la sèle mist en son cheval;
the saddle he-put on his horse
ses armes prent, monte el destrier,
his arms he-takes mounts on-the charger
a Deu comande sa moillier.
to God he-commends his wife
Apareilliez est et armez
Prepared he-is and armed
et el chemin s'en est entrez;
and onto-the road himself-thence is entered
il tint sa veie chevauchant,
he held his way riding
Deiphilé remést plorant.
Deipyle remained weeping
Cele guaimente, crie et brait
She laments cries and wails
por son seignor qui la en vait;
for her lord who there thence goes
mais Tydeüs d'içe n'ot cure,
but Tydeus of-that not-had care
de la cité ést l'ambleüre.
from the city he-issues the-amble

Or li aït Deus et sis dreiz,
Now him aid God and his right
sis vasselages et sa feiz,
his prowess and his faith
car, se onc puet Ethioclès,
for if ever can Eteocles
nel verra mais Polinicès.
not-him will-see more Polynices
Tant chevaucha et jor et nuét,
So-much he-rode both day and night
a fain, a sei et a dur lét,
in hunger in thirst and in hard bed
que ainz que passast la semaine,
that before that passed the week
vint a Thèbes a qualque peine.
he-came to Thebes with some pain
Quant Tydeüs ot tant alé
When Tydeus had so-much gone
que il fu près de la cité,
that he was near to the city
d'un olivier, que il trova,
of-an olive which he found
un ramel o sei en porta:
a branch with himself thence he-carried
por ço porte rain d'olivier,
for that he-carries branch of-olive

que paiz li deit senefiier
that peace to-him ought signify
a aler le regne saisir
to go the realm to-seize
et a le message fornir.
and to the message to-furnish
Entrez en est en la cité
Entered thereinto he-is in the city
et le palaiz a demandé;
and the palace he-has asked
il chevauche par mé la rue,
he rides through midst the street
chevaliers trueve, ses salue:
knights he-finds so-them greets
«Seignor,» fait il, «enseigniez mei
Lords says he show me
«ou jo porrai trover le rei.»
where I shall-be-able to-find the king
Uns des chevaliers li respont:
One of-the knights to-him answers
«En cel palaiz la sus amont.
In that palace there above up
«A un parlement vueut aler,
To a parley he-wishes to-go
«mais encor siet a son disner:
but yet he-sits at his dinner
«Se vos volez a lui parler,
If you wish to him to-speak
«n'avez mais hué que demorer:
not-you-have more today than to-tarry

«Cort i a grant de chevaliers.»
Court there has great of knights
La vint tot dreit li messagiers:
There came all straight the messenger
chevauchant vait isnèlement,
riding he-goes swiftly
et contint sei seürement.
and bore himself surely
A la porte vint Tydeüs,
At the gate came Tydeus
par les degrez en poia sus;
by the steps thence climbed up
l'auberc vestu, l'espee ceinte,
the-hauberk clothed the-sword girt
entre en la sale, que fu peinte.
he-enters into the hall which was painted
Tydeüs fu proz et corteis:
Tydeus was valiant and courteous
a cheval vint devant le deis,
on horse he-came before the dais
le rei salue et son barnage,
the king he-greets and his baronage
et en après dist son message.
and in after said his message
Devant le rei s'est arestez,
Before the king himself-is stopped
et dist en haut: «Or m'escotez.»
and said on high Now me-listen
Li reis se tot et cil parla,
The king himself silenced and he spoke

onc por poor rien n'i laissa;
ever for fear anything not-there he-left
onc ne laissa por coardie
ever not he-left for cowardice
que son message tot ne die.
that his message all not he-say
«Reis,» fait il, «jo tei sué messages:
King says he I to-thee am messenger
«Bien est quel die et que tul saches
Well is that-it I-say and that thou-it know
«por quei sué ça tramis a tei;
for why I-am here sent to thee
«jol te dirai, entent a mei.
I-it to-thee shall-say attend to me
«Pués que mesavint de ton pére,
Since that misbefell of thy father
«tu feïs concorde o ton frére
thou madest concord with thy brother
«que tenissez l'onor par anz,
that you-should-hold the-domain by years
«et de ço a plusors garanz.
and of that he-has many guarantors
«Or m'enveie tis frére a tei,
Now me-sends thy brother to thee
«et si te mande iço par mei
and so to-thee sends this by me
«que guerpisses ceste cité
that thou-forsake this city
«et li renges la reiauté.
and to-him render the royalty

«Tu as eü un an l'onor:
Thou hast had a year the-domain
«Ore te semont par amor
Now thee he-summons by love
«que li tienges la covenance,
that to-him thou-hold the covenant
«si com tu l'en feïs fiance:
so as thou to-him-thereof madest pledge
«Uns anz assez tost passera,
A year enough soon will-pass
«li regnes a tei revendra.
the realm to thee will-come-back
«Prée tei que li lais sa terre,
He-prays thee that to-him thou-leave his land
«et si reva aillors conquerre.
and so go-back elsewhere to-conquer
«Juras le lui, trés bien le sés:
Thou-swarest it to-him very well it thou-knowest
«Parjurez iés, se tu nen és.
Perjured thou-art if thou not-it doest
«Por estre un an desiretez,
For to-be a year disinherited
«ne deis mentir tes leiautez;
not thou-must belie thy loyalties
«et se tu bien l'en vueus mentir,
and if thou well to-him-thereof wishest to-lie

«cist baron nel porront sofrir
these barons not-it will-be-able to-suffer
«que tant prodome por sol tei
that so-many worthy-men for only thee
«chascuns d'eus li mente sa fei;
each of-them to-him belie his faith
«car tu n'as home de parage
for thou not-hast man of lineage
«que tis frére n'ait en ostage;
whom thy brother not-have in hostage
«et est assez plus avenant
and it-is enough more fitting
«que li tienges son covenant
that to-him thou-hold his covenant
«et que t'adreces envers lui,
and that thyself-thou-straighten toward him
«plus por ta fei que por l'autrui.»
more for thy faith than for the-other's
Ethioclès pas ne s'argue,
Eteocles at-all not himself-hastens
et neporuec sa color mue;
and nevertheless his color changes
iriez fu il en son corage,
angered was he in his heart
mais en paiz respont al message:
but in peace answers to-the messenger
«Se mis frére mande par vos
If my brother sends by you
«riches hon est, j'en sué joios:
rich man he-is I-thereof am joyful

«Onc a nul jor ne porent estre
Ever at any day not could be
«de sa richece si ancestre.
of his riches his ancestors
«Se li laissoe cest païs,
If to-him I-left this country
«il n'i serreit ja estaïs;
he not-there would-be ever settled
«car il a la tanz granz afaires
for he has there so-many great affairs
«que d'iceus ne li serreit guaires.
that of-these not to-him would-be much
«Dire li poez une rien:
Tell him you-can one thing
«Laist mei ester, si fera bien.
Let-him-let me be so he-will-do well
«Bel li porreit estre al seignor,
Fair to-him could be to-the lord
«se ci guarisseie a honor;
if here I-lived with honor
«car, se n'aveie honor de ça,
for if not-I-had honor of here
«jo m'en ireie a lui de la.
I myself-thence would-go to him from there
«Mis frére est, li laiz serreit granz
My brother he-is the shame would-be great
«que fusse povre et il mananz.
that I-were poor and he wealthy
«La se repost a grant delét,
There himself let-him-rest at great delight

«o sa femne gése en son lét,
with his wife let-him-lie in his bed
«et jo deça me contendrai
and I here myself shall-maintain
«a poverté, si com porrai.
in poverty so as I-shall-be-able
«Come amenreit si riche femne
How he-would-bring so rich wife
«come est la soe en icest regne?
as is the his into this realm
«En son païs a grant plenté,
In her country she-has great plenty
«ici avreit grant poverté:
here she-would-have great poverty
«Sa richece reprovereit
Her riches she-would-reproach
«et tote jor nos maudireit;
and all day us would-curse
«ele tencereit o mon pére,
she would-quarrel with my father
«o mes serors et o ma mére.
with my sisters and with my mother
«Granz torz serreit que sa moillier
Great wrong it-would-be that his wife
«nos demenast ici dangier.»
us should-lead here trouble

Tydeüs dist: «Or oi enjan;
Tydeus said Now I-hear deceit
«mais, par ma fei, ço n'iert oan
but by my faith that not-will-be this-year
«que il vos laist issi la terre,
that he you let thus the land
«ainceis vos en movra grant guerre;
rather to-you thereof he-will-move great war
«ço sachiez bien que assez tost
that know well that enough soon
«sor vos verreiz venir grant host.
upon you you-will-see come great host
«Voz ueuz veiant prendron les preies,
Your eyes seeing we-shall-take the booties
«et o engenz et o cercleies
and with engines and with siege-towers
«nos acosteron si as murs
we shall-approach so to-the walls
«ja ne serreiz dedenz seürs.
ever not you-will-be within sure
«Por veir vos di, mout me merveil
For truth to-you I-say much myself I-marvel
«que ne prenez autre conseil.
that not you-take other counsel
«Dont esperez aveir aiue?
Whence hope-you to-have aid
«Quant vostre terre iert confondue
When your land will-be confounded
«et maint baron en serront mort,
and many-a baron thereof will-be dead

«li adrecereiz vos cest tort;
to-him will-redress you this wrong
«pués que vendra al grant destreit,
since that it-will-come to-the great strait
«vos li rendreiz, ço sai, son dreit;
you to-him will-render that I-know his right
«vos li rendreiz tote sa part,
you to-him will-render all his share
«mais donques le fereiz a tart.
but then it you-will-do too late
«Mieuz vient que ore senz damage
Better comes that now without harm
«ait li vassaus son hiretage.»
have the vassal his heritage
Li reis li dist: «Mout iés leideiz,
The king to-him said Very thou-art insulting
«de bien parler iés assez deiz;
of well speaking thou-art enough skilled
«tes paroles sés bien assire,
thy words thou-knowest well to-set
«mais, por rien que me saches dire,
but for anything that me thou-know to-say
«ne voudrai jo m'onor guerpir,
not shall-wish I my-domain to-forsake
«tant com la puésse jor tenir;
so-long as it I-can a-day hold
«ne la guerpirai por menace
nor it I-shall-forsake for threat
«que reis ne dus ne cuens me face.»
which king nor duke nor count me make

Et Tydeüs respont al rei:
And Tydeus answers to-the king
«Or te somoign jo de ta fei,
Now thee summon I by thy faith
«car li termes est trespassez
for the term is passed
«qu'il deüst estre coronez;
that-he should be crowned
«vers lui te meines malement:
toward him thyself thou-bearest badly
«A tort est reis qui sa fei ment.
At wrong is king who his faith belies
«Se ne t'en vas, mal t'en vendra,
If not thyself-thence thou-goest ill to-thee-thereof will-come
«ja nule rien ne t'en guarra,
ever any thing not thee-thereof will-save
«qu'anceis que seit cist anz passez,
that-before that be this year passed
«te monsterron cent mile armez.
to-thee we-shall-show hundred thousand armed
«Se li mur de ceste cité
If the walls of this city
«erent de fer o aceré,
were of iron or of-steel
«n'en remaindreit uns en estant,
not-thereof would-remain one in standing
«se ne li renz son covenant.»
if not to-him thou-renderest his covenant

The Ambush of the Fifty

VI

Eteocles defies Tydeus, and when Tydeus appeals to the barons none dares answer. The king secretly sends fifty chosen knights after him, and they lie in wait at the Sphinx's pass. Tydeus kills their leader Jaconeus, then holds the Sphinx's old rock, rolls a great stone down on them, and kills Galeran and the rest, sparing one man to carry the news to the king. He sets out for Argos on a sorrel horse, gravely wounded.

Ethioclès a escoté
Eteocles has listened
com li messages a parlé; 1390
how the messenger has spoken
recoilli le en mautalent
received him in ill-will
et respondié mout fiérement:
and answered very fiercely
«Trop sés estoutement parler,
Too thou-knowest haughtily to-speak
«homes laidir et aviler:
men to-insult and to-debase
«Qui de tei fist son messagier 1395
Who of thee made his messenger
«ne voleit rien ça espleitier.
not wished anything here to-achieve
«Or li diras de meie part
Now to-him thou-wilt-say from my part
«ço que il a trés bien le guart,
that which he has very well it let-him-keep

«car ne vueil mais d'ore en avant
for not I-wish more from-now in forward
«que il m'apeaut de covenant;
that he me-call to covenant
«et sache bien, de quant que j'ai,
and let-him-know well of whatever that I-have
«que ja plein pié ne l'en lairai:
that ever full foot not him-thereof I-shall-leave
«Mais or verrai qui m'assaudra
But now I-shall-see who me-will-assail
«et qui mes murs peceiera.»
and who my walls will-break-to-pieces
Tydeüs dist: «Mar le parlas:
Tydeus said Ill it thou-spokest
«Vueilles o non, tu li rendras.
Thou-wilt or not thou to-him wilt-render
«Son covenant li as menti,
His covenant to-him thou-hast belied
«de soe part ci te desfi.
from his part here thee I-defy
«Fai faire paliz et fossoirs
Make make palisades and ditches
«et redrecier tes aleoirs:
and set-up-again thy wall-walks
«A tart serront mais reparé
Too late will-be more repaired
«li vieil mur de ceste cité.»
the old walls of this city

Tydeüs as barons se torne:
Tydeus to-the barons himself turns
n'i a celui n'ait face morne,
not-there has that-one not-have face gloomy
car il sévent bien que senz dote
for they know well that without doubt
la contree en guastera tote;
the country thereof he-will-lay-waste all
mais le rei n'osent contredire,
but the king not-they-dare gainsay
por ce quel sévent de grant ire:
for that that-him they-know of great wrath
«Seignor,» fait il, «entendez mei:
Lords says he hear me
«Oï avez de vostre rei,
Heard you-have of your king
«que tot pleinement se parjure,
that all fully himself perjures
«que ester ne vueut a dreiture.
that to-stand not he-wishes to right
«Polinicès somont par mei
Polynices summons through me
«ceus qui d'est plait li sont par fei
those who of-this plea to-him are by faith
«que tost en Gréce a lui en viengent
that soon into Greece to him thence they-come
«et de la guerre o lui se tiengent:
and of the war with him themselves they-hold
«Qui guerpira terre ne fué,
Who will-forsake land or fief

«rendra le lui, pleiges l'en sué;
will-render it to-him pledges thereof I-am
«et n'ait il ja creme d'aveir,
and not-have he ever fear of-wealth
«car une rien poez saveir:
for one thing you-can know
«Mout a argent et plus a or,
Much he-has silver and more has gold
«soz ciel nen a si gent tensor;
under heaven not has so noble treasure
«a sa maisniée le dorra,
to his household it he-will-give
«ja autre guarde n'en fera.»
ever other guard not-thereof he-will-make
Onc n'i ot si riche baron
Ever not-there had so rich baron
qui li deïst ne o ne non:
who to-him said nor yes nor no
tuit li baron sont en escot,
all the barons are in listening
li plus riches ne sone mot.
the most rich not sounds word
Quant il veit qu'il n'i fera al,
When he sees that-he not-there will-do other
torne le chief de son cheval;
he-turns the head of his horse
ne li reis ne l'a herbergié,
nor the king not him-has lodged
ne cil ne prent a lui congié.
nor he not takes from him leave

Par la sale tuit en parolent
Through the hall all thereof speak
et le message forment loent;
and the messenger greatly praise
l'uns a l'autre dit en requei:
the-one to the-other says in quiet
«Bien parole cil, par ma fei:
Well speaks he by my faith
«Por parler n'eüst rien perdu,
For speaking not-he-would-have anything lost
«qui l'en eüst dreit consentu.»
who to-him-thereof had right consented
Li messages en vait poignant
The messenger thence goes spurring
et son espié vait brandissant:
and his spear goes brandishing
ço est signes de guerreier
that is sign of warring
et del païs tot eissillier.
and of-the country all to-ravage
Li reis i fist traïson grant,
The king therein did treason great
mais onc n'en ala en avant.
but ever not-thereof went in forward
Il s'en est levez de la table,
He himself-thence is risen from the table
si apèle son conestable,
so calls his constable

et de ses privez ensement
and of his familiars likewise
fait apeler celeement;
he-makes call secretly
si lor dist: «N'os tien mes amis,
so to-them said Not-you I-hold more friends
«se li messages s'en vait vis.»
if the messenger himself-thence goes alive
Pramis lor a or et argent,
Promised to-them he-has gold and silver
muls et chevaus a lor talent.
mules and horses at their will
Cil s'en vont vïaz as hostaus,
They themselves-thence go quickly to-the lodgings
sèles font metre en lor chevaus:
saddles they-make put on their horses
cinquante furent chevalier,
fifty were knights
qui sivirent le messagier;
who followed the messenger
eslét en sont li plus legier
chosen thereof are the most nimble
et li plus fort et li plus fier.
and the most strong and the most fierce
Tot bèlement et a celé
All quietly and in secret
s'en éssent fors de la cité
themselves-thence issue out of the city
par une soutive posterne,
by a hidden postern

que fu d'a val devers gualerne,
which was from below toward northwest
les escuz as cous senglement,
the shields at-the necks singly
por chevauchier legiérement.
for to-ride nimbly
Cinquante furent compaignon,
Fifty were companions
n'i ot escuier ne garçon:
not-there had squire nor groom
chascuns des cinquante par sei
each of-the fifty by himself
de hardement valeit un rei.
in boldness was-worth a king
Il s'adrecent par autre veie,
They themselves-direct by other way
et Tydeüs mout poi espleie:
and Tydeus very little speeds
son cheval crent por l'ahanage,
his horse he-fears for the-toil
li lor sont frès et de grant rage.
the theirs are fresh and of great rage
A tart avra aiuement,
Too late he-will-have aid
se sa proece nel defent:
if his prowess not-him defends
mout li sont or loign si ami
very to-him are now far his friends
et trop prochien si enemi.
and too near his enemies

Li traïtor quil vont sivant
The traitors who-him go following
a l'encontre li vont davant;
to the-encounter to-him go before
el chief del bos sont embuschié
at-the head of-the wood they-are ambushed
et sor lor hanstes apoié.
and upon their shafts leaning
La li sont alé a l'encontre
There to-him they-are gone to the-encounter
ou Spins soleit estre li monstre,
where Sphinx was-wont to-be the monster
qui les homes por deviner
who the men for divining
soleit ocirre et afoler:
was-wont to-kill and to-maim
ço fu uns pas que mout fu griés,
that was a pass which very was grievous
maint home i ont perdu les chiés.
many-a man there have lost the heads
Par son la nuét, en un sentier,
At top-of the night on a path
s'embuschiérent li chevalier.
themselves-ambushed the knights
Vueille o ne vueille Tydeüs,
Will or not will Tydeus
venir l'estuet a cel pertus;
to-come him-behooves to that pass
a cel pertus venir l'estuet,
to that pass to-come him-behooves

car par autre passer ne puet.
for by other to-pass not he-can
Cil ont porpris le pas davant,
Those have seized the pass before
et Tydeüs vint chevauchant.
and Tydeus came riding
Li soleuz ert ja resconsez
The sun was already set
et li jorz ert toz avesprez;
and the day was all evening
la lune liéve, si luist cler,
the moon rises so shines clear
et cil espleite de l'aler.
and he speeds in the-going
Sor lor aguait s'est embatuz,
Upon their ambush himself-is thrust
mais nes a pas aperceüz,
but not-them has at-all perceived
jusque lor chevaus ot fremir
until their horses he-hears neigh
et lor escuz veit resplendir.
and their shields sees shine
Soz son escu guarde a senestre,
Under his shield he-looks at left
aperçut les: n'i vousist estre,
perceived them not-there he-would-have-wished to-be
mais nequedent en son corage
but nevertheless in his heart
mout prent en sei grant vasselage.
much he-takes in himself great prowess

Auques de loign les aperceit,
Somewhat from far them he-perceives
car la lune mout clér luiseit:
for the moon very bright shone
il sét bien que il est traïz,
he knows well that he is betrayed
mais ne s'est pas espooriz;
but not himself-is at-all frightened
proece ot grant et hardement,
prowess he-had great and boldness
si parole seürement;
so he-speaks surely
il s'en traverse en mé la lande,
he himself-thence crosses into midst the heath
a ceus parla, si lor demande:
to those spoke so them asks
«Qual gent estes, qui ci guaitiez
What folk you-are who here lie-in-wait
«et en cest bos vos tapissiez?
and in this wood yourselves hide
«Larron estes o male gent,
Thieves you-are or evil folk
«si com jo cuit a escïent.
so as I think to knowledge
«Mais por neient vos reponez,
But for nothing you hide
«car toz sué sous, bien le veez;
for all I-am alone well it you-see

«a cest afaire o mei n'ai al
for this affair with me not-I-have other
«que mes armes et mon cheval.
than my arms and my horse
«Se vos o mei volez joster,
If you with me wish to-joust
«n'i avez mais que demorer:
not-there you-have more than to-tarry
«En cest chemin ci vos atent, 1535
On this road here you I-await
«ou vos rendrai torneiement.»
where to-you I-shall-render tourney
Cil ne li ont un mot soné,
Those not to-him have a word sounded
ains sont tot prest et acesmé;
rather they-are all ready and equipped
saillent de lor embuschement,
they-leap from their ambush
sil requiérent espessement; 1540
so-him attack thickly
escrïé l'ont et envaï,
cried him-they-have and assailed
de totes parz l'ont assailli.
from all sides him-they-have assailed
Il le cuidiérent sempres prendre,
They him thought at-once to-take
mais il fu prez de se defendre;
but he was ready of himself to-defend
mout se defent bien de trestoz, 1545
much himself defends well from all

come vassaus hardiz et proz:
as vassal bold and valiant
Tydeüs mout fort se defent
Tydeus very strongly himself defends
et combat sei hardiement.
and fights himself boldly
Primes l'assaut Jaconeüs,
First him-assails Jaconeus
qui lor maistre fu et lor dus:
who their master was and their duke
Deus l'a guari et defendu,
God him-has saved and defended
qu'il ne l'a pas aconseü.
that-he not him-has at-all reached
Tuit li lancent espessement
All at-him hurl thickly
et l'assaillent mout durement;
and him-assail very hard
estor li donent grant et fort:
battle to-him they-give great and strong
poor i puet aveir de mort.
fear there he-can have of death
S'espee trait, que li dona
His-sword he-draws which to-him gave
Oëneüs, quant l'adoba:
Oeneus when him-he-dubbed
ne la retient fers ne aciers,
not it holds-back iron nor steel
onc tant bone n'ot chevaliers.
ever so-much good not-had knight

Galanz li févre la forja
Wayland the smith it forged
et danz Volcans la tresgeta:
and lord Vulcan it cast
treis deesses ot al temprer
three goddesses it-had at-the tempering
et treis fees al tresgeter.
and three fays at-the casting
Ja por nul coup ne pleiera,
Ever for any blow not it-will-bend
ne ja roïz n'i aerdra;
nor ever rust not-there will-cling
ne ja nus hon n'en iert navrez
nor ever any man not-thereof will-be wounded
qui de la plaie seit sanez.
who from the wound be healed
Feru en a le chevalier
Struck therewith he-has the knight
et tot fendu jusqu'al braier
and all split as-far-as-the breech-belt
qui primerains a lui lança;
who first at him hurled
as autres dist: «Traiez vos la,
to-the others he-said Draw you there
«car m'espee trenche mout fort.
for my-sword cuts very strongly
«Jo vos defi trestoz de mort:
I you defy all to death

«A tart avra aiuement
Too late will-have aid
«cui jo ferrai par mautalent.»
whom I shall-strike in ill-will
Li traïtor sont irascu
The traitors are angered
del compagnon qu'il ont perdu;
for-the companion whom-they have lost
mout se peinent de lui vengier;
much themselves strive of him to-avenge
as vos l'estor grant et plenier.
behold you the-battle great and full
Il l'ont feru de tal vertu
They him-have struck with such strength
que del cheval l'ont abatu;
that from-the horse him-they-have felled
pués li dient: «Vos estes jus,
then to-him they-say You are down
«ore est vengiez Jaconeüs.
now is avenged Jaconeus
— Seignor,» fait Tydeüs, «nel dites!
Lords says Tydeus not-it say
«Bien m'en devreie raler quites:
Well me-thence I-ought to-go-back quit
«Messages ne devreit, por veir,
Messenger not ought for truth
«ne mal oïr, ne mal aveir.»
nor ill to-hear nor ill to-have
Li traïtor de ço n'ont cure,
The traitors of that not-have care

ainz l'assaillent par grant ardure
rather him-assail with great ardor
et s'escrient: «Ferez, baron!»
and themselves-cry Strike barons
Cil se defent come leon;
He himself defends like lion
mais il est sous, si vait lassant,
but he is alone so goes wearying
et cil le vont fort empressant.
and they him go strongly pressing
Joste sei vit un haut rochier
Beside himself he-saw a high rock
qui mout ert bons a guerreier;
which very was good for warring
en sus monta, lor euz veiant:
on up he-climbed their eyes seeing
or mais orreiz bataille grant.
now more you-will-hear battle great
La roche est fort et defensable,
The rock is strong and defensible
ja dis fu niz a un deable:
already days it-was nest to a devil
Spins i estut al tens antif,
Sphinx there stood in-the time ancient
qui maint franc home fist chaitif.
who many-a noble man made wretched
Se nus d'eus est qui la l'assaille,
If any of-them is who there him-assail
defendre s'i voudra senz faille.
to-defend himself-there he-will-wish without fail

Cil i vienent de grant randon,
Those there come with great rush
a pié l'assaillent environ;
on foot him-assail around
il l'assaillent de totes parz
they him-assail from all sides
et li lancent esmoluz darz;
and at-him hurl sharpened darts
escrient lui mal la garra,
they-cry-to him ill there he-will-be-safe
ne en roche, ne ça, ne la;
nor in rock nor here nor there
mais en la roche a bon guarant:
but in the rock he-has good warrant
ne crent neient fors de davant.
not he-fears anything except from before
Mout lor avint fort aventure;
Very to-them befell strong adventure
a lui fu bone et a eus dure.
to him it-was good and to them hard
A mont ot une pierre bise,
At up there-had a stone gray
que sor les autres fu assise;
which above the others was set
mais par somet si se teneit,
but by summit so itself held
que por un poi qu'el ne chaeit.
that for a little that-it not fell
La pierre par esteit tant grant,
The stone very was so-much great

doze buef ne la traïssant.
twelve oxen not it would-draw
Tydeüs l'empeint contre val,
Tydeus it-thrusts against valley
fremir en fait tot le costal:
tremble thereof he-makes all the slope
cui ele en sa veie aconsiut,
whom it in its way reaches
poez saveir que mort reçut.
you-can know that death he-received
Aconsiut en barons de prez,
It-reaches thereof barons of worth
jo ne sai bien o nuef o dez:
I not know well or nine or ten
cil ne li feront mais hué presse,
these not to-him will-make more today press
ne nule rien dont il s'iraisse.
nor any thing whereof he himself-anger
Del mieuz erent de lor païs:
Of-the best they-were of their country
Therus i esteit et Halys,
Therus there was and Halys
et Dorylas et Fedimus.
and Dorylas and Fedimus
Ceus ne crendra mais Tydeüs:
These not will-fear more Tydeus
la pierre les a si feruz
the stone them has so struck
que morz les a et confonduz.
that dead them it-has and confounded

Li autre vont desconfortant
The others go disheartening
et vont sovent entre eus disant:
and go often among themselves saying
«Deables est cil veirement,
Devil is he truly
«que nes o pierres se defent!»
who even with stones himself defends
Quant il les vit issi trembler,
When he them saw thus tremble
començа les a degaber:
he-began them to mock
«Ceste fiévre, mon escïent,
This fever to-my knowledge
«vos est prise par hardement.
to-you is taken through boldness
«Se de cest mal guarir volez,
If of this ill to-be-cured you-wish
«un sol petit or m'atendez:
one only little now me-wait
«Ceste espee vos guarira,
This sword you will-cure
«car reliques bones i a.»
for relics good there has
A terre saut isnèlement,
To earth he-leaps swiftly
sis envaïst hardiement:
so-them attacks boldly
cui il consiut ne vait avant,
whom he reaches not goes forward

ne ja de mort n'avra guarant.
nor ever from death not-will-have warrant
Il saut a mont et pués a val,
He leaps to up and then to below
en guise de pro de vassal;
in guise of worthy-one of vassal
de totes parz les abat morz
from all sides them fells dead
par vasselage et par esforz;
by prowess and by force
et quant li autre se restreignent,
and when the others themselves draw-together
pas avant autre a mont le meinent.
step before other to up him they-drive
Il le cuidiérent a mont prendre:
They him thought to up to-take
cil entent fort a sei defendre;
he attends strongly to himself defend
et neporuec guaires nes dote,
and nevertheless much not-them fears
ainceis les rue a val et bote.
rather them hurls to below and pushes
Mout grant bataille lor tendeit
Very great battle to-them he-offered
por la roche, quel defendeit.
for the rock which-he defended
Tydeüs est en mout fort lou:
Tydeus is in very strong place
ne crent engegn, ne fer, ne fou,
not he-fears engine nor iron nor fire

ne mais sol davant a l'entree.
nor but only before at the-entrance
Cele lor defent o l'espee:
That to-them he-defends with the-sword
cil qui premiers i enterra
he who first there will-enter
mout chiérement le comperra.
very dearly it will-pay
Onc ne fu porte si vendue,
Ever not was gate so sold
ne par portier si defendue.
nor by porter so defended
Par l'entree, que fu faitice
By the-entrance which was made
en la fort pierre entailleïce,
in the strong stone carved
l'assaillent trestuit a un front,
him-assail all at one front
et qui ainz ainz montent a mont.
and who first first mount to up
Mais Tydeüs fort se defent,
But Tydeus strongly himself defends
cui il consiut, par mé le fent;
whom he reaches through midst him cleaves
cous done merveillos et granz:
blows he-gives marvelous and great
onc ne dona meillors Rollanz.
ever not gave better Roland

De premier en a tant ocis
Of first thereof he-has so-many killed
que o les morz abat les vis;
that with the dead he-fells the living
car li mort qui d'a mont rabatent
for the dead who from up fall-back
encontre val les vis abatent.
against valley the living fell
Cil qui iluec chiet n'en reliéve:
He who there falls not-thence rises-again
morir l'estuet, iluec achiéve.
to-die him-behooves there he-ends
Li lor se vont afebleiant:
The theirs themselves go weakening
mout volentiers s'en tornissant,
very willingly themselves-thence would-turn
ne fust Gualerans de Sipont,
not were-it Galeran of Siponto
qui de part le rei les somont:
who from part (of-)the king them summons
«Mauvaise gent, que porron dire,
Bad folk what we-shall-be-able to-say
«quant nos demandera noz sire
when us will-ask our lord
«que avon fait del messagier
what we-have done with-the messenger
«qui le laidi a son mangier?
who him insulted at his eating
«Davant nos le clama parjure:
Before us him he-called perjured

«A trestoz nos penser en dure.
To all us to-think thereof it-lasts
«Mar torneron en noz païs,
Ill we-shall-turn into our countries
«se nel rendon o mort o pris.
if not-him we-render or dead or taken
«Mauvaise gent, que li diron
Bad folk what to-him we-shall-say
«et davant lui coment iron?
and before him how shall-we-go
«Ço serra nostre grant vergoigne,
That will-be our great shame
«s'issi s'estort de la bosoigne;
if-thus he-escapes from the business
«granz laiz iert que par un escu
great shame will-be that by one shield
«seient tant chevalier vencu:
be so-many knights conquered
«Neporquant de tot son empére
Nevertheless from all his empire
«nos cuida hué li reis eslére.»
us thought today the king to-choose
A icest mot tornent ariére:
At this word they-turn back
ja li rendront bataille fiére,
already to-him they-will-render battle fierce
car ensemble de totes parz
for together from all sides
li ont lanciez esmoluz darz.
at-him they-have hurled sharpened darts

Sis haubers fausse et sis escuz,
His hauberk fails and his shield
car d'or en autre fu fenduz.
for from-edge to other it-was split
Mout pert del sanc, la color mue,
Much he-loses of-the blood the color changes
et ne por quant mout s'esvertue;
and not for all much himself-exerts
defent sei o le brant d'acier,
he-defends himself with the blade of-steel
dont a ocis maint chevalier;
whereby he-has killed many-a knight
mout se defent de grant vigor,
much himself he-defends with great vigor
car il ne trueve o eus amor.
for he not finds with them love
Forment se peinent cil del prendre
Greatly themselves strive those of-the taking
et il encontre del defendre.
and he against of-the defending
Ocis lor a le conestable
Killed to-them he-has the constable
et son nevo, Vougrin de Naple:
and his nephew Vougrin of Naples
pués que il virent ces dous morz,
since that they saw these two dead
petiz fu pués li lor esforz.
small was then the their force

Il s'en comencent a foïr
They themselves-thence begin to flee
et lor chevaus toz a guerpir,
and their horses all to forsake
quant Gualerans li proz les tint,
when Galeran the valiant them held
cui malement pués en avint.
to-whom badly then thereof befell
Toz les apèle par lor nons:
All them he-calls by their names
«Estez,» fait il, «fil a barons.
Stand says he sons of barons
«Franc chevalier, maisniée a rei,
Noble knights household of king
«por quei fuiez a tal desrei?
for why flee-you in such disorder
«Ou sont les granz chevaleries
Where are the great chivalries
«dont vos vantez a voz amies?
whereof you boast to your sweethearts
«Ou sont, seignor, les granz colées
Where are lords the great blows
«dont vos vantez as cheminées?
whereof you boast at-the hearths
«Et li orgueil et les menaces,
And the pride and the threats
«que solïez faire en cez places?
which you-were-wont to-make in these squares
«Venu estes a la destrece:
Come you-are to the strait

«Or verron bien vostre proece.
Now we-shall-see well your prowess
«Estez,» fait il, «tornez ariére.
Stand says he turn back
«Membre vos de la geste fiére,
Remember you of the race proud
«des estorz et des vasselages
of-the battles and of-the prowesses
«que toz jorz fist vostre lignages,
which all days did your lineage
«qui por poor de perdre vie
who for fear of losing life
«ne vout onc faire coardie.
not wished ever to-do cowardice
«Vengiez voz fréres, voz amis,
Avenge your brothers your friends
«que cist vassaus vos a ocis.
whom this vassal to-you has killed
«Se vos ne m'en volez faillir,
If you not me-thereof wish to-fail
«jal vos ferai d'a mont saillir:
already-him to-you I-shall-make from up leap
«Male veie li estuet prendre,
Bad way to-him behooves to-take
«se il a nos ne se vueut rendre.
if he to us not himself wishes to-render
«Qui onques jor ama le rei,
Who ever day loved the king
«ore i parra: estoise o mei.»
now there it-will-appear let-him-stand with me

Que par creme, que par vergoigne,
Both by fear and by shame
tornent arriére en la bosoigne.
they-turn back into the business
Gualerans vait avant, ses guie,
Galeran goes before so-them guides
et vait jurant le braz s'amie
and goes swearing the arm (of-)his-beloved
que, se il ore s'en estort,
that if he now himself-thence escapes
tendra sei mais tot tens a mort.
he-will-hold himself more all time as dead
Davant les autres tient sa rote,
Before the others he-holds his band
mais Tydeüs pas nel redote:
but Tydeus at-all not-him fears
cuevre sei bien et trait l'espée
covers himself well and draws the-sword
et atent le sus en l'entrée.
and awaits him up in the-entrance
Jo qu'en direie al? Entre eus dous
I what-thereof would-say other Between them two
se donérent cous merveillous.
themselves gave blows marvelous
Quant Gualerans fiert Tydeü,
When Galeran strikes Tydeus
un pan li trenche de l'escu;
a panel to-him he-cuts from the-shield

de l'espée tal coup li done
with the-sword such blow to-him he-gives
que Tydeüs tot en estone;
that Tydeus all thereof is-stunned
mais li cous en eschapa fors,
but the blow thence escaped out
si ne l'aconsiut pas el cors.
so not him-reaches at-all in-the body
Tydeüs sot ferir d'espee:
Tydeus knew to-strike with-sword
Gualeran done tal colee,
Galeran he-gives such blow
que le tranchant de la lemèle
that the edge of the blade
li embatié en la cervèle.
to-him he-drove into the brain
Estorst son coup, cil chiet a terre:
He-wrenched his blow he falls to earth
de lui est mais faite la guerre.
of him is more done the war
Des autres mais ne sai que dire,
Of-the others more not I-know what to-say
car tuit sont livré a martire:
for all are delivered to martyrdom
mout volentiers s'en tornissant,
very willingly themselves-thence would-turn
se il torner s'en poüssant;
if they to-turn themselves-thence could
mais Tydeüs lor est de près,
but Tydeus to-them is from near

quis fait morir toz desconfès.
who-them makes die all unconfessed
Onques de cele compagnie
Ever of that company
n'en i ot un quin portast vie,
not-thereof there had one who-thence carried life
ne mais sol un que mist par fei
nor but only one whom he-put by faith
que tot içо contast le rei.
that all this he-should-tell the king
Pués est montez el cheval sor,
Then he-is mounted on-the horse sorrel
qui bien valeit mil livres d'or.
which well was-worth thousand pounds of-gold
Sa veie acueut par la montaigne;
His way he-takes through the mountain
mais mout fu fiébles, que trop saigne.
but very he-was feeble for too-much he-bleeds
Il fu nafrez par mé le cors,
He was wounded through midst the body
si que la rate li saut fors;
so that the spleen to-him leaps out
li frans hon est nafrez a mort,
the noble man is wounded to death
et n'a qui ses armes li port.
and not-has who his arms for-him carry

The Muster

VII

Tydeus reaches Argos half dead, and Adrastus has him healed in a month. At Thebes the survivor reproaches Eteocles and kills himself in the hall, and the city mourns its dead. Adrastus summons his host, among them Parthenopaeus of Arcadia, Hippomedon, and Capaneus. The seer Amphiaraus foretells that few will return and that the earth will swallow him, but Capaneus scorns the prophecy. The host marches toward Thebes and enters the realm of Lycurgus.

Mout chevaucha a grant dolor:
Much he-rode with great pain
ne pot chevauchier a graignor.
not he-could ride with greater
Neporquant tant a chevauchié
Nevertheless so-much he-has ridden
le dreit chemin et le chaucié,
the straight road and the causeway
par la contrée que mieuz sot,
through the country which best he-knew
en Grece vint si come il pot;
into Greece he-came so as he could
tot dreit en Grece a Arges vint
all straight into Greece to Argos he-came
et Adrastus sa cort i tint.
and Adrastus his court there held
Li reis esteit en son palaiz,
The king was in his palace
o ses barons teneit ses plaiz.
with his barons he-held his pleas

Il entra el palaiz toz vains;
He entered into-the palace all faint
assez paru que ne fu sains:
enough it-appeared that not he-was sound
faussez fu sis haubers safrez,
pierced was his hauberk gilded
et il par mé le cors nafrez;
and he through midst the body wounded
l'aubers del dos fu toz desroz
the-hauberk of-the back was all torn
et li bliauz sanglenz desoz.
and the tunic bloody under
Talevaz semble sis escuz,
A-pavise seems his shield
car d'or en autre fu fenduz:
for from-edge to other it-was split
il fu l'autr'ier mil sous comprez,
it was the-other-day thousand sous bought
or est venuz a petit prez;
now is come to little worth
n'i trovissiez d'entier un dor:
not-there you-would-find of-whole a hand's-breadth
ne l'ot pas coarz en estor.
not it-had at-all coward in battle
Si com vos di, o cest conrei
So as to-you I-say with this equipment
vint Tydeüs devant le rei.
came Tydeus before the king
Il s'escria: «Armez vos tost,
He himself-cried Arm you soon

«et li reis face banir s'ost
and the king let-make proclaim his-host
«et somoigne ses chevaliers;
and let-summon his knights
«mout est nafrez cist messagiers.»
very is wounded this messenger
Li reis le vit; il saut en piez:
The king him saw he leaps on feet
poez saveir mout fu iriez.
you-can know very he-was angered
Entre ses braz soéf l'a pris,
Between his arms softly him-has taken
sanglenz en fu sis manteaus gris;
bloody thereof was his mantle gray
tot soavet et bèlement
all softly and gently
le descendié el pavement;
him he-set-down on-the pavement
il meïsmes l'auberc li trait
he himself the-hauberk from-him draws
et as plaies demande entrait.
and for-the wounds asks salve
Sor le pez ot une grant plaie:
On the breast he-had a great wound
quant il la vit, mout s'en esmaie;
when he it saw much himself-thereof dismays
quant vit la cobe de la lance,
when he-saw the cut of the lance
en sa vie nen ot fiance.
in his life not he-had trust

Il demande qui ço li fist,
He asks who that to-him did
et Tydeüs tot le li dist.
and Tydeus all it to-him said
Sa femne, eschevelee et pale,
His wife unbound-haired and pale
vint acorant par mé la sale:
came running through midst the hall
par mé la sale, eschevelee,
through midst the hall unbound-haired
acort come femne desvee.
runs as woman maddened
Polinicès plore mout fort,
Polynices weeps very strongly
nule rien n'est que le confort;
any thing not-is which him comfort
por poi de duel toz vis n'esrage,
for little from grief all alive not-he-goes-mad
quant si veit nafré son message.
when so he-sees wounded his messenger
Li reis fait mander un hermine,
The king makes send-for an Armenian
qui mout saveit de medecine:
who much knew of medicine
tant i pena et seir et main
so-much there he-toiled both evening and morning
a chief d'un meis le rendi sain.
at end of-a month him rendered sound

De ceus de Thèbes vos dei dire
Of those of Thebes to-you I-ought tell
qual duel meinent et qual martire.
what grief they-lead and what martyrdom
Li mes descent devant le rei
The messenger dismounts before the king
que Tydeüs ot mis par fei;
whom Tydeus had put by faith
davant le rei s'est arestez
before the king himself-is stopped
et dist en haut: «Tant mar fui nez!»
and said on high So ill I-was born
Pués ot tal duel que il pasma;
Then he-had such grief that he swooned
quant fu relevez, si parla.
when he-was raised-up so spoke
Conte de la desconfeture
He-tells of the defeat
et de la grant mesaventure,
and of the great misadventure
com par un home sont tuit mort,
how by one man they-are all dead
ne mais sol lui nus n'en estort:
nor but only him any not-thence escapes
«Tu as basti tal traïson
Thou hast built such treason
«dont tu avras tal guerredon
whereof thou wilt-have such reward

«que tu serras desiretez
that thou wilt-be disinherited
«et de ton regne forsgetez.
and from thy realm thrown-out
«Jo sui venuz de ton message,
I am come from thy message
«mais tu i as mout grant damage:
but thou therein hast very great harm
«Nel verras ja mais restoré
Not-it thou-wilt-see ever more restored
«por trestot l'or de ton regné.
for all the-gold of thy realm
«Tu as perdu tes chevaliers,
Thou hast lost thy knights
«toz les a morz li messagiers;
all them has killed the messenger
«ne mais sol mei nus n'en estort:
nor but only me any not-thence escapes
«Ço peise mei qu'il ne m'a mort.
That weighs-on me that-he not me-has killed
«Soz la roche Spin al deable
Under the rock (of-)Sphinx the devil
«les pues trover, senz nule fable.
them thou-canst find without any fable
«Mauvais reis, por quei le feïstes?
Bad king for why it did-you
«Ital vassal por quei traïstes
Such vassal for why betrayed-you
«come est li bons cuens Tydeüs,
as is the good count Tydeus

«qui vint a tei parler ça sus?
who came to thee to-speak here up
«Ja ne t'en leira repentir:
Ever not thee-thereof he-will-let repent
«Mieuz t'en venist le jor foïr
Better to-thee-thereof would-have-come the day to-flee
«que tu feïsses tal outrage;
than thou should-do such outrage
«car nus ne deit traïr message,
for any not ought betray messenger
«ne nus ne deit celui mesfaire
nor any not ought that-one misdo
«qui son message vueut retraire:
who his message wishes to-relate
«Seürs vait et seürs repaire,
Sure he-goes and sure returns
«quaus qu'il seit, fel o de bon aire.
whatever that-he be felon or of good nature
«Mais jo sai tal le messagier
But I know such the messenger
«qu'il t'en fera le dreit gagier
that-he thee-thereof will-make the right pledge
«et de ton cors le vendra prendre,
and of thy body it will-come to-take
«que ja ne t'en porras defendre,
that ever not thyself-thereof thou-wilt-be-able defend
«o de ton cors le comperras,
or with thy body it thou-wilt-pay
«que ja par home n'en guarras.
that ever by man not-thereof thou-wilt-be-saved

«Il nos vendra certes destruire,
He us will-come certainly to-destroy
«si nos fera de bel fou luire,
so us will-make with fair fire shine
«si que le chief te fera cuére,
so that the head thee he-will-make cook
«se Deus ne suefre qu'il ainz muére.
if God not suffer that-he before die
«Ha! Tydeüs, com tu ies ber!
Ah Tydeus how thou art baron
«Com sés granz cous de brant doner!
How thou-knowest great blows of blade to-give
«Beneeite seit ta vertu,
Blessed be thy strength
«car mout sés bien porter escu.
for very thou-knowest well to-bear shield
«Se tu ne viens a Thèbes tost
If thou not comest to Thebes soon
«et ne l'assailles o grant host,
and not him-assailest with great host
«ja ne place a Apollini
ever not please to Apollo
«que tu veies passé tierz di!»
that thou see passed third day
Li reis s'embronche et esprent d'ire,
The king bows-his-head and kindles with-anger
si le comanda tost ocirre.
so him commanded soon to-kill
Quant cil s'oï a mort jugier,
When he himself-heard to death judged

del fuerre trait le brant d'acier;
from-the scabbard he-draws the blade of-steel
defublez s'est davant le rei,
uncloaked himself-is before the king
la more en drece encontre sei;
the point thereof he-raises against himself
pués a parlé en tal mesure,
then he-has spoken in such measure
come cil qui de sei n'ot cure:
as he who of himself not-had care
«Mout par semblereit granz viltez,
Very much would-seem great vileness
«se par vos esteie afolez,
if by you I-were maimed
«quant taus vassaus me laissa vivre,
when such vassal me let live
«car il ne me vout pas ocirre.
for he not me wished at-all to-kill
«Jo ne morrai ja par t'espee,
I not shall-die ever by thy-sword
«car la meie m'est mout privee.»
for the mine to-me-is very familiar
Le pont vers terre en apoia,
The pommel toward earth thereon he-leaned
par mé le cors se tresperça;
through midst the body himself pierced
tresperce sei par mé le cors,
he-pierces himself through midst the body
li fers en pert demé pié fors.
the iron thereof appears half foot out

Il se feri de tal aïr
He himself struck with such force
onques uns plainz n'en pot eissir;
ever a lament not-thence could issue
li sans en saut par tal desrei
the blood thereof leaps in such disorder
que tot en a soillié le rei
that all thereof he-has soiled the king
et les barons qui iluec sont,
and the barons who there are
que lor bliauz sanglenz en ont.
that their tunics bloody thereof they-have
Quant la novèle est espandue,
When the news is spread
tuit en parolent par la rue;
all thereof speak through the street
pués qu'en la rue fu portee,
since that-in the street it-was carried
guaires ne pot estre celee.
much not it-could be hidden
Par la cité meinent grant duel:
Through the city they-lead great grief
soz ciel n'a home, tant seit fel,
under heaven not-has man so-much he-be felon
ne s'il eüst le cuer si dur
nor if-he had the heart so hard
come est la pierre de cel mur,
as is the stone of that wall

qui ne plorast de la dolor
who not would-weep from the grief
et des granz plainz que font des lor.
and from-the great laments which they-make for-the theirs
Par les rues ces dames corent,
Through the streets these ladies run
por lor amis crient et plorent:
for their friends cry and weep
por lor enfanz plorent les méres
for their children weep the mothers
et les serors plaignent lor fréres;
and the sisters lament their brothers
lor amis plaignent les pucèles,
their beloveds lament the maidens
dont ont oï freides novèles.
whereof they-have heard cold news
Lor cheveus tirent et esrachent,
Their hair they-pull and tear-out
por poi de duel vives n'esragent:
for little from grief alive not-they-go-mad
se la cité fust lors assise
if the city were then besieged
o craventee o tote esprise,
or thrown-down or all burned
ne cuit que plus en plorissant
not I-think that more thereof they-would-weep
ne graignor duel en feïssant.
nor greater grief thereof would-make

Li chevalier et li borgeis
The knights and the burghers
et li vilain et li corteis
and the peasants and the courtly
de traïson le rei blastengent,
of treason the king they-blame
por un petit que ne s'en vengent.
for a little that not themselves-thereof they-avenge
Trestuit ensemble en vont al rei,
All together thence go to-the king
demandent lui par grant esfrei
ask him with great uproar
que il a fait de lor amis,
what he has done with their friends
ou les querront, en qual païs.
where them they-will-seek in what country
Li reis lor enseigna le val
The king to-them showed the valley
ou geseient mort li vassal;
where were-lying dead the vassals
et cil i vont o granz dolors
and those there go with great griefs
et o granz criz et o granz plors:
and with great cries and with great tears
onc n'en remést un en la vile,
ever not-thence remained one in the town
plus en i vait de treis cenz mile;
more thereof there go than three hundred thousand

granz sont les torbes que la vont
great are the throngs which there go
et granz est li dueus que il font.
and great is the grief which they make
Quant il orent assez ploré
When they had enough wept
et de lor amis dementé,
and over their friends lamented
enterrent les, car contre mort,
they-bury them for against death
ço sévent bien, n'a nul resort.
that they-know well not-has any recourse
Li reis de Thèbes grant duel ot
The king of Thebes great grief had
de ço qu'ot fait, car ore sot
of that which-he-had done for now he-knew
que la guerre esteit comenciee,
that the war was begun
par quei sa terre iert eissilliee.
by which his land will-be laid-waste
Ou ot ami, por lui enveie
Where he-had friend for him sends
et del siége bien se conreie.
and for-the siege well himself equips
Si devin truevent en lor sorz
His soothsayers find in their lots
que Greu chevauchent a esforz,
that Greeks ride with force
et il chevauchent veirement.
and they ride truly

Adrastus a mandé sa gent:
Adrastus has summoned his folk
qui de lui tient ne fué ne terre,
who from him holds nor fief nor land
ne qui de lui vueut rien conquerre,
nor who from him wishes anything to-conquer
bien les somont por rien ne muent
well them he-summons for anything not let-them-stay
qu'a cest bosoign ne li aiuent.
that-at this need not to-him they-aid
De par ses terres, que sont larges,
From through his lands which are wide
fait ajoster son host a Arges:
he-makes gather his host at Argos
grant est la gent que il aüne,
great is the folk which he assembles
onc ne veïstes graignor une;
ever not you-saw greater one
onc ne fu mais tal aünee,
ever not was more such gathering
fors la Cesar et la Pompee;
except the Caesar's and the Pompey's
en l'ost de Troie, dont l'on conte,
in the-host of Troy whereof one tells
nen ot tant prince ne tant conte.
not had so-many princes nor so-many counts

La fu li dus d'Amphigenie
There was the duke of-Amphigenia
et Licaon d'Orchomenie
and Lycaon of-Orchomenus
et li aufages de Miceines:
and the caliph of Mycenae
fors solement li dus d'Ateines,
except only the duke of-Athens
n'i a baron que la ne vienge,
not-there has baron who there not come
qui d'Adrastus chasement tienge.
who of-Adrastus fief holds
D'Archade i vint Parthonopeus,
From-Arcadia there came Parthenopaeus
qui amena vint mile Greus:
who brought twenty thousand Greeks
onques plus gente criature
ever more noble creature
en cest siécle ne fist nature.
in this world not made nature
Ypomedon i vint après,
Hippomedon there came after
qui fu parenz le rei mout près:
who was kinsman (of-)the king very near
une compaigne o sei ameine,
a company with himself he-brings
que ne fu povre ne vilaine.
which not was poor nor base
Capaneüs i vint li granz,
Capaneus there came the great

qui fu de l'orine as Geanz:
who was of the-origin of-the Giants
cil ameine o sei tal maisniee,
he brings with himself such household
que de guerre est bien enseigniee.
which of war is well taught
Tydeüs mande en Calidone
Tydeus sends into Calydon
que tuit i viengent senz essone.
that all there come without excuse
Polinicès rot de sa terre
Polynices had-again from his land
mil chevaliers, que font sa guerre.
thousand knights who make his war
Li plusor furent si hostage,
The most were his hostages
qu'il ot somons par son message.
whom-he had summoned by his message
Auquanz i a cui l'on fait tort:
Some there has to-whom one does wrong
Etioclès héent de mort;
Eteocles they-hate to death
por haïne del seignorage,
from hatred of-the lordship
ont cil guerpi lor hiretage.
have these forsaken their heritage
Quant furent tuit josté ensemble,
When they-were all joined together
granz fu li hoz, si com mei semble:
great was the host so as me seems

une jornee tote entiére
a day's-march all entire
dura li hoz par la riviére.
lasted the host along the river
Amphiaras manda li reis,
Amphiaraus summoned the king
un arcevesque mout corteis:
an archbishop very courteous
cil esteit maistre de lor lei,
he was master of their law
del ciel saveit tot le secrei;
of-the heaven he-knew all the secret
il prent respons et giéte sorz
he takes answers and throws lots
et revivre fait homes morz;
and to-live-again makes men dead
de toz oiseaus sot le latin,
of all birds he-knew the latin
soz ciel n'aveit meillor devin.
under heaven not-was better soothsayer
Li reis li prée qu'il li die
The king him prays that-he to-him say
com iert de l'ost, ne li ceit mie.
how it-will-be of the-host not from-him let-him-conceal at-all
Amphiaras forment sospire;
Amphiaraus greatly sighs
embroncha sei, ne li vout dire;
bowed himself not to-him wished to-say

mais li reis forment le conjure
but the king greatly him conjures
que veir li die de l'augure:
that truth to-him he-say of the-augury
«Sire,» fait il, «jol vos dirai,
Lord says he I-it to-you shall-say
«de rien ne vos en mentirai:
in anything not to-you thereof I-shall-lie
«Ceste gent que vos ci veez,
This folk which you here see
«se vos a Thèbes les menez,
if you to Thebes them lead
«se jo onc rien d'augure soi,
if I ever anything of-augury knew
«mout en retornera ça poi.
very thereof will-return here few
«Jo i morrai, se tu m'i meines,
I there shall-die if thou me-there leadest
«ne vivrai mie dous semaines;
not I-shall-live at-all two weeks
«et ja nus hon ne m'ocira,
and ever any man not me-will-kill
«mais la terre me sorbira,
but the earth me will-swallow
«sorbira mei et mon cheval
will-swallow me and my horse
«jusqu'en parfont abisme a val.»
down-into deep abyss to below

Capaneüs sailli en piez
Capaneus leaped on feet
et a parlé com hon iriez:
and has spoken as man angered
«Sire,» fait il, «ne deis pas creire
Lord says he not thou-must at-all believe
«quant que oz dire a cest proveire.
whatever that thou-hearest say to this priest
«De ço que est oncore a estre
Of that which is yet to be
«ne te sét rien dire cist prestre;
not to-thee knows anything to-say this priest
«mais coarz est; tal rien vueut feindre
but coward he-is such thing he-wishes to-feign
«par quei cist hoz porra remaindre.
by which this host will-be-able remain
«Com laisseras desireter
How thou-wilt-let disinherit
«et de son regne fors geter
and from his realm out throw
«Polinicès, qui a ta fille
Polynices who has thy daughter
«et que sis frére a tort eissille?
and whom his brother at wrong exiles
«Pués que serron la o nostre host,
Since that we-shall-be there with our host
«assaudron les, prendron les tost:
we-shall-assail them we-shall-take them soon

«Grant honor t'iert, se les pues prendre
Great honor to-thee-will-be if them thou-canst take
«et a ton ami s'onor rendre.
and to thy friend his-domain render
«Chevauche, reis, ne creire en sort,
Ride king not believe in lot
«car a ton jor vendra ta mort:
for at thy day will-come thy death
«Ja nus devins ne t'en guarra,
Ever any soothsayer not thee-thereof will-save
«ne ja ainceis ne t'avendra.»
nor ever before not to-thee-it-will-befall
Cele parole tuit otreient
That word all grant
et l'arcevesque pas ne creient.
and the-archbishop at-all not believe
Li reis fait corner ses buisines
The king makes sound his trumpets
et ses tabors et ses troïnes;
and his drums and his horns
li banier vont criant par l'ost
the criers go crying through the-host
que tuit s'en éssent et cel tost.
that all themselves-thence issue and that soon
Es praeries, soz la vile,
In-the meadows below the town
s'esmérent bien a treis cenz mile:
themselves-reckoned well to three hundred thousand
dreit a Thèbes tiénent lor veie,
straight to Thebes they-hold their way

les deserz passent de Nemeie;
the deserts they-pass of Nemea
el regne entrent Ligurge al rei,
into-the realm they-enter (of-)Lycurgus the king
ou il durent morir de sei.
where they were-to die of thirst

Hypsipyle

VIII

After three months without rain the host searches for water. Tydeus finds a maiden in King Lycurgus's orchard with the king's young son, and she leaves the child to lead them to the river Langia, where the army drinks. She tells Adrastus she is Hypsipyle, who fled Lemnos when its women murdered their husbands. Meanwhile a fire-breathing serpent has killed the child, and her cries bring Capaneus running.

Ço fu en mai, en cez lons jors
That was in May in these long days
que li soleuz rent ses chalors,
that the sun renders its heats
que fait un tens clér et serein,
which makes a weather clear and serene
li oiselet chantent al main.
the little-birds sing in-the morning
En cel termine que l'ost mut,
In that term that the-host moved
tarja treis meis qu'onques ne plut.
it-delayed three months that-ever not it-rained
N'onques terre ne reçut pluée:
Nor-ever earth not received rain

forment essart et mout essuée;
greatly parched and very dried
en terre vint tal secherece,
into earth came such drought
que tote criature sece.
that all creature dries
Une jornee dure entiére
A day's-march hard entire
qu'en l'ost ne davant ne deriére
that-in the-host nor before nor behind
ne truevent Greu ne mont ne val,
not find Greeks nor mount nor valley
ou il beivent ne lor cheval.
where they drink nor their horses
Mout esteient destreit li Greu:
Very were distressed the Greeks
sovent reclamoent lor deu
often they-called-on their gods
que lor tramete pluée en terre,
that to-them they-send rain on earth
car ne sévent ou ève querre.
for not they-know where water to-seek
Mout les angoisse d'une part
Much them anguishes on-one side
li chauz, de l'autre seiz les art:
the heat on the-other thirst them burns
destrier, roncin et palefrei
charger nag and palfrey
rerent si angoissos de sei,
were-again so anguished from thirst

et li plusor de ceus a pié
and the most of those on foot
por poi n'erent tot estanchié.
for little not-were all dried-up
Greu nel poeient mais sofrir,
Greeks not-it could more suffer
toz les i covenist morir,
all them there would-behoove to-die
quant conseil pristrent li princier
when counsel took the princes
qu'il feront la forest cerchier
that-they will-make the forest search
par la contree d'environ,
through the country from-around
saveir se trover porreit l'on,
to-know if to-find could one
de nule part que onques fust,
from any part that ever were
riviére ou l'ost s'aresteüst.
river where the-host might-stop
Ço truevent Greu en lor conseil
That find Greeks in their counsel
que nel lairont por nul traveil
that not-it they-will-leave for any toil
ne por peine ne por destreit,
nor for pain nor for strait
com loign que la riviére seit,
how far that the river be

qu'il ne cerchent par la contree
that-they not search through the country
tant qu'il avront ève trovee.
until that-they will-have water found
Quant il orent lor conseil pris,
When they had their counsel taken
a la veie se resont mis.
to the way themselves are-again put
Tydeüs chevauche premiers,
Tydeus rides first
qui des Greus ert gonfanoniers;
who of-the Greeks was standard-bearer
avant en vait o sa compaigne.
forward thence goes with his company
Joste le pié d'une montaigne,
Beside the foot of-a mountain
en un val entre merveillos
into a valley he-enters marvelous
qui mout ert laiz et tenebros:
which very was ugly and dark
d'ambes parz ert li vaus enclos
from-both sides was the valley enclosed
de granz forez et de granz bos.
by great forests and by great woods
Capaneüs le siut li cuens
Capaneus him follows the count
o tot treize mile des suens.
with all thirteen thousand of-the his

Davant en vont querre riviére
Before thence go to-seek river
et tote l'ost les siut deriére.
and all the-host them follows behind
Tant chevauchiérent dès le main
So-much they-rode from the morning
Greu tot ensemble bos et plain,
Greeks all together wood and plain
que onc n'i ot rène tiree
that ever not-there had rein drawn
de si que vint a relevee.
from so that it-came to afternoon
Ja esteit bien li soleuz bas,
Already was well the sun low
et li Greu erent forment las,
and the Greeks were greatly weary
mout chevauchoent a grant peine,
very they-rode with great pain
quant aventure les ameine
when adventure them brings
a un vergier que mout ert genz,
to an orchard which very was noble
que onc espice ne pimenz
that ever spice nor pigment
que hon peüst trover ne dire
that man could find nor say
de cel vergier ne fu a dire.
of that orchard not was to say

Mout esteit bien enclos li jarz
Very was well enclosed the garden
de forz paliz de totes parz,
with strong palisades from all sides
ne mais que davant a l'entree
nor but that before at the-entrance
ot une porte bien ovree,
had a gate well wrought
par ou Ligurges sout venir,
by where Lycurgus was-wont to-come
li reis, por son deduit tenir.
the king for his pleasure to-hold
Dès qu'iluec furent Greu venu,
As-soon that-there were Greeks come
onc ainz n'i ot frein retenu,
ever before not-there had bridle held-back
gardent a val par mé le jart:
they-look to below through midst the garden
soz un lorier de l'une part,
under a laurel on the-one side
si virent une dameisèle,
so they-saw a damsel
que mout esteit gentil et bèle.
who very was noble and fair
Un enfant tint ensemble o sei,
A child she-held together with herself
qui fiz esteit Ligurge al rei;
who son was (of-)Lycurgus the king
iluec erent desoz l'ombrail,
there were under the-shade

cele et li fiz a l'amirail.
she and the son of the-emir
Reguarda sei, si vit les rens:
She-looked herself so saw the ranks
por poi que ne perdié le sens.
for little that not she-lost the sense
Grant poor ot, forment s'esfreie;
Great fear she-had greatly herself-frightens
son enfant prist, si tint sa veie:
her child she-took so held her way
quant Tydeüs li proz s'eslaisse,
when Tydeus the valiant himself-launches
sor le col del cheval s'abaisse,
over the neck of-the horse himself-lowers
par sa manche la prist davant,
by her sleeve her took before
si li a dit tot en riant:
so to-her has said all in laughing
«Dameisèle, vos estes prise:
Damsel you are taken
«Dites mei par vostre franchise,
Tell me by your nobility
«ne dotez rien, parlez o mei,
not fear anything speak with me
«si me dites par vostre fei —
so to-me tell by your faith
«chevalier somes mout destreit —
knights we-are very distressed
«se vos savez en nul endreit
if you know in any place

«par ces forez, n'avant n'ariére,
through these forests nor-before nor-behind
«ou nos poisson trover riviére.
where we could find river
«Por Deu vos pré, ma douce amie,
For God you I-pray my sweet friend
«rendez a ceste gent la vie,
render to this folk the life
«aiez de nos pitié et cure.
have of us pity and care
«Destreit somes a desmesure:
Distressed we-are beyond measure
«Por veir vos di treis jorz ot hier
For truth to-you I-say three days it-had yesterday
«que ne burent nostre destrier.
that not drank our chargers
«De vers Grece tot dreit venomes:
From toward Greece all straight we-come
«Trestuit li plusor de nos homes
All the most of our men
«sont si destreit et mat et las
are so distressed and spent and weary
«ne pueent faire avant un pas.»
not they-can make forward a step
La dameisèle ert mout corteise:
The damsel was very courteous
quant ço oï, forment l'en peise.
when that she-heard greatly to-her-thereof weighs
Ele respondié al princier:
She answered to-the prince

«Sire, pas celer nel vos quier,
Lord at-all to-conceal not-it from-you I-seek
«tant par est toz cist païs seis
so very is all this country dry
«n'i a fontaine ne mareis
not-there has fountain nor marsh
«que toz ne seit arz ne sechiez.
which all not be burned nor dried
«Por noz orgueuz, por noz pechiez,
For our prides for our sins
«nos tramet Deus del ciel en terre
us sends God from-the heaven on earth
«mout grant haïne et mout grant guerre;
very great hatred and very great war
«et neporquant ço iert damages,
and nevertheless that will-be harm
«se vos et toz vostre barnages
if you and all your baronage
«n'avez aparmaines confort.
not-have presently comfort
«Ne fust cist enfes que jo port,
Not were-it this child whom I carry
«jo vos menasse a une evete,
I you would-lead to a little-water
«que mout par est et clére et nete:
which very much is both clear and clean
«C'est la riviére de Langie,
It-is the river of Langia
«que vos rendreit, ço cuit, la vie.
which to-you would-render that I-think the life

«Ne l'os guerpir, ne sué si ose;
Not him-I-dare forsake nor I-am so daring
«mais tant me semblez franche chose
but so-much to-me you-seem noble thing
«ne lairai pas, o muére o vive,
not I-shall-leave at-all or die or live
«que ne vos mein jusqu'a la rive.
that not you I-lead until-to the bank
«Mais se volez venir o mei,
But if you-wish to-come with me
«guardez que vos me portez fei.»
take-care that you to-me bear faith
A tant i est li reis venuz,
At this there is the king come
qui les barons aveit seüz.
who the barons had followed
Quant il entendié la novèle,
When he heard the news
que mout li sembla bon[e] et bèl[e];
which very to-him seemed good and fair
a la meschine dist premier:
to the maiden said first
«Par Apollin, que j'ai mout chier,
By Apollo whom I-have very dear
«jo vos liverrai tal conduit
I to-you shall-deliver such escort
«que bien vos guardera, ço cuit.
that well you will-guard that I-think
«Ou estes vos, Capaneüs,
Where are you Capaneus

«Polinicès et Tydeüs?
Polynices and Tydeus
«Iceste dame vos comant:
This lady to-you I-commend
«Guardez la mei d'ore en avant.
Guard her for-me from-now in forward
— Sire,» font il, «bien le feron:
Lord say they well it we-shall-do
«Ja n'avra mal, que nos poisson.»
Ever not-she-will-have ill that we can
Quant la pucèle cel oï,
When the maiden that heard
a merveille s'en esjoï;
at marvel herself-thereof rejoiced
a terre assiet l'enfant petit,
on earth she-sets the-child little
d'erbe et de flors li fait un lit;
of-grass and of flowers to-him she-makes a bed
del vergier ést com ainceis pot,
from-the orchard she-issues as soonest she-could
el chemin entre que bien sot:
into-the road enters which well she-knew
«Seignor,» dist ele, «estez ariére,
Lords said she stand back
«jo vos menrai a la riviére.»
I you shall-lead to the river
Quant fu esloigniee del parc
When she-was distanced from-the park
quatre traitiees a un arc,
four shots with a bow

l'ève lor monstra o son deit.
the-water to-them she-showed with her finger
Quant Tydeüs li proz la veit,
When Tydeus the valiant it sees
mout par fu liez: corant et tost
very much was glad running and soon
tramet ses mes ariére en l'ost
he-sends his messengers back into the-host
et fait crier en quatre sens
and makes cry in four directions
par les eschiéles, par les rens:
through the battalions through the ranks
«Ja mar avront mais desperance:
Ever ill they-will-have more despair
«Viengent a l'ève senz dotance;
Let-them-come to the-water without fear
«qui ore a sei a l'ève voise.»
who now has thirst to the-water let-him-go
Lors oïssiez estrange noise:
Then you-would-have-heard strange noise
par l'ost demeinent grant leece,
through the-host they-lead great joy
car mout aveient grant tristece,
for very they-had great sadness
cil as chevaus corent premier,
those on-the horses run first
ne quiérent veie ne sentier;
not they-seek way nor path

nes puet tenir ne bos ne pleie
not-them can hold nor wood nor hedge
qu'el plus espes ne facent veie;
that-in-the most thick not they-make way
davant en poignent a eslais,
before thence they-spur at gallop
et cil a pié en vont après;
and those on foot thence go after
com chascuns puet a son endreit,
as each can at his place
corent a l'ève a grant espleit.
they-run to the-water with great speed
Et des qu'il perçurent la rive,
And as-soon-as they perceived the bank
nes tenist pués nus hon qui vive:
not-them would-hold then any man who live
ne quiérent gué n'a val n'a mont,
not they-seek ford nor-to valley nor-to mount
ainz se fiérent el plus parfont.
rather themselves strike into-the most deep
Qui donc veïst chevaus estans
Who then had-seen horses standing
emplir ces ventres et ces flans:
fill these bellies and these flanks
tant beivent por la sei ques art,
so-much they-drink for the thirst which-them burns
vueillent o non, li cuers lor part.
they-will or not the heart to-them bursts
Qui donc veïst iceus a pié,
Who then had-seen those on foot

qui tot vestu et tot chaucié
who all clothed and all shod
saillent en l'ève jusqu'as cous:
leap into the-water up-to-the necks
nes puet tenir sages ne fous
not-them can hold wise nor fool
que el plus parfont gué ne saille,
that into-the most deep ford not he-leap
car il crement qu'ève lor faille.
for they fear that-water to-them fail
Qu'en direie? Tal presse i font
What-thereof would-I-say Such press there they-make
cil qui vienent et cil qui vont
those who come and those who go
tote en perdié l'ève son cors,
all thereby lost the-water its course
si corut ariére a rebors.
so ran back to backwards
Adrastus, qui sire ert des Greus,
Adrastus who lord was of-the Greeks
o l'arcevesque Amphiareus,
with the-archbishop Amphiaraus
o les princes et o les dus,
with the princes and with the dukes
s'en traeient de l'ost en sus,
themselves-thence drew from the-host in up
quant Tydeüs li proz les meine
when Tydeus the valiant them leads
a cele que pas n'ert vilaine,
to her who at-all not-was base

que por eus s'ert tant traveilliee,
who for them herself-was so-much toiled
l'ève lor aveit enseigniee.
the-water to-them had shown
Adrastus ne fu pas vilains,
Adrastus not was at-all base
cele araisone premerains:
her addresses first
«Bèle,» fait il, «com avez non?
Fair says he how have-you name
«Jo vos merci et mi baron,
I you thank and my barons
«jo vos merci mout hautement.
I you thank very highly
«Ues avez eü a ma gent:
Use you-have had for my folk
«Ço m'est avis en mon corage
That to-me-is opinion in my heart
«que vos estes de franc lignage.»
that you are of noble lineage
Cele respont come afaitiee:
She answers as well-bred
«Sire, jo sué une eissilliee,
Lord I am an exiled-one
«Ysiphile m'apèle l'on.
Hypsipyle me-calls one
«Par pechié et par traïson
By sin and by treason
«fui de mon regne fors getee,
I-was from my realm out thrown

«de Lemne, l'isle ou jo fui nee.
of Lemnos the-isle where I was born
«Une merveille avint en Lemne:
A marvel befell in Lemnos
«Tal n'oï mais ne hon ne femne;
Such not-heard more nor man nor woman
«car les dames, par lor outrage,
for the ladies by their outrage
«porparlérent une grant rage:
plotted a great madness
«Par merveillose traïson,
By marvelous treason
«ocist chascune son baron;
killed each her husband
«qui n'ot mari ocist son pére,
who not-had husband killed her father
«fil o nevo, cosin o frére.
son or nephew cousin or brother
«De la vile ert mis pére reis,
Of the town was my father king
«ma mére ert morte un poi ainceis:
my mother was dead a little before
«Idonc n'aveit mie d'espose,
Then not-he-had at-all of-spouse
«et j'esteie assez juefne tose.
and I-was enough young girl
«Ne poi aveir en mon corage
Not I-could have in my heart
«que je feïsse ital outrage,
that I should-do such outrage

«por rien que me seüssent dire,
for anything that to-me they-could say
«que mon pére vousisse ocire.
that my father I-should-wish to-kill
«La nuét, quant toz li ségles dort,
The night when all the world sleeps
«furent tuit cil de Lemne mort.
were all those of Lemnos dead
«O lor couteaus que eles tindrent,
With their knives which they held
«dreit al palais mon pére vindrent;
straight to-the palace (of-)my father they-came
«par la fenestre de la sale,
by the window of the hall
«poiérent sus o une eschale;
they-climbed up with a ladder
«nes puet tenir ferrouz ne serre,
not-them can hold bolt nor lock
«en la chambre le vont requerre;
into the chamber him they-go to-seek
«o lor couteaus qu'erent tranchant
with their knives which-were cutting
«le rei ocistrent en dormant.
the king they-killed in sleeping
«Grant poor oi, nes voil atendre:
Great fear I-had not-them I-wished await
«Bien sai, se me peüssent prendre,
Well I-know if me they-could take
«de cent vies n'en portasse une.
of hundred lives not-thence I-would-carry one

«Fuiant m'en tornai a la lune:
Fleeing myself-thence I-turned by the moon
«Onc ne finai dous jorz entiers,
Ever not I-stopped two days entire
«que par chemins, que par sentiers.
both by roads and by paths
«A un seignor m'en sué venue,
To a lord myself-thence I-am come
«a grant honor m'a receüe:
with great honor me-he-has received
«De ceste terre est reis et sire,
Of this land he-is king and lord
«ne sai s'onques l'oïstes dire.
not I-know if-ever it-you-heard say
«Un sol fil a de sa moillier:
One only son he-has of his wife
«Celui li guart, qu'il a mout chier.
Him for-him I-guard whom-he has very dear
«Onc plus bel ne forma nature.»
Ever more fair not formed nature
Or oez qual mesaventure
Now hear what misadventure
li est venue en mout poi d'ore.
to-him is come in very little of-hour
Endementiers qu'ele demore,
Meanwhile that-she tarries
une serpent de male part
a serpent from evil part
eissi del bos, si entre el jart.
issued from-the wood so enters into-the garden

Par les narilles giéte fors
Through the nostrils it-throws out
et fou et flambe de son cors:
both fire and flame from its body
n'encontre rien que trestot n'arde.
not-meets thing which all not-it-burn
L'enfant trueve tot sol senz guarde:
The-child it-finds all alone without guard
sifle, si met fors l'aguillon,
it-hisses so puts out the-sting
que ele ot lonc come un baston;
which it had long as a staff
si point l'enfant soz la mamèle,
so pricks the-child under the breast
le cuer li trait de soz l'aissèle,
the heart to-him draws from under the-armpit
par mé la plaie en but le sanc.
through midst the wound thereof drank the blood
Li enfes al cors bel et blanc
The child with-the body fair and white
tot ennercist, gient, crie et brait;
all blackens groans cries and wails
li cors muert et l'anme s'en vait:
the body dies and the-soul itself-thence goes
et la serpent emprès esteit,
and the serpent beside was
dejoste l'enfant se dormeit.
beside the-child itself slept

Cele qui ert loign del vergié
She who was far from-the orchard
oï les criz, si quiert congié;
heard the cries so seeks leave
come ainceis pot de l'ost depart, —
as soonest she-could from the-host departs
ne pot chaleir, car trop vint tart, —
not it-could matter for too she-came late
come ele ainz pot est retorne[e],
as she soonest could is returned
mais mout fu fort la destine[e].
but very was strong the destiny
Quant ele vint iluec tot dreit,
When she came there all straight
la serpent vit que se dormeit,
the serpent she-saw which itself slept
que aveit ocis son enfant:
which had killed her child
iluec esteit lonc lui gesant.
there it-was along him lying
Poor ot de la serpent grant:
Fear she-had of the serpent great
ariére s'en torna fuiant,
back herself-thence turned fleeing
et regretot son enfant fort,
and lamented her child strongly
que li deables li ot mort:
whom the devil to-her had killed
«A! beaus enfes, bèle color,
Ah fair child fair color

«com mar vos laissai hué cest jor!
how ill you I-left today this day
«Morz en estes, beaus douz amis:
Dead thereof you-are fair sweet friend
«Ne remaindrai en cest(e) païs.
Not I-shall-remain in this country
«Ahi! lasse, maleüree,
Ah weary ill-fated
«come ore estes deshonere[e]!
how now you-are dishonored
«Morir m'estovra veirement,
To-die me-will-behoove truly
«ne vivrai mie longement.»
not I-shall-live at-all long
El(e) s'escrie en haut, la chaitive,
She herself-cries on high the wretch
si que cil l'oent de la rive.
so that those her-hear from the bank
Capaneüs entent les criz,
Capaneus hears the cries
si s'escria: «Mal sué bailliz;
so himself-cried Ill I-am handled
«jo oi crier la dameisèle:
I hear cry the damsel
«Saveir m'estuet cest[e] novèle,
To-know me-behooves this news
«qui cil est qui l'a envaïe;
who he is who her-has attacked
«certes n'en portera la vie.»
certainly not-thence he-will-carry the life

The Serpent

IX

Their weapons glance off the serpent until Capaneus pins it with an uprooted oak and the Greeks finish it. Hypsipyle finds the child cold and fears the king. At Tydeus's urging Adrastus goes to Lycurgus, who welcomes the Greeks and offers them his city before news of his son's death arrives. The king and queen mourn and bury Archemorus, and at the Greeks' pleading Lycurgus pardons Hypsipyle. Word comes that sixty thousand Thebans ride to hold the passes, and the host marches on, ravaging the land, with Tydeus in the vanguard.

Come il ainz po(e)t vint cele part,
As he soonest could he-came that side
et en sa main tint un grant dart.
and in his hand held a great dart
Cele trova eschevele[e]:
Her he-found unbound-haired
bien resemblot femne desvee.
well she-resembled woman maddened
Il li demande: «Bèle amie,
He to-her asks Fair friend
«qui t'a ço fait? Nel ceile mie.
who to-thee-has that done Not-it conceal at-all
«Saches que je t'en vengerai
Know that I thee-thereof shall-avenge
«et o cest espié l'ocirai,
and with this spear him-I-shall-kill
«et sil ferai passer al port
and so-him I-shall-make pass to-the port
«ou passent tuit cil qui sont mort;
where pass all those who are dead

«saches tu bien que hué cest jor
know thou well that today this day
«par mé enfer prendra son tor.»
through midst hell he-will-take his turn
Cele l'entent, si l'esguarda
She him-hears so him-looked-at
et pués après si l'araisna:
and then after so him-addressed
«Sire, por quei le vos dirai?
Lord for why it to-you shall-I-say
«Car par vos aïe n'avrai.
For through you aid not-I-shall-have
— Di le mei, bèle, par ta fei(e),
Tell it me fair by thy faith
«et se jo pués, vengerai tei.»
and if I can I-shall-avenge thee
La pucèle li dist a tant:
The maiden to-him said at this
«Sire, j'ai perdu mon enfant.
Lord I-have lost my child
— Bèle, coment l'avez perdu?
Fair how him-have-you lost
— Sire, une serpent l'a tolu.
Lord a serpent him-has taken
— Serpent? — Veire, sire, par fei;
Serpent True lord by faith
«ja la vos monsterrai al dei:
already it to-you I-shall-show with-the finger
«Elle est graindre d'un olifant,
It is greater than-an elephant

«iluec se gést joste l'enfant.»
there itself lies beside the-child
Capaneüs vait cele part,
Capaneus goes that side
en sa ma(t)in destre tint son dart;
in his hand right he-held his dart
si come il vint irieement,
so as he came angrily
lança, si feri la serpent.
he-hurled so struck the serpent
Li darz encontre mont resort:
The dart against up rebounds
par icele arme n'avra mort.
by that weapon not-it-will-have death
Tydeüs i vint apoignant;
Tydeus there came spurring
lance, fiert la el péz davant:
he-hurls strikes it in-the breast before
onc la serpent ne se guenchi,
ever the serpent not itself swerved
car li espiez en resorti.
for the spear thereof rebounded
Polinicès cil i lanç(e)a:
Polynices he there hurled
li fers resorti, nel plaia.
the iron rebounded not-it wounded
Tuit i lancent fer et acier:
All there hurl iron and steel
onc la pel ne porront percier.
ever the hide not they-will-be-able pierce

Capaneüs plus l'empressa:
Capaneus more it-pressed
la serpent a lui s'eslança;
the serpent at him itself-launched
mais [s']il a failli al vassal,
but if-it has missed the vassal
ne meschoisi pas le cheval;
not missed at-all the horse
plus tost li ot le col trenchié
more soon to-it had the neck cut
que uns rasors un peil deugié.
than a razor a hair fine
Capaneüs s'a mout irié:
Capaneus himself-has much angered
un juevne chaisne a arrachié,
a young oak he-has uprooted
aguisié l'a devers le gros;
sharpened it-he-has toward the thick-end
lance et fiert la par mé le dos;
he-hurls and strikes it through midst the back
d'outre en outre le li passa,
from-beyond in beyond it to-it passed
que dous pleins piez en terre entra.
that two full feet into earth entered
La serpent se tint [por] ferue,
The serpent itself held for struck
que del pal fu par mé cosue:
that by-the stake it-was through midst sewn
environ le pal s'est lacie[e];
around the stake itself-is laced

li Gr(i)eu, come gent esragie[e],
the Greeks like folk maddened
tot entor l'ont avirone[e],
all around it-they-have surrounded
tant i fiérent que l'ont tue[e].
so-much there they-strike that it-they-have killed
Mout furent lié icele gent,
Very were glad that folk
quant orent tué la serpent:
when they-had killed the serpent
as herberges s'en retornérent
to-the lodgings themselves-thence returned
et grant leece demenérent,
and great joy led
pués joérent, segont lor estre,
then they-played according-to their custom
a plusors jous, a la palestre.
at many games at the palaestra
Mais cele que ot l'enfant mort
But she who had the-child dead
ne po(e)t onques ave[i]r de(s)port,
not could ever have pleasure
et vint corant tot dreit soz l'arbre:
and came running all straight under the-tree
l'enfant trova plus freit que marbre.
the-child she-found more cold than marble
Il esteit morz, ja aveit pose:
He was dead already it-had a-while
«Deus!» fait ele, «com faite chose,
God says she how made thing

«quant mis enfes est si pasmez!»
when my child is so swooned
A mont le drece vers son péz,
On up him she-raises toward her breast
plus le baise de trente feiz:
more him she-kisses than thirty times
ne li vaut rien, car toz est freiz.
not to-her avails anything for all he-is cold
Ses mains par tot le cors li meine:
Her hands through all the body to-him she-leads
quant n'i sent ne fun ne aleine,
when not-there she-feels nor vapor nor breath
desor l'enfant dous feiz se pasme.
upon the-child two times herself swoons
Quant el revint, forment se blasme:
When she came-back greatly herself blames
«Deus!» fait ele, «com mar fui nee!
God says she how ill I-was born
«A com grant honte sué livree!
Ah how great shame I-am delivered
«Por qu'eschapai de Lemne vive,
For why-escaped-I from Lemnos alive
«quant ci morrai come chaitive?
when here I-shall-die as wretch
«Ço sai jo bien, morir m'estuet:
That know I well to-die me-behooves
«Nule rien guarir ne m'en puet.
Any thing to-save not me-thence can
«Mout sué livree a grant eissil,
Very I-am delivered to great exile

«quant le rei ai tolu son fil:
when the king I-have taken his son
«La meie mort serra tant dure
The my death will-be so-much hard
«onc ne fu mort de sa mesure.
ever not was death of its measure
«Et se jo muer, n'iert pas a tort,
And if I die not-it-will-be at-all at wrong
«quant jo mon dameisel ai mort:
when I my young-lord have killed
«Par mei a il perdu la vie,
Through me has he lost the life
«quant jol laissai senz compaignie.
when I-him left without company
«Quant li reis savra cest damage,
When the king will-know this harm
«grant merveille iert s'il ne s'esrage.»
great marvel will-be if-he not himself-maddens
La dameisèle plus ne dist:
The damsel more not said
del jart s'en ést, l'enfant guerpist
from-the garden herself-thence issues the-child she-forsakes
et cort come femne esragiee
and runs as woman maddened
a l'ève, ou l'ost aveit laissiee.
to the-water where the-host she-had left
Sovent plorot, grant duel faiseit:
Often she-wept great grief she-made
al rei de Grece en vait tot dreit.
to-the king of Greece thence goes all straight

Cil li a dit: «Qu'avez, amie?
He to-her has said What-have-you friend
— Sire, jo sué mout mal baillie.
Lord I am very badly handled
«En cest jardin, ici desus,
In this garden here above
«ert sous remés Archemorus,
was alone remained Archemorus
«mis dameiseaus, li fiz le rei:
my young-lord the son (of-)the king
«Trové l'ai mort, ço peise mei.
Found him-I-have dead that weighs-on me
«Ne sué tant ose ne hardie
Not I-am so-much daring nor bold
«que auge al rei et si li die:
that I-go to-the king and so to-him say
«Il m'ocirreit, jol sai de fi,
He me-would-kill I-it know for sure
«quant jo l'aveie sol guerpi.
when I him-had alone forsaken
«La reïne par est tant fiére,
The queen very is so-much fierce
«pués qu'el verra son fil en biére
since that-she will-see her son on bier
«qu'ele amot plus que nule rien,
whom-she loved more than any thing
«el m'ocirra, ço sai jo bien.»
she me-will-kill that know I well
La dameisèle a tant se tot,
The damsel at this herself silenced

et Tydeüs, qui l'escotot,
and Tydeus who her-listened
tal pitié ot en son corage
such pity had in his heart
par poi de duel que vis n'esrage:
for little from grief that alive not-he-goes-mad
«Sire,» fait il, «a moi entent.
Lord says he to me attend
«Par tei et par la toe gent
Through thee and through the thy folk
«li est venuz cist granz damages:
to-her is come this great harm
«Bien est que tu et tis barnages
Well it-is that thou and thy baronage
«raiez por li travail et peine.
have-again for her toil and pain
«Pren la pucèle, al rei la meine;
Take the maiden to-the king her lead
«nos iron tuit ensemble o tei.
we shall-go all together with thee
«Mon escïent, si com jo crei,
To-my knowledge so as I believe
«ja n'iert li reis tant fel ne fiers,
ever not-will-be the king so-much felon nor fierce
«se tu por lei pardon requiers,
if thou for her pardon requirest
«ne la reïne n'iert tant fiére,
nor the queen not-will-be so-much fierce
«que il n'en oent ta preiére.»
that they not-thereof hear thy prayer

Adrastus cel conseil otreie;
Adrastus that counsel grants
somont sa gent, si tint sa veie,
summons his folk so held his way
et cil de l'ost s'esmuevent tuit:
and those of the-host themselves-move all
donc oïssiez estrange bruit.
then you-would-have-heard strange noise
Vers la cité en vont tot dreit,
Toward the city thence they-go all straight
ou Ligurges li reis esteit:
where Lycurgus the king was
defors les murs, une traitiee,
outside the walls a bowshot
est tote l'ost es plains logiee.
is all the-host in-the plains lodged
Adrastus lait defors sa gent,
Adrastus leaves outside his folk
vers la cité vait mornement;
toward the city goes gloomily
o sei meine princes et dus
with himself he-leads princes and dukes
dès qu'a quarante, et neient plus.
from that-to forty and nothing more
Li reis Ligurges ert montez,
The king Lycurgus was mounted
ensemble o lui de ses privez:
together with him of his familiars
contre Adrastus aler voleit,
against Adrastus to-go he-wished

quant en la porte entrer le veit.
when in the gate to-enter him he-sees
Il point vers lui, mout fu joios:
He spurs toward him very he-was joyful
«Sire,» fait il, «bien vengiez vos!
Lord says he well come you
«Mout par sué liez et retenuz,
Very much I-am glad and held-fast
«quant vos estes a mei venuz;
when you are to me come
«del remuer iert il neienz,
of-the moving will-be it nothing
«ainz vos herbergereiz çaenz.
rather you will-lodge here-within
«Mandez a vos chasez demeines,
Send to your vassals own
«a vos princes, a vos chadaines,
to your princes to your captains
«çaenz prengent herbergerie,
here-within let-them-take lodging
«tant que la vile seit emplie;
until that the town be filled
«li autre facent la fors prendre
the others let-them-make there outside take
«herbergerie et lor trés tendre;
lodging and their tents pitch
«par tot augent prendre vitaille:
through all let-them-go to-take victuals
«Troveront en assez senz faille.»
They-will-find thereof enough without fail

Adrastus l'ot: mout l'en mercie
Adrastus it-hears much him-thereof thanks
et de lui servir se covie.
and of him to-serve himself pledges
«Sire,» fait il, «ci a gent don,
Lord says he here has noble gift
«quant vos me metez a bandon,
when you me put at disposal
«vers mei et vers la meie gent,
toward me and toward the my folk
«vostre cité tot en present.
your city all in present
«Or vos pré jo et vos somoign,
Now you pray I and you summon
«se onc de mei eüstes soign,
if ever of me you-had care
«se onc de rien m'eüstes chier,
if ever in anything me-you-held dear
«donez mei un don que vos quier.»
give me a gift which of-you I-seek
Ligurges s'embroncha vers terre
Lycurgus bowed toward earth
et dist: «Ja n'en voil conseil querre
and said Ever not-thereof I-wish counsel to-seek
«que me quergiez chose tant chiére,
that of-me you-should-seek thing so-much dear
«s'aveir la pués, que nel vos quiére,
if-to-have it I-can that not-it you I-seek

«ne mais que tant en met defors
nor but that so-much thereof I-put outside
«mon fil et ma femne et mon cors.»
my son and my wife and my body
Ja erent sus trés qu'al palais,
Already they-were up as-far as-to-the palace
quant uns mes vint tot a eslais,
when a messenger came all at gallop
qui le rei nonce le peril,
who (to-)the king announces the peril
qu'il aveit mort trové son fil,
that-he had dead found his son
qu'une serpent l'aveit ocis
that-a serpent him-had killed
en son jardin, ou il ert mis.
in his garden where he was put
Quant li reis sot que ço ert veirs,
When the king knew that that was true
mua color, si devint neirs;
he-changed color so became black
de ço qu'il ot mout s'esbahi,
of that which-he heard much he-was-dismayed
par un poi que il ne chaï:
for a little that he not fell
«E! Deus,» fait il, «tant sué iriez,
Ah God says he so-much I-am angered
«ja mais nul jor ne serrai liez,
ever more any day not I-shall-be glad
«seit a present o seit a loinz,
be-it at present or be-it at long

«jusque j'aie mort o mes poinz
until I-have killed with my fists
«cele que m'a toleit mon fil,
her who me-has taken my son
«qui resemblot la flor d'avril.»
who resembled the flower of-April
La reïne s'esteit levee:
The queen herself-was risen
dormi aveit cele vespree.
slept she-had that evening
Bien ert vestue estreit son cors;
Well she-was clothed tight her body
isnèlement s'en eissi fors:
swiftly herself-thence issued out
por la noise qu'ert en la sale,
for the noise which-was in the hall
descoloree fu et pale.
discolored she-was and pale
Quant la novèle parentent,
When the news she-hears
pasmee chiet el pavement:
swooned she-falls on-the pavement
mout fait grant duel, forment li griéve.
much she-makes great grief greatly to-her it-weighs
A terre chiet: quant s'en reliéve,
To earth she-falls when herself-thence raises
ses paumes bat, grant duel demeine;
her palms she-beats great grief she-leads
de grant dolor fu lasse et pleine.
of great sorrow she-was weary and full

Tuit cil qui a la noise acorent,
All those who to the noise run
quant la novèle oent, en plorent.
when the news they-hear thereof weep
Li reis Ligurges fu mout sages:
The king Lycurgus was very wise
por ço qu'iluec ert li barnages,
for that that-there was the baronage
ne puet muer ne se confort.
not he-can change not himself he-comfort
Il comande qu'on li aport
He commands that-one to-him bring
son fil, qui ert morz el vergié.
his son who was dead in-the orchard
Cent en i corent tuit a pié,
Hundred thereof there run all on foot
le fil le rei ont aporté:
the son (of-)the king they-have brought
de lui font duel desmesuré.
over him they-make grief beyond-measure
Quant li reis vit son fil en biére:
When the king saw his son on bier
«E! Deus,» fait il, «par qual maniére
Ah God says he by what manner
«est morz mis fiz qu'amoe tant?
is dead my son whom-I-loved so-much
«N'avrai mais joie a mon vivant.»
Not-I-shall-have more joy in my living
De l'autre part fu la reïne,
On the-other side was the queen

que pas ne cesse ne ne fine
who at-all not ceases nor not stops
et se debat forment et crie;
and herself beats greatly and cries
mout semblot bien femne marrie:
very she-seemed well woman grieved
«E! petiz enfes, tendre boche,
Ah little child tender mouth
«por vos granz dueus al cuer me toche:
for you great griefs to-the heart me touch
«Mout est mis cuers de fort nature,
Very is my heart of strong nature
«bien sai de fi que trop sué dure,
well I-know for sure that too I-am hard
«quant davant mei vei tal damage,
when before me I-see such harm
«que ne me prent forsen o rage.»
that not me takes frenzy or rage
Lors s'escrie forment et brait,
Then herself-cries greatly and wails
li reis de sor le cors la trait;
the king from over the body her draws
entre les mains le rei se pasme.
between the hands (of-)the king herself swoons
Li reis la chose mout et blasme:
The king her chides much and blames
«Dame,» fait il, «grant tort avez,
Lady says he great wrong you-have

«que tal duel faites: bien savez
that such grief you-make well you-know
«que por plorer ne por duel faire
that for weeping nor for grief making
«nel poez pas de mort retraire.»
not-him you-can at-all from death draw-back
A grant dolor et a granz criz
With great sorrow and with great cries
fu li enfes enseveliz:
was the child buried
encosu l'ont en un chier paile,
sewn him-they-have in a dear silk
qui fu aportez de Thessaile;
which was brought from Thessaly
un sarcueu font de marbre querre,
a coffin they-make of marble seek
dedenz ont mis le cors en terre.
within they-have put the body in earth
Desor le gentil dameisel
Over the noble young-lord
firent un merveillos tombel:
they-made a marvelous tomb
onques senz or et senz argent
ever without gold and without silver
ne vit nus hon, ço cuit, plus gent.
not saw any man that I-think more noble
Li reis de Grece li corteis,
The king of Greece the courteous
qui ne vueut estre en lonc sospeis,
who not wishes to-be in long suspense

de mout grant bien se porpensa,
of very great good himself bethought
que la pucèle acordera.
that the maiden he-will-reconcile
Un son privé a sei apèle,
A his familiar to himself he-calls
que tost en aut por la pucèle;
that soon thence he-go for the maiden
et cil en vait, si li ameine.
and he thence goes so to-him brings
La ou la sale ert tote pleine
There where the hall was all full
vient cele al rei, merci li crie,
comes she to-the king mercy to-him cries
as piez li chiet, mout s'umelie.
at-the feet to-him she-falls much herself-humbles
Adrastus et toz sis barnages
Adrastus and all his baronage
por lei vuelent faire homenages.
for her wish to-do homages
Que vos direie? Tant ont fait,
What to-you would-I-say So-much they-have done
que par preiére, que par plait,
both by prayer and by pleading
que tot li pardona sis sire
that all to-her pardoned her lord
son mautalent et sa grant ire.
his ill-will and his great wrath

Mien escïent, jusqu'al tierz jor
To-my knowledge until-the third day
orent li Greu iluec sojor;
had the Greeks there rest
mout erent tuit en l'ost haitié
very were all in the-host glad
cil a cheval et cil a pié,
those on horse and those on foot
quant uns mes vint davant le rei,
when a messenger came before the king
qui li nonça par grant desrei:
who to-him announced with great uproar
«Adrastus, gentiz reis et larges,
Adrastus noble king and generous
«por quei demores et t'atarges?
for why tarriest-thou and delayest
«Cil de Thèbes sont fors eissu:
Those of Thebes are out issued
«Bien sont seissante mile escu;
Well they-are sixty thousand shields
«vers tei chevauchent par grant ire
toward thee they-ride with great wrath
«por les passages contredire.»
for the passes to-gainsay
Li reis, quant la parole oï,
The king when the word he-heard
forment li plot, si s'esjoï:
greatly to-him it-pleased so he-rejoiced
bien sét, si veirs est ço qu'il dit,
well he-knows if true is that which-he says

cil de Thèbes sont desconfit.
those of Thebes are discomfited
Par les princes le fait saveir:
Through the princes it he-makes know
qui donc veïst l'ost esmoveir!
who then had-seen the-host move
Ces buisines, cil graislier sonent;
These trumpets these bugles sound
ces granz valees en resonent;
these great valleys thereof resound
une grant liue tot de front
a great league all of front
durent li renc qui davant vont.
lasted the ranks which before go
Dès pués qu'il vinrent en lor guerre,
From since that-they came into their war
a martire metent la terre,
to martyrdom they-put the land
car, pués que entre la gent fiére
for since that enters the folk fierce
en la terre que est pleniére,
into the land which is full
par le païs s'espandent tuit,
through the country themselves-spread all
vitaille prenent senz conduit;
victuals they-take without safe-conduct
ardent les bors, les preies prenent
they-burn the boroughs the booties they-take
et prisoniers mout chier raement.
and prisoners very dear ransom

Mais, qui que preit ne qui que arde,
But whoever that plunder nor whoever that burn
Tydeüs fait davant l'anguarde;
Tydeus makes before the-vanguard
li eissilliez Polinicès
the exiled Polynices
le cheval point et broche après.
the horse spurs and spurs after

Montflor
X

The Greeks come to Eteocles's castle of Montflor. Its constable Meleager, Polynices's cousin, would yield it, but Hugh of Valplenier and the garrison refuse, and Achillor mocks the Greeks. Polynices counsels leaving it, but Tydeus says the castle must be taken. Adrastus vows to burn it and pitches his pavilion, painted with the world's histories.

Greu descendirent en un val,
Greeks dismounted in a valley
soz un chastel pristrent ostal:
under a castle they-took lodging
li chasteaus sist en la montaigne,
the castle sat on the mountain
la tor en est haute et sotaigne;
the tower thereof is high and lofty
Etioclès si l'ot fermé,
Eteocles so it-had fortified
seignor l'en ont tuit reclamé.
lord him-thereof have all claimed

El chastel ot mil chevaliers,
In-the castle there-had thousand knights
li reis les aveit forment chiers:
the king them had greatly dear
conestable ont Meleagès,
constable they-have Meleager
qui fu parenz le rei mout près;
who was kinsman (of-)the king very near
el baille esteient li borgeis.
in-the bailey were the burghers
Li chasteaus ert toz noveaus freis,
The castle was all new fresh
de totes parz ert en pendant:
from all sides it-was on slope
Polinicès i vint errant.
Polynices there came journeying
O lui fu li reis Adrastus,
With him was the king Adrastus
Ypomedon et Tydeüs.
Hippomedon and Tydeus
Cil dedenz les virent venir,
Those within them saw come
nes voudrent pas o eus cueillir:
not-them wished at-all with them to-receive
le pont tornérent o chaeines.
the bridge they-turned with chains
Lor genz furent totes certaines
Their folk were all certain
del defendre, s'est quis assaille,
of-the defending if-there-is who assail

les murs porprenent a bataille.
the walls they-seize for battle
Polinicès dist en riant:
Polynices said in laughing
«Di, va,» fait il, «venez avant:
Say go says he come forward
«Dites, cui est ceste maison,
Say whose is this house
«qui est li sire et come a non?»
who is the lord and how he-has name
Premiers parla Meleagès,
First spoke Meleager
qui fu cosins Ethioclès:
who was cousin (of-)Eteocles
«Sire,» fait il, «que volez vos?
Lord says he what wish you
«De nostre seignor et de nos
Of our lord and of us
«vos respondrai en paiz senz ire:
you I-shall-answer in peace without wrath
«Etioclès a non mis sire,
Eteocles has name my lord
«Valflorie a non ceste honor
Valflorie has name this domain
«et cist chasteaus a non Monflor;
and this castle has name Montflor
«et jo ai non Meleagès,
and I have name Meleager
«si sué cosins Etioclès;
so am cousin (of-)Eteocles

«de cest chastel sué conestables:
of this castle I-am constable
«Verté vos di senz nules fables.
Truth to-you I-say without any fables
«Or me dites, nel me celez,
Now me tell not-it from-me conceal
«qui vos estes et ou alez,
who you are and where you-go
«car mout avez bèles compaignes,
for very you-have fair companies
«bien ont porprises les montaignes:
well they-have seized the mountains
«Assez i vei beaus chevaliers,
Enough there I-see fair knights
«beaus dameiseaus et beaus destriers,
fair young-lords and fair chargers
«escuz a or bien peinz a flors
shields with gold well painted with flowers
«et enseignes de mil colors,
and ensigns of thousand colors
«et verz heaumes et blans haubers,
and green helmets and white hauberks
«lances nueves o trenchanz fers.
lances new with cutting irons
«Mais ço tiegn jo a grant folie,
But that hold I for great folly
«que vos entrez en Valflorie:
that you enter into Valflorie
«Se porprenez avant les bors,
If you-seize before the boroughs

«n'en ireiz mais senz granz dolors.»
not-thence you-will-go more without great griefs
Donc respondié Polinicès:
Then answered Polynices
«Se tu as non Meleagès,
If thou hast name Meleager
«bien me deis rendre la maison,
well to-me thou-must render the house
«quant jo t'avrai jehi mon non.
when I to-thee-shall-have declared my name
«Jo te tiegn a cosin germain,
I thee hold for cousin german
«et si iés tu fiz de m'antain;
and so art thou son of my-aunt
«Edipodès ot non mis pére,
Oedipus had name my father
«et Ethioclès est mis frére.
and Eteocles is my brother
«Il a son an tenu la terre,
He has his year held the land
«aillors s'en deit aler conquerre;
elsewhere himself-thence he-ought go to-conquer
«jo viegn mon an tenir l'onor,
I come my year to-hold the-domain
«si me deis bien rendre Monflor.
so to-me thou-must well render Montflor
«Se le me renz en paiz senz guerre,
If it to-me thou-renderest in peace without war
«tote te dorrai ceste terre;
all to-thee I-shall-give this land

«autresi as tu poi d'onor:
likewise hast thou little of-domain
«Seignor te ferai de Monflor.
Lord thee I-shall-make of Montflor
«Se ne te vueus par amor rendre
If not thyself thou-wishest by love to-yield
«et te puésse par force prendre,
and thee I-can by force take
«par toz les deus que nos creon
by all the gods whom we believe
«et par la lei que nos tenon,
and by the law which we hold
«ja n'i avra guardé parage
ever not-there will-have regarded lineage
«ne amistié ne cosinage,
nor friendship nor cousinhood
«que ne vos penge toz as portes
that not you I-hang all at-the gates
«a laz corsoirs et a reortes.
with nooses running and with withies
— Sire,» ço dist Meleagès,
Lord that said Meleager
«se le faites, n'en poon mais.
if it you-do not-thereof we-can more
«J'irai a ces barons parler,
I-shall-go to these barons to-speak

«saveir, enquerre et demander
to-know to-inquire and to-ask
«s'il vos voudront rendre Monflor
if-they you will-wish to-render Montflor
«et vos reconoistre a seignor.»
and you to-acknowledge as lord
Sus el palaiz arriére torne.
Up into-the palace back he-turns
Tuit li baron esteient morne:
All the barons were gloomy
«Seignor,» fait il, «qual la feron?
Lords says he what there shall-we-do
«Cist est dreiz heirs, bien le savon;
This-one is rightful heir well it we-know
«de l'onor est autresi près,
of the-domain he-is likewise near
«par dreit, come est Etioclès:
by right as is Eteocles
«Il a son an tenu la terre,
He has his year held the land
«aillors s'en deit aler conquerre;
elsewhere himself-thence he-ought go to-conquer
«cist vient son an tenir l'onor,
this-one comes his year to-hold the-domain
«et si vos prée par amor
and so you prays by love
«que vos senz ire et senz destrece
that you without wrath and without distress
«li rendez ceste forterece,
to-him render this fortress

«car ço est de dreit natural.
for that is of right natural
«Rendon la lui, jo n'en sai al.»
Let-us-render it to-him I not-thereof know other
Huges parla de Valplenier,
Hugh spoke of Valplenier
qui se dreça del renc premier:
who himself raised from-the rank first
«Meleagès, mout iés vilains,
Meleager very thou-art base
«n'iés pas de hardement certains:
not-thou-art at-all of boldness sure
«Malement vueus ta fei mentir
Badly thou-wishest thy faith to-belie
«et ton seignor a tort traïr,
and thy lord at wrong to-betray
«qui te vueus rendre a un vassal
who thyself wishest to-yield to a vassal
«et laissier nostre natural.»
and to-leave our natural
Donc li respont Meleagès:
Then to-him answers Meleager
«Vassal?» fait il, «nel dites mais:
Vassal says he not-it say more
«Ço sué jo prest a desraisnier,
That am I ready to prove
«toz adobez sor mon destrier,
all dubbed on my charger

«vers le vostre cors solement
against the your body only
«que vos dites faus jugement.
that you say false judgment
«Tenir devon cest joveignor
To-hold we-must this younger
«a nostre natural seignor;
as our natural lord
«s'il entre en paiz en ceste terre,
if-he enters in peace into this land
«nus hon ne li deit faire guerre:
any man not to-him ought make war
«Et si li jurérent li per,
And so to-him swore the peers
«et jo i fui al porparler;
and I there was at-the parley
«vos li jurastes as premiers,
you to-him swore among-the first
«come uns des autres chevaliers;
as one of-the other knights
«si li mentez la vostre fei
so to-him you-belie the your faith
«come traïtre, que jol vei.
as traitor as I-it see
«Se de ço vos osez defendre,
If of that you dare to-defend-yourself
«alez en tost vos armes prendre,
go thence soon your arms to-take
«et jo me combatrai por mei,
and I myself shall-fight for me

«por mon seignor et por ma fei:
for my lord and for my faith
«Se jo pués vostre cors conquerre,
If I can your body conquer
«qui li volez tolir sa terre,
who to-him wish to-take his land
«si li deit on rendre Monflor,
so to-him ought one render Montflor
«et lui reconoistre a seignor.»
and him acknowledge as lord
La cort s'estuet morne et secreie;
The court itself-keeps gloomy and silent
nus nel viée, nus ne l'otreie,
any not-it refuses any not it-grants
ne nus nel tout, ne nus nel done,
nor any not-it takes nor any not-it gives
ne cil vers lui ne s'abandone,
nor he toward him not himself-abandons
ne ne vueut pas eissir al plain:
nor not wishes at-all to-issue on-the plain
en la tor se vueut tenir sain.
in the tower himself he-wishes to-keep sound
Uns chevaliers de Bonivent
A knight of Benevento
en parla mout raisnablement:
thereof spoke very reasonably
«Seignor,» fait il, «entendez mei.
Lords says he hear me
«Nos somes tuit home le rei;
We are all men (of-)the king

«vers lui somes en sairement,
toward him we-are in oath
«et jol jurai premiérement:
and I-it swore first
«Ne m'en vueil mie parjurer,
Not me-thereof I-wish at-all to-perjure
«ne a autre sa tor livrer.
nor to other his tower to-deliver
«Ore aut cist en paiz a son frére,
Now let-go this-one in peace to his brother
«o lui parout et o sa mére:
with him let-him-speak and with his mother
«S'il li laisse son an l'onor,
If-he to-him leaves his year the-domain
«nos li rendron sempres Monflor;
we to-him shall-render at-once Montflor
«se il remaint en cest païs,
if he remains in this country
«ja n'i iert pués nus estaïs;
ever not-there will-be then any staying
«nos li rendron a mout grant joie,
we to-him shall-render with very great joy
«nostre defense iert mais mout poie.
our defense will-be more very little
«Ainceis ne li rendron nos mie,
Rather not to-him shall-render we at-all
«car ço semblereit coardie.»
for that would-seem cowardice

Tuit s'escriérent par la tor,
All themselves-cried through the tower
cest conseil tiénent a meillor.
this counsel they-hold for better
Li baron sont venu as estres,
The barons are come to-the galleries
si ont fait ovrir les fenestres;
so have made open the windows
par les entailles de la tor
through the embrasures of the tower
getérent fors lor chiés al jor.
they-threw out their heads to-the day
Premiers parla Meleagès,
First spoke Meleager
si apela Polinicès:
so called Polynices
«Sire,» fait il, «entendez mei.
Lord says he hear me
«Cist baron sont home le rei:
These barons are men (of-)the king
«Ne vuelent faire de Monflor
Not they-wish to-do of Montflor
«chose que tort a deshonor,
thing which turn to dishonor
«ne ne vuelent mon conseil creire,
nor not wish my counsel to-believe
«ne vostre cors ça enz receivre.
nor your body here within to-receive
«Se vos volez, jo remandrai,
If you wish I shall-remain

«et se vos plaist, jo m'en irai.»
and if you please I myself-thence shall-go
Dist Achillor: «Sire vassal,
Said Achillor Lord vassal
«si m'aït Deus, n'en puet estre al:
so me-help God not-thereof can be other
«Ja le pié ça enz ne metreiz,
Ever the foot here within not you-will-put
«ne par force n'i enterreiz.
nor by force not-there you-will-enter
«Ça enz a grant chevalerie
Here within has great chivalry
«des nobles barons de Surie,
of-the noble barons of Syria
«et si avon assez vitaille,
and so we-have enough victuals
«n'avon poor qu'ele nos faille:
not-we-have fear that-it us fail
«Se seïez quatorze meis,
If you-sat fourteen months
«n'en mangerïon nos tardeis.
not-thereof would-eat we late
«Assez avon bon vin et cler.
Enough we-have good wine and clear
«Ne nos poez de rien grever;
Not us you-can in anything harm
«remuez vos de ceste place,
move yourself from this place
«petit cremon vostre menace.
little we-fear your threat

«A vostre frére le graignor
To your brother the elder
«laissiez en paiz tenir l'onor;
let in peace hold the-domain
«tornez vos en arriére en Grece,
turn yourself thence back into Greece
«si conquerez ceus de Venece,
so conquer those of Venice
«qui vos guastent vostre contree:
who to-you lay-waste your country
«Petit preson vostre posnee.»
Little we-prize your boast
Polinicès fu soz un arbre,
Polynices was under a tree
et descendié desor un marbre;
and dismounted upon a marble
o lui fu li reis Adrastus,
with him was the king Adrastus
Ypomedon et Tydeüs:
Hippomedon and Tydeus
«Seignor,» fait il, «veez qual tor!
Lords says he see what tower
«Ne crent assaut de nul seignor,
Not it-fears assault from any lord
«ne crent ne traire ne lancier,
nor it-fears nor shooting nor hurling
«n'engenz n'i vaut un sol denier;
nor-engines not-there are-worth one single penny

«la tor ne crent nule perriére
the tower not fears any stone-thrower
«ne nul chaable qui la fiére.
nor any catapult which it strike
«Taus chevaliers a en Monflor,
Such knights there-has in Montflor
«qui n'essaucent guaires m'onor:
who not-exalt much my-domain
«Conseilliez mei que jo ferai
Counsel me what I shall-do
«et coment jo me contendrai.
and how I myself shall-bear
«Laisson Monflor, alon avant,
Let-us-leave Montflor let-us-go forward
«a vis deables le comant.
to live devils it I-commend
— En meie fei,» fait Tydeüs,
In my faith says Tydeus
«malement conquerron nos plus.
badly shall-conquer we more
«Mout avez dit que maus coarz
Much you-have said like bad coward
«et que maus bric et que musarz,
and like bad fool and like idler
«et si vos deit on bien choser,
and so you ought one well chide
«car folement savez parler.
for foolishly you-know-how to-speak
«Ne devez pas laissier Monflor,
Not you-must at-all leave Montflor

«qui est el chief de vostre honor,
which is at-the head of your domain
«jusqu'en aiez les murs fonduz
until-thereof you-have the walls thrown-down
«et les pilers toz abatuz:
and the pillars all felled
«Mal conquerron nos l'autre terre,
Badly shall-conquer we the-other land
«ou nos troveron fiére guerre,
where we shall-find fierce war
«se ne prenon ceste busnache
if not we-take this fort
«ainceis qu'Etioclès le sache.»
before that-Eteocles it know
Dist Adrastus li gentiz reis:
Said Adrastus the noble king
«Tydeüs, mout par iés corteis;
Tydeus very much thou-art courteous
«mieuz deis porter corone d'or
better thou-must bear crown of-gold
«que danz Nabugodonosor.
than lord Nebuchadnezzar
«Or sachent bien cil de Monflor
Now let-them-know well those of Montflor
«qu'el chastel lor ferai poor;
that-in-the castle to-them I-shall-make fear
«jo lor ferai a fou grezeis
I to-them shall-make with fire Greek
«ardeir les maisons as borgeis,
burn the houses of-the burghers

«les forz murs fondre et trebuchier,
the strong walls melt and topple
«l'orgueil des barons abaissier.»
the-pride of-the barons lower
Ne vos en quier plus alongier:
Not you thereof I-seek more to-lengthen
Polinicès monte el destrier.
Polynices mounts on-the charger
Li banier vont criant par l'ost
The criers go crying through the-host
que se herbergent et cel tost:
that themselves they-lodge and that soon
la veïssiez tanz hostaus prendre,
there you-would-have-seen so-many lodgings take
tanz riches trés as barons tendre;
so-many rich tents for-the barons pitch
li tréf porprènent les montaignes
the tents seize the mountains
et environ totes les plaignes.
and around all the plains
Le tréf al duc de Calidone
The tent of-the duke of Calydon
tent ses seneschaus Garsidone:
pitches his seneschal Garsidone
fiz fu d'un conte natural,
son he-was of-a count natural
si l'apèlent le seneschal.
so him-they-call the seneschal

Davant la porte del danjon
Before the gate of-the keep
tendent al rei son paveillon.
they-pitch for-the king his pavilion
Toz fu de pailes de colors,
All it-was of silks of colors
tailliez a bestes et a flors;
cut with beasts and with flowers
bien i sont peintes les estores,
well there are painted the histories
les vieilles leis et les memores,
the old laws and the memorials
et les justices et li plait,
and the justices and the pleas
li jugement et li forfait,
the judgments and the forfeits
et les montaignes et li val,
and the mountains and the valleys
et les caroles et li bal;
and the carols and the dances
les pucèles et lor ami,
the maidens and their beloveds
et les dames et lor mari,
and the ladies and their husbands
les larges prees, les riviéres
the wide meadows the rivers
et les bestes de mil maniéres;
and the beasts of thousand manners
li ostor et li esprevier,
the goshawks and the sparrowhawks

li palefrei et li destrier,
the palfreys and the chargers
et li vieil home et li chanu,
and the old men and the white-haired
et li chauf et li chevelu,
and the bald and the long-haired
et les selves et les forèz,
and the woods and the forests
li embuschement des aguaiz,
the ambushes of-the lurkings
li cembel et les envaïes
the skirmishes and the onsets
que danzel font por lor amies,
which youths make for their beloveds
et li chastel et les citez,
and the castles and the cities
les fortereces, les fertez.
the fortresses the strongholds
De totes autres creatures
Of all other creatures
sont el tréf peintes les natures.
are in-the tent painted the natures
Li aigles d'or est a neiel,
The eagle of-gold is in niello
qui est assis sor le pomel:
which is set on the knob
onques nus hon ne vit tant cler,
ever any man not saw so-much bright
vilains ne l'ose reguarder;
base-man not it-dares look-at

li reis David ne Salomon
the king David nor Solomon
n'ot tal aigle en son paveillon.
not-had such eagle in his pavilion
Tant i ot pierres naturaus,
So-many there it-had stones natural
tant calcedones, tant esmaus,
so-many chalcedonies so-many enamels
tant escharboncles cler ardanz,
so-many carbuncles bright burning
tant jagonces cler reluisanz!
so-many jacinths bright shining
Dès que soleuz ne venz le toche,
As-soon as sun nor wind it touches
fou ardant giéte par la boche.
fire burning it-throws through the mouth
Environ ot cent trés et plus,
Around it-had hundred tents and more
qui sont as contes et as dus,
which are of-the counts and of-the dukes
qui le rei servent par amor,
who the king serve by love
et chascuns tient de lui s'onor.
and each holds from him his-domain

The Siege of Montflor

XI

The Greeks assault the walls, and the defenders scald Hippomedon's men with boiling water. Tydeus's stone-throwers break a gate tower and Greek fire burns the town, but the keep holds. Four counts of Venice propose a stratagem: Polynices will lie in ambush, Tydeus will come up from Valcolor as though he were Eteocles's relief, and the host will feign flight so that the garrison comes out for plunder. The two take their posts, and Hippomedon, going alone to the breach, is wounded by a bolt but keeps watch over the host.

Davant la porte sist li reis
Before the gate sat the king
et li barnages des Grezeis.
and the baronage of-the Greeks
Lor armes prènent li baron,
Their arms take the barons
assaillir vont; et li geudon,
to-assail go and the foot-soldiers
qui l'assaut orent comencié,
who the-assault had begun
maint dart trenchant i ont lancié:
many-a dart cutting there they-have hurled
lancent et traient par orgueil,
they-hurl and shoot with pride
nus hon n'i puet descovrir l'ueil.
any man not-there can uncover the-eye
Polinicès assaut deriére,
Polynices assails behind
compaignie ot hardie et fiére:
company he-had bold and fierce

il sont vint mile dameisel
they are twenty thousand young-lords
proz et corteis et assez bel.
valiant and courteous and enough fair
Cil assaillent hardiement
These assail boldly
de si qu'as murs comunement;
from so-far as-to-the walls jointly
chascuns i fiert de son piqueis,
each there strikes with his pick
mais ço ne lor valut un peis.
but that not to-them was-worth a pea
Cil se defendent fort del mur:
Those themselves defend strongly from-the wall
as vos l'assaut plenier et dur.
behold you the-assault full and hard
Tydeüs sist en la montaigne:
Tydeus sat on the mountain
mout ot grant gent fiére et grifaigne
very he-had great folk fierce and grim
des chevaliers de Calidone,
of-the knights of Calydon
qui bien assaillent senz essone
who well assail without excuse
et o treis cenz arbalestiers
and with three hundred crossbowmen
et plus de quatre mile archiers
and more than four thousand archers
traient saietes et quarreaus.
they-shoot arrows and bolts

As murs ala des dameiseaus
To-the walls went of-the young-lords
que Tydeüs ot adobez
whom Tydeus had dubbed
et de novèlement armez:
and from newly armed
trenchanz ciseaus ont et forz pis,
cutting chisels they-have and strong picks
mais li mur sont de marbre bis,
but the walls are of marble gray
qu'il n'en pueent point esgruner;
that-they not-thereof can at-all crumble
ne eus n'i leist pas converser,
nor them not-there is-permitted at-all to-stay
car cil lor giétent granz chaillous,
for those at-them throw great stones
qui del defendre nes font fous.
who of-the defending not-them make fools
Ypomedon fu en un val:
Hippomedon was in a valley
en l'ost n'aveit meillor vassal;
in the-host not-was better vassal
et ot cinquante chevaliers,
and he-had fifty knights
proz et hardiz et bons guerriers.
valiant and bold and good warriors
Jusqu'as terriers les envaïssent,
As-far-as-the earthworks them they-attack
en trente lous les murs fieblissent;
in thirty places the walls they-weaken

set cenz quarreaus en ont fonduz,
seven hundred blocks thereof they-have thrown-down
qu'il ont des pilers abatuz:
which-they have from-the pillars felled
s'auques les i leüst ester,
if-somewhat them there it-were-permitted to-stand
ja feïssent le mur verser.
already they-would-make the wall topple
Mais cil dedenz les aperceivent,
But those within them perceive
qui les ocient et deceivent;
who them kill and deceive
ève boillant giétent a tas,
water boiling they-throw in heaps
trente barons lor i ont ars.
thirty barons to-them there they-have burned
Icil a fait l'assaut laissier,
That has made the-assault leave
si tornérent al herbergier;
so they-turned to-the lodging
la nuét jurent et reposérent
the night they-lay and rested
jusqu'al matin que il levérent.
until-the morning that they rose
Tydeüs est matin levez,
Tydeus is in-morning risen
ses engineors a mandez,
his engineers he-has summoned

et sis prée des engenz faire
and so-them prays of-the engines to-make
et le mairrien del bos atraire;
and the timber from-the wood to-draw
si lor fait faire dous perriéres
so to-them he-makes make two stone-throwers
forz et getanz et bien legiéres:
strong and throwing and very light
ainz que venist a l'avesprer,
before that it-came to the-evening
sont totes prestes de geter.
they-are all ready to throw
Une tor ot desus la porte,
A tower there-had above the gate
mout ert bèle, mais n'ert pas forte:
very it-was fair but not-was at-all strong
geter i font les dous perriéres
throw there make the two stone-throwers
chaillos cornuz et grosses pierres;
stones horned and big stones
les panz en ont fraiz et rompuz
the panels thereof they-have broken and burst
et les pilers a val fonduz.
and the pillars to below thrown-down
Dedenz aveit dez chevaliers,
Within there-were ten knights
ço m'est avis, et vint archiers,
that to-me-is opinion and twenty archers

qui tuit furent mort et tué
who all were dead and killed
et contre terre acraventé:
and against earth thrown-down
grant duel en ont cil de Monflor,
great grief thereof have those of Montflor
forment maudient lor seignor.
greatly they-curse their lord
Bien les assaillent li reial,
Well them assail the royal-ones
qui sont lor anemi mortal;
who are their enemies mortal
lancié lor ont le fou grezeis:
hurled at-them they-have the fire Greek
ardent les maisons as borgeis;
they-burn the houses of-the burghers
n'i remaint voute ne celier,
not-there remains vault nor cellar
sale perrine ne mostier.
hall of-stone nor minster
La flame entra par les fenestres:
The flame entered through the windows
cil s'en fuient qui sont as estres.
those themselves-thence flee who are on-the galleries
Grant chalor ont el maistre estage:
Great heat they-have in-the master story
n'i a baron de tal corage
not-there has baron of such heart
que ne fremisse de poor;
that not tremble from fear

forment maudient lor seignor,
greatly they-curse their lord
quant il ne lor i vient aidier,
when he not to-them there comes to-aid
car il le sét dès avant hier.
for he it knows since before yesterday
En la tor cornent la menee,
In the tower they-horn the call
mout par est lor gent esfreee:
very much is their folk frightened
li reis les fait mout aprochier,
the king them makes very approach
les eschales as murs drecier.
the ladders to-the walls raise
Cil dedenz ne se vuelent rendre,
Those within not themselves wish to-yield
forment se peinent del defendre:
greatly themselves strive in-the defending
lancent espiez set cenz et plus,
they-hurl spears seven hundred and more
que cil ne puéssent monter sus.
that those not can mount up
Li fous remaint. Quant vint al seir,
The fire remains When it-came to-the evening
que virent l'air teniécle et neir,
that they-saw the-air dark and black
reial cornérent la retraite:
royal-ones horned the retreat
mout ont bone jornee faite;
very they-have good day made

as herberges est l'ost tornee,
to-the lodgings is the-host turned
mout furent lié cele vespree;
very they-were glad that evening
davant le maistre tréf reial,
before the master tent royal
la descendirent li vassal.
there dismounted the vassals
Davant la tente al rei de Grece
Before the tent of-the king of Greece
ot quatre contes de Venece;
there-had four counts of Venice
a une part traient le rei:
to one side they-draw the king
«Sire,» font il, «ja par desrei
Lord say they ever by disorder
«ne par traire ne par lancier
nor by shooting nor by hurling
«ne porreiz ceste tor baillier;
not you-will-be-able this tower to-take
«mais nos somes sage de guerre,
but we are wise in war
«si savon bien chastel conquerre;
so we-know well castle to-conquer
«se vos creez nostre corage,
if you believe our heart

«nos somes tant veisié et sage
we are so-much shrewd and wise
«que demain vos rendron Monflor
that tomorrow to-you we-shall-render Montflor
«et toz ceus qui sont en la tor.»
and all those who are in the tower
Ço dist li reis: «Et vos coment?
That said the king And you how
«Mout vos dorrai or et argent,
Much to-you I-shall-give gold and silver
«a bandon vos met mon tensor,
at disposal to-you I-put my treasure
«tot mon argent et tot mon or.
all my silver and all my gold
«Se me poez le chastel prendre
If me you-can the castle take
«et les chevaliers dedenz rendre,
and the knights within render
«jo vos otrei ma druerie,
I to-you grant my friendship
«et vos dorrai plus manantie
and to-you I-shall-give more wealth
«que cuers d'ome ne puet penser,
than heart of-man not can think
«ne boche ne savreit nomer.
nor mouth not could name
— Sire,» font il, «or vos sofrez,
Lord say they now you be-patient
«si vos diron que vos ferez.
so to-you we-shall-say what you will-do

«Bailliez a dant Polinicès
Give to lord Polynices
«cinc cenz chevaliers et nen mais;
five hundred knights and not more
«cil s'embuscheront a la lune
these themselves-will-ambush by the moon
«a val soz cele roche brune.
to below under that rock brown
«Quant li baron seront es vaus,
When the barons will-be in-the valleys
«si descendront de lor chevaus;
so they-will-dismount from their horses
«desoz les oliviers foilluz
under the olives leafy
«s'apoieront sor lor escuz,
they-will-lean on their shields
«et tendront iluec li vassal
and will-hold there the vassals
«chascuns par le frein son cheval.
each by the bridle his horse
«En terre fichent lor espiez:
Into earth let-them-fix their spears
«Demain les fera Deus toz liez.
Tomorrow them will-make God all glad
«Mil chevaliers bons par nature,
Thousand knights good by nature
«sages de sens et de mesure,
wise of sense and of measure
«ceus baillereiz a Tydea:
these you-will-give to Tydeus

«Dreit vers Thèbes les conduira.
Straight toward Thebes them he-will-lead
«A dous granz liues de Monflor,
At two great leagues from Montflor
«la descendront en Valcolor;
there they-will-dismount in Valcolor
«es ombres, soz les oliviers,
in-the shades under the olives
«embuschera ses chevaliers.
he-will-ambush his knights
«Al fin del jor, tot par egal,
At-the end of-the day all by equal
«eistront del bos, sordront del val;
they-will-issue from-the wood will-rise from-the valley
«de vers Thèbes par mé les plaignes
from toward Thebes through midst the plains
«vendront rengiees les compaignes;
will-come ranked the companies
«o eus avront porté mil corz,
with them they-will-have carried thousand horns
«qu'il soneront par granz esforz:
which-they will-sound with great forces
«Lors cuideront cil de Monflor
Then will-think those of Montflor
«que tuit icil seient des lor.
that all these be of-the theirs
«Poignant viengent vers ceus defors,
Spurring let-them-come toward those outside
«les gonfanons aient destors:
the banners let-them-have unfurled

«Dreit a cest host prendront un poindre
Straight at this host they-will-take a charge
«et nos demanderont a joindre;
and us will-ask to join
«vos les verreiz vers vos venir,
you them will-see toward you come
«semblant lor faites de fuïr;
seeming to-them make of fleeing
«mout tost montez sor voz chevaus
very soon mount on your horses
«o la force de voz vassaus,
with the force of your vassals
«et fuiez a desconfiture
and flee in rout
«par mé ces chans grant aleüre.
through midst these fields great pace
«Ci laissereiz les trés tenduz.
Here you-will-leave the tents pitched
«Li chevalier o les escuz
The knights with the shields
«derier facent la riére guarde:
behind let-them-make the rear guard
«N'i muevent ja trossel ne farde;
Not-there let-them-move ever bundle nor pack
«ci laissereiz les chevaus gras,
here you-will-leave the horses fat
«l'or et l'argent et les bons dras,
the-gold and the-silver and the good cloths

«trés et tentes de mil maniéres
tents and pavilions of thousand manners
«totes soles par ces jonchiéres,
all alone through these rushes
«et granz aveirs de mainte guise.
and great wealth of many-a guise
«Cil del chastel par coveitise
Those of-the castle through covetousness
«saudront fors por prendre la preie,
will-leap out for to-take the booty
«que il verront par ceste herbeie;
which they will-see through this grass
«la povre gent et les garçons
the poor folk and the grooms
«verreiz venir as paveillons,
you-will-see come to-the pavilions
«et li chevalier del chastel
and the knights of-the castle
«vos ensiuront o lor cembel;
you will-follow with their skirmish
«bien vos enchauceront as plains.
well you will-chase in-the plains
«Polinicès ne seit vilains:
Polynices not be base
«Sa baate ait sor un lorier;
His watch let-him-have on a laurel
«quant serront fors li chevalier,
when will-be out the knights
«dreit al chastel vienge poignant;
straight to-the castle let-him-come spurring

«par ceste porte ça davant
by this gate here before
«se mete sempres en Monflor,
himself let-him-put at-once into Montflor
«es bretesches et en la tor.
into-the bretesches and into the tower
«Tot le chastel trovera vué,
All the castle he-will-find empty
«si lor fera mout grant enué,
so to-them he-will-make very great annoy
«que, por coveitise d'aveir,
that for covetousness of-wealth
«avront guerpi sol lor maneir.
they-will-have forsaken alone their dwelling
«Nos ne somes mie devin:
We not are at-all soothsayers
«Cil ait o sei un cor de pin;
He let-him-have with himself a horn of pine
«quatre feiz le sont en la tor,
four times it let-him-sound in the tower
«quant il serra dedenz Monflor.
when he will-be within Montflor
«Quant nos orron le cor soner,
When we shall-hear the horn sound
«sempres feron l'ost arrester
at-once we-shall-make the-host stop
«et nos atorneron al joindre,
and we ourselves-shall-turn to-the joining
«vers ceus dedenz prendron le poindre.
toward those within we-shall-take the charge

«Cil se tendront a escharni,
Those themselves will-hold for mocked
«quant se verront issi traï,
when themselves they-will-see thus betrayed
«et se torneront al defendre:
and themselves will-turn to-the defending
«Ne se voudront pas laissier prendre.
Not themselves will-wish at-all to-let take
«Tante haste verreiz baissier
So-many shaft you-will-see lowered
«et tante enseigne despleier,
and so-many ensign unfurled
«tant fort escu freindre et percier,
so-many strong shield break and pierce
«tant gentil home tresbuchier;
so-many noble man tumble
«la verreiz tante haste fraite
there you-will-see so-many shaft broken
«et tante bone espee traite.
and so-many good sword drawn
«Tydeüs criera s'enseigne,
Tydeus will-cry his-war-cry
«poignant venra par la montaigne;
spurring will-come by the mountain
«cil dedenz nel porront sofrir,
those within not-it will-be-able suffer
«le champ lor estovra guerpir;
the field to-them will-behoove to-forsake
«fuiant vendront vers le chastel,
fleeing they-will-come toward the castle

«mais defors tendront lor cembel.
but outside they-will-hold their skirmish
— Par Deu,» dist Adrastus li reis,
By God said Adrastus the king
«ne parlez pas come borgeis:
not you-speak at-all like burgher
«Nobles dus estes de parage,
Noble dukes you-are of lineage
«mout avez dit grant vasselage.
much you-have said great prowess
«Seignor,» fait il, «issi feron:
Lords says he thus we-shall-do
«Ja cest conseil ne changeron.»
Ever this counsel not we-shall-change
Polinicès monte premiers,
Polynices mounts first
o lui prent cinc cenz chevaliers.
with him takes five hundred knights
Cil s'embuschiérent en la brueille,
These themselves-ambushed in the thicket
en la ramee, soz la fueille;
in the boughs under the foliage
et Tydeüs en Valcolor,
and Tydeus in Valcolor
soz les arbres, en la freidor,
under the trees in the cool
mil chevaliers ot toz en nombre:
thousand knights he-had all in number
li olivier lor firent ombre.
the olives to-them made shade

Li chevalier en sont alé,
The knights thence are gone
si come il furent devisé.
so as they were devised
Par tote l'ost grant joie meinent;
Through all the-host great joy they-lead
cil des aguaiz pas ne se feignent:
those of-the ambushes at-all not themselves feign
porpensent sei que il feront
bethink themselves what they will-do
et coment il se contendront.
and how they themselves will-bear
Ypomedon fist l'eschauguaite:
Hippomedon made the-watch
onques nule ne fu mieuz faite.
ever any not was better made
Veisos est de chevalerie,
Shrewd he-is in chivalry
de hardement et d'estoutie:
in boldness and in-rashness
comencier vuet tal vasselage
to-begin he-wishes such prowess
que tost tornereit a folage.
which soon would-turn to folly
Une fraite ot desoz le mur,
A breach there-had under the wall
ou l'assaut firent fort et dur,
where the-assault they-made strong and hard

que si chevalier esfondérent
which his knights broke-through
quant cil dedenz les eschaudérent:
when those within them scalded
toz sous s'en vint desoz Monflor;
all alone himself-thence came under Montflor
les guaites cornent en la tor;
the watchmen horn in the tower
il est descenduz del destrier,
he is dismounted from-the charger
si est montez sor le terrier.
so is mounted on the earthwork
Li cuens s'est enz el pertus mis:
The count himself-is in into-the hole put
ja passast outre, ço m'est vis,
already he-would-have-passed beyond that to-me-is opinion
quant uns pautoniers del chastel
when a rascal of-the castle
le feri si o un quarrel,
him struck so with a bolt
par mé l'escu li fist passer.
through midst the-shield to-him he-made pass
Onc li haubers nel pot sauver
Ever the hauberk not-him could save
que nel ferist par mé le cors:
that not-him it-struck through midst the body
un rai de sanc en geta fors.
a jet of blood thereof threw out
Ypomedon se sent bleciez:
Hippomedon himself feels wounded

taus n'en sét mot qui'n iert iriez.
such-a-one not-thereof knows word who-thereof will-be angered
Il est descenduz del terrier,
He is dismounted from-the earthwork
si rest montez sor son destrier;
so again-is mounted on his charger
celeement vint a sa gent,
secretly he-came to his folk
sor l'erbe vert a pié descent;
on the-grass green on foot he-dismounts
li sans li cort a val l'escu.
the blood to-him runs to below the-shield
Si home l'ont aperceü:
His men him-have perceived
cent se pasment de la dolor
hundred themselves swoon from the grief
et mil en plorent de tendror.
and thousand thereof weep from tenderness
Li sans li raie por le chaut:
The blood to-him gushes for the heat
il trenche un pan de son bliaut,
he cuts a panel from his tunic
si en bende desus la plaie
so therewith he-binds above the wound
por retenir le sanc qui raie.
for to-hold-back the blood which gushes
Quant fu estanchiez li saigniers:
When was staunched the bleeding
«A! Deus,» fait il, «com sué legiers!
Ah God says he how I-am light

«Ceste plaie ne prez un guant.»
This wound not I-prize a glove
Toz premiers monte en l'auferrant:
All first he-mounts on the-war-horse
por ses homes reconforter,
for his men to-comfort
qu'il a veüz por lui plorer,
whom-he has seen for him weep
se peine mout de chevauchier;
himself he-strives much of riding
mout se travaille de veillier.
much himself he-toils of watching
Ypomedon est angoissos
Hippomedon is anguished
de sa plaie et mout doloros;
by his wound and very in-pain
mais l'ost voudreit forment guarder,
but the-host he-would-wish greatly to-guard
de totes parz sa gent sauver.
from all sides his folk to-save
Bien a les hoz avironees,
Well he-has the hosts surrounded
cerchié les puéz et les valees;
searched the hills and the valleys
en plusors lous met s'establie
in many places he-puts his-post
des chevaliers d'Alemandie:
of-the knights of-Alemannia

cil sont natural de sa terre,
these are native of his land
sage sont et bien duét de guerre.
wise they-are and well taught of war

Montflor Taken

XII

A Greek knight posing as Eteocles's man tells Achillor the king is coming with a thousand knights. At dawn Tydeus appears with his companies and horns, and the Greeks flee, leaving their tents. The garrison pours out to plunder and pursue, and Polynices enters the empty castle and raises the bridge. When his horn sounds, the Greeks turn and take the garrison. Adrastus throws the prisoners in a pit under the tower, spares Meleager, garrisons Montflor, and marches on Thebes.

Un chevalier i ot mout sage:
A knight there had very wise
riches hon fu et de parage,
rich man he-was and of lineage
niés a un conte de Venece;
nephew to a count of Venice
seneschaus fu al rei de Grece.
seneschal he-was to-the king of Greece
Toz sous s'en vint desoz Monflor,
All alone himself-thence came under Montflor
si a guardé devers la tor;
so has looked toward the tower
vit Achillor a la fenestre,
he-saw Achillor at the window
joste un piler, devers senestre:
beside a pillar toward left

«Di, va,» fait il, «entent a mei:
Say go says he attend to me
«Niés sué Etioclès le rei;
Nephew I-am (of-)Eteocles the king
«ci m'a tramis, si sué espie;
here me-has sent so I-am spy
«mais jo ne sai coment ço die
but I not know how that I-say
«por quei jo sué tramis a tei.
for why I am sent to thee
«Jol te dirai, entent a mei.»
I-it to-thee shall-say attend to me
Cil vint al mur a une part,
That-one came to-the wall at one side
et cil de fors li dist par art:
and he of outside to-him said by art
«Di, va,» fait il, «n'aiez poor:
Say go says he not-have fear
«Ainceis demain prime de jor,
Before tomorrow prime of day
«verreiz Etioclès venir;
you-will-see Eteocles come
«mil chevaliers prèz de ferir,
thousand knights ready to strike
«de toz les meillors de s'onor,
of all the best of his-domain
«vos aconduira a Monflor.
you he-will-lead to Montflor
«Se vos veez Grezeis fuïr,
If you see Greeks flee

«quant il verront le rei venir,
when they will-see the king come
«sis parsivez hardiement,
so-them pursue boldly
«car il sont mout mauvaise gent.»
for they are very bad folk
Et cil respont: «Si feron nos:
And that-one answers So shall-do we
«Mar amenérent host sor nos.
Ill they-brought host upon us
«Se nos poon par nostre poigne
If we can by our fist
«parfaire bien ceste bosoigne,
complete well this business
«li reis nos en savra bon gré:
the king to-us thereof will-know good thanks
«Toz jorz serron mais si privé.»
All days we-shall-be henceforth his intimates
Dist Achillor: «Fui tei de ci,
Said Achillor Flee thee from here
«que ne t'aient de l'ost choisi.
that not thee-have of the-host spied
«En cele tor m'en monterai,
Into that tower myself-thence I-shall-mount
«a mes compaignons le dirai,
to my companions it I-shall-tell
«que li gentiz reis de nature
that the noble king of nature
«nos socorra tot a dreiture.»
us will-succor all at right

Achillor s'en monte en la tor
Achillor himself-thence mounts into the tower
et cil s'en vait a son seignor.
and he himself-thence goes to his lord
Li niés al conte de Venece
The nephew of-the count of Venice
en est venuz al rei de Grece;
thence is come to-the king of Greece
el tréf li conte a une part
in-the tent to-him tells at one side
coment il a parlé par art.
how he has spoken by art
Adrastus est reis de nature,
Adrastus is king of nature
sages de sen et de mesure:
wise of sense and of measure
o ses privez barons conseille
with his familiar barons he-counsels
et si lor conte la merveille,
and so to-them tells the marvel
issi com cil a espleitié;
thus as that-one has achieved
cil en rient et sin sont lié.
those thereof laugh and so-thereof are glad
La nuét passa de si qu'al jor:
The night passed from so-far as-to-the day
les guaites cornent en la tor,
the watchmen horn in the tower
li soleuz liéve par matin,
the sun rises by morning

li rossignous s'escrie el pin.
the nightingale itself-cries in-the pine
Quant li soleuz fu esbaudiz,
When the sun was emboldened
Tydeüs ést des bos floriz;
Tydeus issues from-the woods flowered
Tydeüs ést de la ramee,
Tydeus issues from the boughs
l'auberc vestu, ceinte l'espee,
the-hauberk clothed girt the-sword
l'eaume lacié, l'escu al col:
the-helmet laced the-shield at-the neck
ne semble pas Lombart ne fol.
not he-seems at-all Lombard nor fool
Tote dreite porte sa lance;
All straight he-carries his lance
mout par ot bèle conoissance;
very much he-had fair device
uns esporons aveit es piez
a-pair-of spurs he-had on-the feet
a fin or mout bien entailliez.
with fine gold very well carved
Bien li sistrent si guarnement.
Well to-him sat his equipments
Bon cheval ot et bel et gent:
Good horse he-had both fair and noble
plus tost porprent pué et montaigne
more soon it-seizes hill and mountain
qu'autre chevaus ne cort par plaigne;
than-other horse not runs by plain

por dous larges liues noer,
for two wide leagues to-swim
ne l'estuet pas esporoner;
not it-behooves at-all to-spur
ja por dous liues n'iert estans,
ever for two leagues not-it-will-be weary
ne ja n'en poussera des flans.
nor ever not-thereof it-will-heave of-the flanks
Taus chevaliers sist en la sèle,
Such knight sat in the saddle
qui mout aime guerre novèle:
who much loves war new
un poindre fist par un costal,
a charge he-made by a slope
tot en a fait fremir le val;
all thereof he-has made tremble the valley
il se retint en mé la plaigne,
he himself held-back in midst the plain
si reguarda vers sa compaigne.
so looked toward his company
Bien les vit après sei venir,
Well them he-saw after himself come
a grant espleit del bos eissir;
with great speed from-the wood issue
trestoz li cuers l'en rit de joie:
all the heart him-thereof laughs from joy
lor demorance iert mais hué poie.
their delay will-be more today little
Il ot monté un pué hauçor:
He had mounted a hill higher

cil le choisissent de Monflor;
those him descry from Montflor
l'uns a l'autre le monstre al dei,
the-one to the-other him shows with-the finger
car bien cuident veeir le rei.
for well they-think to-see the king
En terre fichiérent lor lances:
Into earth they-fixed their lances
mout orent bèles conoissances
very they-had fair devices
que es lances furent laciees,
which on-the lances were laced
al vent sont totes despleiees,
to-the wind they-are all unfurled
des plus riches pailes de Frise:
of-the most rich silks of Frisia
a mont ventèlent a la bise.
on high flutter in the north-wind
Cinc cent graisle cornent ensemble,
Five hundred bugles horn together
tote en bondist la terre et tremble.
all thereof booms the earth and trembles
Tydeüs a val un pendant
Tydeus to below a slope
dreit a l'ost vient esporonant:
straight to the-host comes spurring
l'ost de Grece fremist et bruit,
the-host of Greece trembles and roars
les genz a pié s'en éssent tuit.
the folk on foot themselves-thence issue all

Adrastus monte o ses barons,
Adrastus mounts with his barons
si guerpissent lor paveillons;
so forsake their pavilions
fuiant s'en vont par mé la plaigne:
fleeing themselves-thence go through midst the plain
li reis chadèle sa compaigne.
the king leads his company
Tuit s'en éssent cil de Monflor,
All themselves-thence issue those of Montflor
que n'i remést un sol des lor:
that not-there remained one single of-the theirs
la gent a pié o les garçons
the folk on foot with the grooms
corent tot dreit as paveillons;
run all straight to-the pavilions
tuit li chevalier del chastel
all the knights of-the castle
s'en éssent fors o lor cembel;
themselves-thence issue out with their skirmish
bien enchaucent le rei a plein.
well they-chase the king at open
Polinicès lasche le frein,
Polynices slackens the bridle
par mé le pré fait un eslais;
through midst the meadow he-makes a gallop
si chevalier le sivent près;
his knights him follow near

poignant vait sa chevalerie
spurring goes his chivalry
par la prée, que fu florie:
through the meadow which was flowered
quant éssent fors del bos a plain,
when they-issue out of-the wood at open
ne semblent pas de rien vilain.
not they-seem at-all in anything base
Poignant viénent dreit a Monflor,
Spurring they-come straight to Montflor
cent en entrérent en la tor;
hundred thereof entered into the tower
n'i trovérent nesun portier,
not-there they-found any porter
portier firent d'un chevalier.
porter they-made of-a knight
Quant il furent dedenz entré,
When they were within entered
après eus ont le pont levé:
after them they-have the bridge raised
de tant furent il plus seür;
by so-much were they more sure
de totes parz montent al mur.
from all sides they-mount on-the wall
Li corz de pin corne en la tor,
The horn of pine horns in the tower
cil se reguardent de Monflor.
those themselves look-back from Montflor
Lors se tindrent a engeignié:
Then themselves they-held for tricked

un petit ont l'enchauz laschié.
a little they-have the-chase slackened
Lors s'arestut li reis de Grece,
Then himself-stopped the king of Greece
si dist as contes de Venece:
so said to-the counts of Venice
«Franc chevalier, ne fuiez mais,
Noble knights not flee more
«que trop vos tiénent por mauvais.
for too-much you they-hold for bad
«Or verron ja, al torner tost,
Now we-shall-see already at-the turning soon
«qui serra li plus proz de l'ost
who will-be the most valiant of the-host
«et qui se savra mieuz aidier
and who himself will-know better to-help
«del decouper et del trenchier.»
of-the hacking and of-the cutting
A tant ont comencié l'estor,
At this they-have begun the-battle
si vont joindre a ceus de Monflor.
so go to-join with those of Montflor
La veïssiez hastes baissier
There you-would-have-seen shafts lower
et tanz gonfanons despleier,
and so-many banners unfurl
escuz croissir, haubers fausser,
shields crack hauberks fail
lances brisier, tronçons voler,
lances break splinters fly

tant riche coup ferir d'espee,
so-many rich blow strike with-sword
tante teste del bu sevree;
so-many head from-the trunk severed
tant gentil home d'autre terre,
so-many noble man of-other land
qui erent venu por conquerre,
who were come for to-conquer
veïssiez morir en la pree
you-would-have-seen die in the meadow
ou la bataille fu jostee.
where the battle was joined
Mout sont hardi cil de Monflor,
Very are bold those of Montflor
bien se defendent en l'estor:
well themselves defend in the-battle
l'une meitié, ço m'est avis,
the-one half that to-me-is opinion
i a des lor que mors que pris.
there has of-the theirs both dead and taken
Tydeüs vait criant s'enseigne,
Tydeus goes crying his-war-cry
apoignant vint par mé la plaigne;
spurring he-came through midst the plain
un chevalier vait si ferir
a knight goes so to-strike
l'escu li fait fraindre et partir,
the-shield to-him he-makes break and part
l'auberc fausser et desmaillier,
the-hauberk fail and unmail

mort le tresbuche del destrier:
dead him he-fells from-the charger
par les rènes prent l'auferrant.
by the reins he-takes the-war-horse
La meslee depart a tant:
The melee breaks-up at this
as vos toz ceus de Monflor pris,
behold you all those of Montflor taken
ne mais que ceus qui sont ocis.
nor more than those who are killed
Li reis de Grece ést de l'estor,
The king of Greece issues from the-battle
apoignant vint dreit a Monflor,
spurring he-came straight to Montflor
en sa main une espee nue.
in his hand a sword naked
Quant la bataille fu vencue,
When the battle was won
contre lui vint Polinicès
against him came Polynices
a un perron ilueques près.
to a block there near
Li gentil home de Sidone
The noble men of Sidon
et li baron de Calidone
and the barons of Calydon
et tuit li conte de Venece
and all the counts of Venice
en sont venu al rei de Grece.
thence are come to-the king of Greece

Polinicès dist en riant:
Polynices said in laughing
«Franc chevalier, venez avant.»
Noble knights come forward
Ypomedon et Tydeüs
Hippomedon and Tydeus
apelérent Capaneüs:
called Capaneus
a une part sistrent tuit trei,
to one side sat all three
si conseilliérent o le rei.
so counseled with the king
Li reis demande ses prisons:
The king asks his prisoners
cinc cenz i ot de ces barons.
five hundred there had of these barons
Davant sei les fait amener,
Before himself them he-makes bring
pués les a fait toz desarmer,
then them he-has made all unarm
sis enveie dedenz Monflor,
so-them he-sends within Montflor
el fondement, desoz la tor,
into-the foundation under the tower
en une fosse perillose,
into a pit perilous
qui de vermine est angoissose.
which with vermin is anguishing

Li prison sont desoz la tor
The prisoners are under the tower
o la vermine a grant dolor,
with the vermin in great grief
fors solement Meleagès,
except only Meleager
qui fu cosins Polinicès:
who was cousin (of-)Polynices
por ço que il s'offri a rendre,
for that that he himself-offered to yield
nel vout li reis de Grece prendre,
not-him wished the king of Greece to-take
ainz le retint ensemble o sei,
rather him he-kept together with himself
pués li done armes et conrei.
then to-him gives arms and equipment
Li reis fait l'eschiec departir
The king makes the-booty share
par les barons a son plaisir;
among the barons at his pleasure
les guarnemenz et les chevaus
the garments and the horses
a fait doner a ses vassaus.
he-has made give to his vassals
La nuét jut li reis a Monflor,
The night lay the king at Montflor
servir se fait come seignor;
to-serve himself he-makes as lord
a l'endemain, bien par matin,
on the-morrow well by morning

se met li reis en son chemin.
himself puts the king on his road
Cent chevaliers laisse en Monflor
Hundred knights he-leaves in Montflor
proz et sages, de grant valor,
valiant and wise of great worth
et si lor a laissié vitaille:
and so to-them he-has left victuals
ne crement pas qu'ele lor faille.
not they-fear at-all that-it them fail
Cuellent les trés, cornent les corz:
They-gather the tents they-horn the horns
li reis s'en ést o son esforz;
the king himself-thence issues with his force
dreit a Thèbes, par les montaignes,
straight to Thebes through the mountains
conduit de Grece les compaignes.
leads from Greece the companies
Tant chevauchiérent que la vindrent,
So-much they-rode that there they-came
onques ainceis rène ne tindrent.
ever before rein not they-held

The Greeks Before Thebes

XIII

The Greeks camp before Thebes, and Eteocles watches all night. In council Ates urges a night attack, but Otes advises sharing the realm. Eteocles will have all or nothing, and Jocasta begs her son to keep his oath. He yields to the barons, swearing privately to be avenged, and nurses a grudge against Otes. Ates and Otes quarrel over who will carry the offer, Otes refuses for fear of the Greeks, and Jocasta says she will go herself with her daughters.

Soz la cité, en Valflorie,
Under the city in Valflorie
la pristrent Greu herbergerie.
there took Greeks lodging
Merveillose fu l'ost as Grés,
Marvelous was the-host of-the Greeks
mout i ot paveillons et trés.
much there had pavilions and tents
Cil dedenz fortment s'esfreïrent
Those within strongly themselves-frightened
de la grant gent que si près virent;
of the great folk which so near they-saw
as hostaus se corent armer,
to-the lodgings themselves they-run to-arm
et li reis as portes fermer.
and the king to-the gates to-shut
Il meïsmes en fu portiers,
He himself thereof was porter
n'i mist sergenz ne chevaliers:
not-there he-put sergeants nor knights

des jovenceaus sot la nature,
of-the young-men he-knew the nature
qu'en eus n'aveit point de mesure;
that-in them not-there-was at-all of measure
crent que tal jou comencissant
he-fears that such game they-might-begin
que achever ne poüssant.
which to-finish not they-could
Li jorz passa, si vint la nuéz.
The day passed so came the night
Li reis fut bien de guerre duéz:
The king was well of war taught
eschauguaites mist par les murs,
watches he-put along the walls
mil Açoparz et cinc cenz Turs.
thousand Azoparts and five hundred Turks
Sonent tabors, cornent fresteaus
They-sound drums horn pipes
et troïnes et chalumeaus;
and horns and reeds
grant est la noise que il font
great is the noise which they make
as batailles des murs a mont.
at-the battlements of-the walls on high
Li reis fait bien guarnir ses tors
The king makes well garrison his towers
et bien guarder des traïtors:
and well guard from-the traitors

il a homes quil traïreient
he has men who-him would-betray
mout volentiers, se il poeient.
very willingly if they could
Onc ne dormi icele nuét
Ever not he-slept that night
ne ne s'ala coucher en lét;
nor not himself-went to-lie in bed
li reis ne dort pas, ainceis veille:
the king not sleeps at-all rather wakes
a ses privez homes conseille
with his familiar men he-counsels
vers cel host com se contendra,
toward that host how himself he-will-bear
s'il fera plait o non fera.
if-he will-make treaty or not will-make
Ates parla premiérement:
Ates spoke first
fiz fu a un rei d'Orient
son he-was to a king of-the-Orient
et chevaliers de grant valor;
and knight of great worth
al rei serveit por sa seror:
to-the king he-served for his sister
«Reis,» fait il, «iés tu fous o ivres,
King says he art thou fool or drunk
«qui plait vueus faire et iés delivres?
who treaty wishest to-make and art free
«Tost puet on estre a mauvais plait;
Soon can one be at bad treaty

«mais cent dehaiz ait qui ço fait
but hundred curses have who that does
«davant que il n'en puésse mais,
before that he not-thereof can more
«o qu'il seit pris o de mort près!
or that-he be taken or of death near
«Toz estes muëz dès l'autr'ier,
All you-are changed since the-other-day
«que vos vi si felon et fier:
that you I-saw so felon and fierce
«N'avïez baron si estout
Not-you-had baron so bold
«qui de paiz osast dire mot;
who of peace dared say word
«or l'offrez mout vilainement;
now it-you-offer very basely
«mais Greu n'en recevront neient,
but Greeks not-thereof will-receive anything
«se vos ne forsjurez la terre,
if you not forswear the land
«que vos ja mais n'en faciez guerre.
that you ever more not-thereof make war
«Mauvais hon, ou as ton espeir?
Bad man where hast thy hope
«Ja diseies tu l'autre seir
Already saidst thou the-other evening
«que, tant com tu vesquisses jor,
that so-long as thou shouldst-live day
«ne laireies de terre un dor:
not wouldst-leave of land a hand's-breadth

«Or la vueus rendre senz colee
Now it thou-wishest to-render without blow
«qu'en aies prise ne donee.
which-thereof thou-have taken nor given
«Mieuz te vient morir a honor
Better to-thee comes to-die with honor
«que tu vives a deshonor:
than thou live in dishonor
«Fai ta gent armer par la vile,
Make thy folk arm through the town
«et serron bien seisante mile;
and we-shall-be well sixty thousand
«ainz qu'il seit jor les requerron,
before that-it be day them we-shall-attack
«et cuit que les desconfiron,
and I-think that them we-shall-discomfit
«car troveron les endormiz
for we-shall-find them asleep
«et de lor armes desguarniz;
and of their arms unequipped
«des espees ferron maneis:
with-the swords we-shall-strike at-once
«Ja contre nos n'avront defeis.»
Ever against us not-they-will-have defense
Otes parla après Aton:
Otes spoke after Ates
sages hon fu, cosins Platon,
wise man he-was cousin (of-)Plato
et vavasors de grant tenue:
and vavasor of great holding

en Thèbes ot la maistre rue:
in Thebes he-had the master street
«Sire,» fait il, «entent a mei:
Lord says he attend to me
«Ne t'i foleieras, ço crei.
Not thyself-there thou-wilt-fool that I-believe
«Se Ates dist sa legerie,
If Ates said his lightness
«se tu m'en creis, n'en feras mie:
if thou me-thereof believest not-thereof thou-wilt-do at-all
«Ates est mout hardiz et prouz
Ates is very bold and valiant
«et a parlé come hon estouz;
and has spoken as man rash
«conseil done de vasselage,
counsel he-gives of prowess
«quil porreit faire senz damage.
which-he could do without harm
«Taus est conseuz de bacheler,
Such is counsel of bachelor
«qui toz jorz vueut guerre mener:
who all days wishes war to-lead
«Por qu'il i puésse une feiz joindre
Provided that-he there can one time join
«o a un d'eus faire un bon poindre,
or with one of-them make a good charge
«ne li chaut pués a quei que tort,
not to-him matters then to what that it-turn
«mais qu'alosez seit en la cort.
but that-praised he-be in the court

«Greu sont hardi et proz senz faille,
Greeks are bold and valiant without fail
«et bien aduré de bataille;
and well hardened in battle
«contre un des noz en ont il quatre:
against one of-the ours thereof have they four
«Fous est qui nos loe combatre.
Fool is who us counsels to-fight
«Pren tes messages le matin,
Take thy messengers the morning
«offre a ton frére plait et fin:
offer to thy brother treaty and end
«De quant que onques tint tis pére
Of whatever that ever held thy father
«l'une meitié laisse a ton frére,
the-one half leave to thy brother
«mais tis hon seit et l'ait de tei,
but thy man let-him-be and let-him-have-it from thee
«si t'asseürt de porter fei;
so thee-let-him-assure of bearing faith
«les fortereces des citez
the fortresses of-the cities
«tien en ta main, l'autre partez.»
hold in thy hand the-other share
Li reis respont, dit son talant:
The king answers says his will
«Or me tenez vos por enfant,
Now me hold you for child

«qui me loez m'onor partir
who me counsel my-domain to-share
«tant com la puésse jor tenir;
so-long as it I-can a-day hold
«car bien savez qu'en une honor
for well you-know that-in one domain
«mauvais ester ont dui seignor:
badly stand have two lords
«Meie o soe iert; tote l'avrai,
Mine or his it-will-be all it-I-shall-have
«o tote ensemble la perdrai;
or all together it I-shall-lose
«bien le sachiez a escïent:
well it know to knowledge
«O jo avrai tot, o neient.»
Or I shall-have all or nothing
Jocaste fu mére le rei:
Jocasta was mother (of-)the king
son fil acole et trait vers sei;
her son she-embraces and draws toward herself
por amor Deu merci li crie,
for love (of-)God mercy to-him she-cries
qu'a son frére face partie:
that-with his brother he-make share
«Fiz,» fait ele, «por Deu merci,
Son says she for God mercy
«crei ces barons que tu veis ci;
believe these barons whom thou seest here
«fai ço que il te loeront:
do that which they thee will-counsel

«Ja ne te forsconseilleront.
Ever not thee will-misadvise
«Ore ont Greu ceste vile assise:
Now have Greeks this town besieged
«Ainceis avras la barbe grise,
Before thou-wilt-have the beard gray
«se tant te puez ci enz defendre,
if so-long thyself thou-canst here within defend
«que il s'en torgent senz la prendre.
that they themselves-thence turn without it taking
«Quant ne la pues toz sous tenir,
When not it thou-canst all alone hold
«mieuz te vient o autrui partir
better to-thee comes with other to-share
«que tot coveitier et voleir,
than all to-covet and to-wish
«et tot perdre senz rien aveir.
and all to-lose without anything to-have
«O tot iço tu li juras:
With all this thou to-him sworest
«Se tu onques de tei cure as,
If thou ever of thee care hast
«ne te parjurer ja por terre
not thyself perjure ever for land
«ne por coveitié d'onor querre.»
nor for covetousness of-domain to-seek
Li reis s'embronche et esprent d'ire:
The king bows-his-head and kindles with-anger
a sa mére ne vout rien dire,
to his mother not wished anything to-say

jure les deus que il aore
he-swears the gods whom he adores
ja ne serra pris en tale hore
ever not he-will-be taken at such hour
que ja, por rien que l'on li die,
that ever for anything that one to-him say
a son frére face partie.
with his brother he-make share
Li baron dient: «Si fereiz;
The barons say So you-will-do
«se nel faites, vos i perdreiz;
if not-it you-do you there will-lose
«se ne faites acordement
if not you-make agreement
«et ne l'en tenez jugement,
and not him-thereof hold judgment
«ne voudron guerre a tort sofrir,
not we-shall-wish war at wrong to-suffer
«ne del dreit ne porron guenchir.
nor from-the right not we-shall-be-able to-swerve
«Mais por quei avez tort vers lui?
But for why have-you wrong toward him
«Ja n'estes vos ne mais vos dui:
Ever not-are you nor but you two
«Mal est, por coveitié de terre,
Ill it-is for covetousness of land
«qu'entre vos dous aiez ja guerre.
that-between you two you-have ever war

«Deus maudie guerre entre fréres
God curse war between brothers
«et entre fiz et entre péres!
and between sons and between fathers
«Car, quant il ont plusors maus faiz,
For when they have many ills done
«si resont il après en paiz;
so are-again they after in peace
«il sont ami, et lor contree
they are friends and their country
«en est confondue et guastee.»
thereby is confounded and laid-waste
Dui baron, que li sont privé,
Two barons who to-him are familiar
d'entre les autres sont levé.
from-among the others are risen
A une part traient le rei,
To one side they-draw the king
conseillent lui par dreite fei:
counsel him by right faith
«Sire,» font il, «que vueus tu faire
Lord say they what wishest thou to-do
«vers ceste gent, que est mout vaire?
toward this folk which is very fickle
«Des plusors d'eus sés lor corage,
Of-the most of-them thou-knowest their heart
«que mout voudreient ton damage:
that much they-would-wish thy harm
«Se tu ne fais ceste partie,
If thou not makest this share

«sodement t'en viendra folie.»
suddenly to-thee-thereof will-come folly
Etioclès sospire et plore,
Eteocles sighs and weeps
quant veit que tuit li corent sore;
when he-sees that all to-him run upon
3625 estre son gré l'otreie a faire,
against his will it-he-grants to do
car mout est fel et de put aire.
for very he-is felon and of foul nature
A ceus a dit priveement:
To those he-has said privately
«Morz sué se nen pren vengement
Dead I-am if not-thereof I-take vengeance
«des traïtors qui par destreit
on-the traitors who by constraint
3630 «me font guerpir demé mon dreit.
me make forsake half my right
«A! Deus, si ja verrai le jor
Ah God if ever I-shall-see the day
«que jes poüsse metre en tor,
that them I-could put in tower
«que sor eus fust la force meie,
that over them were the force mine
«com volentiers m'en vengereie!»
how willingly me-thereof I-would-avenge
3635 Cil li préent por Deu nel face:
Those him pray for God not-it he-do
«N'est ore pas lous de menace;
Not-is now at-all place of threat

«mais bien se sofre et ne s'iraisse
but well himself let-him-bear and not himself-anger
«et autrement pas nes empresse:
and otherwise at-all not-them let-him-press
«Nus hon ne deit honor tenir,
Any man not ought domain hold
«se il ne puet auques sofrir,
if he not can somewhat suffer
«tant que il puésse apareillier
until that he can prepare
«que il se puésse bien vengier:
that he himself can well avenge
«Tanz dis se repost et se taise,
So-many days himself let-him-hide and himself silence
«jusque il veie bien son aise.»
until he see well his ease
Li reis s'en torne et cil o lui:
The king himself-thence turns and those with him
«A! las,» fait il, «com mare fui,
Ah weary says he how ill I-was
«quant ore serrai meiteiers
when now I-shall-be half-holder
«de ço dont ere reis entiers!»
of that whereof I-was king entire
As barons vint et a sa mére:
To-the barons he-came and to his mother

otreia lor que a son frére
granted to-them that with his brother
de la terre fereit partie,
of the land he-would-make share
mais soe en fust la seignorie.
but his thereof were the lordship
Otes respont: «Ore estait bien,
Otes answers Now stands well
«or n'i sai mais amender rien.
now not-there I-know more to-amend anything
«Guardez qui ira le matin
See who will-go the morning
«a vostre frére ofrir la fin.»
to your brother to-offer the end
Ates li dist: «Vos i ireiz,
Ates to-him said You there will-go
«qui le message bien direiz:
who the message well will-say
«Ital home i covient aler
Such man there behooves to-go
«qui la fin sache bien parler.
who the end know well to-speak
«Vos l'avez primes porparlee,
You it-have first planned
«par vos deit bien estre acordee.»
by you ought well be accorded
Otes s'embronche et esprent d'ire:
Otes bows-his-head and kindles with-anger
«Vos n'estes pas,» fait il, «mis sire,
You not-are at-all says he my lord

«ne por vostre comandement
nor for your command
«n'irai oan al parlement.»
not-I-shall-go this-year to-the parley
Ates s'iraist legiérement
Ates himself-angers lightly
et a parlé enfleement:
and has spoken swollenly
«Se tu nen iés,» fait il, «mis hon,
If thou not art says he my man
«d'iço cui chaut? car bien sét l'on
of-that who cares for well knows one
«que j'en ai trente de ton prez,
that I-thereof have thirty of thy worth
«de ton parage et de mieuz nez.
of thy lineage and of better born
«Ne t'i rués pas aler por mei,
Not thee-there I-ask at-all to-go for me
«mais por la bosoigne le rei:
but for the business (of-)the king
«Pués que tu fin li loes faire,
Since that thou end to-him counselest to-make
«cerchier la deis et a chief traire.»
seek it thou-must and to end draw
Et l'un et l'autre li reis chose:
And the-one and the-other the king chides
«Tencier,» fait il, «est laide chose;
To-quarrel says he is ugly thing

«n'est costume ne pas n'otrei
not-is custom nor at-all not-I-grant
«que vos tenciez ci davant mei.»
that you quarrel here before me
Por ço nel dit mie li reis
For that not-it says at-all the king
que il l'en seit vaillant un peis,
that he to-him-thereof be worth a pea
ainceis vousist que grant colee
rather he-would-have-wished that great blow
eüst Ates Oton donee:
had Ates to-Otes given
mout en eüst bien la consence,
very thereof he-would-have well the consent
mais que ne fust en sa presence.
but that not were-it in his presence
Mout li griéve la departie
Very to-him grieves the division
que par Oton li est bastie:
which by Otes to-him is built
vengera s'en come ainz porra;
he-will-avenge himself-thereof as soonest he-will-be-able
se il nel fait, de duel morra;
if he not-it does from grief he-will-die
mais or se taist, et si se prient
but now himself silences and so himself constrains
et ses ires o sei retient;
and his angers with himself retains

son mautalent sét bien covrir,
his ill-will he-knows well to-cover
tant qu'il en puésse en lou venir.
until that-he thereof can at place come
Li reis demande loement
The king asks counsel
a ses barons comunement
of his barons in-common
cui il i porra enveier:
whom he there will-be-able send
sor toz en vueut Oton preier.
above all thereof he-wishes Otes to-pray
Tuit li loent que il i auge:
All him counsel that he there go
n'i a baron qui tant i vauge,
not-there has baron who so-much there be-worth
ne qui si bien parout en cort;
nor who so well speak in court
que qu'il en die, sor lui cort.
whatever that-he thereof say upon him runs
Otes s'en escondit mout fort
Otes himself-thence excused very strongly
del message, que il nel port.
of-the message that he not-it carry
Ates li demande por quei:
Ates of-him asks for why
«Mout cremez poi,» fait il, «le rei
Very you-fear little says he the king
«et poi preisiez son seignorage,
and little prize his lordship

«quant por lui n'alez el message.
when for him not-you-go in-the message
«Mais se li reis m'en voleit creire,
But if the king me-thereof wished to-believe
«vos covenreit faire cest eirre,
you would-behoove to-make this journey
«o come fous remandrïez,
or as fool you-would-remain
«se el message n'alïez.»
if in-the message not-you-went
Otes respondié par contraire,
Otes answered by contrary
come cil qui bien le sot faire:
as he who well it knew to-do
«Ja Deus,» fait il, «bien ne me face,
Ever God says he good not to-me make
«se de rien cren vostre menace:
if of anything I-fear your threat
«Ne tiegn de vos ne fué ne terre,
Not I-hold from you nor fief nor land
«ne ne préz guaires vostre guerre.
nor not I-prize much your war
«Se vos volez tencier o mei,
If you wish to-quarrel with me
«n'enguarderai l'onor le rei,
not-I-shall-spare the-honor (of-)the king
«pués que direiz en cort folie,
since that you-will-say in court folly
«que autretant ne vos en die;
that as-much not to-you thereof I-say

«mais, s'il vos plaist, laissiez m'ester,
but if you please let me-be
«car ne voudreie a vos mesler.
for not I-would with you quarrel
«S'onques vos fiz rien que ne deie,
If-ever to-you I-did anything that not I-ought
«dreit volentiers vos en fereie;
right willingly to-you thereof I-would-do
«et prenez l'en sempres ici:
and take it-thereof at-once here
«Ja mar del dreit avreiz merci.
Ever ill of-the right you-will-have mercy
«D'une rien vos vueil contredire
Of-one thing you I-wish to-gainsay
«que jo vos ai ci oï dire,
which I of-you have here heard say
«que mon seignor tant vil aveie
that my lord so-much vile I-had
«por lui rien faire ne voleie:
for him anything to-do not I-wished
«Por mon seignor ai jo mout fait,
For my lord have I much done
«maintes peines et maint mal trait,
many pains and many-an ill borne
«et receü maintes colees,
and received many blows
«et autretant por lui donees;
and as-many for him given

«onc d'aler ne me fiz preier
ever of-going not myself I-made pray
«en lou ou me vout enveier;
in place where me he-wished to-send
«mais ore nel quier pas celer,
but now not-it I-seek at-all to-conceal
«a ceste feiz n'i vueil aler,
at this time not-there I-wish to-go
«et vos sai bien dire por quei,
and you I-know well to-tell for why
«mais mon seignor n'en peist le rei.
but my lord not-thereof weigh the king
«N'a oncore pas quatre meis,
Not-has yet at-all four months
«mien escïent, non mie treis,
to-my knowledge not at-all three
«Greu nos tramistrent un message
Greeks to-us sent a messenger
«hardi et pro, corteis et sage:
bold and valiant courteous and wise
«Fiz ert al rei de Calidone,
Son he-was to-the king of Calydon
«n'a tal chevalier soz le trone.
not-has such knight under the throne
«A la cort vint, le rei trova;
To the court he-came the king found
«parla a lui, pués s'en torna.
spoke to him then himself-thence turned
«Il s'en alot tot son chemin:
He himself-thence went all his road

«Nostre home orent trop beü vin,
Our men had too-much drunk wine
«es chevaus montent, sel sevirent:
on-the horses they-mount so-him followed
«A com male hore, Deus, le firent!
Ah how in-evil hour God it made
«Car il i furent trestuit mort, 3755
For they there were all dead
«et li messages en estort.
and the messenger thence escaped
«Se il troveit le mes le rei,
If he found the messenger (of-)the king
«cuidiez que il li portast fei?
think-you that he to-him would-bear faith
«Ja nul de nos ne trovereit
Ever any of us not he-would-find
«ne l'oceïst, si avreit dreit.» 3760
not-him he-would-kill so he-would-have right
Par la sale tuit en conseillent,
Through the hall all thereof whisper
dient que pas ne s'en merveillent
they-say that at-all not themselves-thereof they-marvel
se Otes ne vait cele part,
if Otes not goes that side
ou cuide aveir si grant regart;
where he-thinks to-have so great danger
et autretal dient il tuit 3765
and likewise say they all
nus d'eus n'ira senz bon conduit.
any of-them not-will-go without good safe-conduct

Ço dist Jocaste: «Jo irai,
That said Jocasta I shall-go
«que le message conduirai:
who the messenger shall-conduct
«Que mis fiz puésse, pas ne cuit
That my son could at-all not I-think
«que hon seit pris en mon conduit;
that man be taken in my safe-conduct
«Polinicès bien guardera
Polynices well will-guard
«que on nul mal ne li fera.»
that one any ill not to-him will-do
N'i a celui qui pas l'en creie
Not-there has that-one who at-all her-thereof believe
ne por lui emprenge la veie:
nor for her undertake the way
«Dame,» font il, «nos n'iron pas,
Lady say they we not-shall-go at-all
«car on n'i tout cotes ne dras,
for one not-there takes coats nor clothes
«mais on i tout et cors et vie:
but one there takes both body and life
«Qui la ireit, c'estreit folie.»
Who there would-go that-would-be folly
Jocaste fu et proz et sage:
Jocasta was both valiant and wise
«Jo irai,» fait ele, «el message;
I shall-go says she in-the message
«mes dous filles merrai o mei,
my two daughters I-shall-lead with me

«quant vos tuit en falez le rei;
when you all thereof fail the king
«et por sofraite de prodomes
and for lack of worthy-men
«iert cist messages faiz par domes.
will-be this message done by ladies
— Granz est,» fait Otes, «li periz: 3785
Great is says Otes the peril
«Ne nos guarreit ja vostre fiz.
Not us would-save ever your son
«Mais ore alez al parlement,
But now go to-the parley
«vos et voz filles senglement:
you and your daughters singly
«Se il agréent ceste fin,
If they accept this end
«apruisment sei jusqu'a cel pin; 3790
let-them-approach themselves until-to that pine
«entrésque la iron nos bien:
until there shall-go we well
«Ne cuit que nos i cremon rien.»
Not I-think that we there fear anything

Jocasta

XIV

Jocasta rides to the Greek camp with Antigone and Ismene, both richly described. Parthenopaeus meets them, falls in love with Antigone, and asks for her love. She bids him ask her mother and brother, and Jocasta favors the match. In Adrastus's tent, painted with a map of the world, the year's months, and Greece's history, Polynices greets his mother and sisters with tears. Adrastus asks how the Thebans stand and says he will not turn back until the war is won.

A tant se depart li conseuz:
At this itself breaks-up the council
al main, quant fu clérs li soleuz,
in-the morning when was clear the sun
la reïne se fu levee,
the queen herself was risen
bien vestue et bien conreee,
well clothed and well equipped
et ses dous filles ensement,
and her two daughters likewise
que vont o lei al parlement.
who go with her to-the parley
De chascune dire vos dei
Of each to-tell to-you I-ought
quaus dras orent et qual conrei.
what clothes they-had and what equipment
Antigoné ot non l'ainznee,
Antigone had name the-elder
franche, corteise et honoree.
noble courteous and honored

Mout ot gent cors et bèle chiére;
Very she-had noble body and fair face
sa beauté fu as autres miére:
her beauty was to-the others mirror
ja en fable ne en chançon
ever in fable nor in song
n'orreiz femne de sa façon.
not-you-will-hear woman of her fashion
D'une porpre inde fu vestue
In-a purple indigo she-was clothed
tot senglement a sa char nue:
all singly on her flesh naked
la blanche char desoz pareit.
the white flesh beneath appeared
Li bliauz detrenchiez esteit
The tunic slashed was
par menue detrencheüre
by small slashing
entrésqu'a val vers la ceinture.
until-to down toward the girdle
Vestue fu estreitement,
Clothed she-was tightly
d'un baudré ceinte laschement;
with-a baldric girt loosely
chauciee fu d'un barragan
shod she-was with-a camlet
et d'uns sollers de cordoan;
and with-some shoes of cordovan
sis manteaus fu, ço m'est vis, vairs,
her mantle was that to-me-is opinion vair

et afubla s'en en travers:
and cloaked herself-therewith in across
les panz en ot bien entroverz,
the panels thereof she-had well half-open
que li costez fu descoverz.
that the side was uncovered
Les cheveus ot et lons et sors,
The hair she-had both long and golden
plus reluisanz que n'est fins ors:
more shining than not-is fine gold
d'un fil d'argent sont galoné,
with-a thread of-silver they-are braided
pendirent lé sor le baudré.
they-hung wide over the baldric
El chevauchot un palefrei
She rode a palfrey
qui fu l'autr'ier tramis le rei:
which was the-other-day sent (to-)the king
bien amblanz fu et bien delivres,
well ambling it-was and well free
sis prez esteit de treis cenz livres;
its worth was of three hundred pounds
et fu toz neirs, ne mais les hanches
and it-was all black nor but the haunches
et les espaules, qu'il ot blanches,
and the shoulders which-it had white
et les costes et les oreilles
and the ribs and the ears
et les jambes, que sont vermeilles.
and the legs which are red

Le frein ot precios et gent,
The bridle it-had precious and noble
les rènes sont de fil d'argent,
the reins are of thread of-silver
la cheveçaille de fin or:
the headstall of fine gold
les pierres valent un tensor.
the stones are-worth a treasure
D'un blanc ivuére fu la sèle
Of-a white ivory was the saddle
et d'un brun paile la sorsèle,
and of-a brown silk the saddle-cloth
et li estreu et la peaigne
and the stirrups and the crupper
sont tuit massiz de l'or d'Espaigne.
are all solid of the-gold of-Spain
Antigoné, o cest conrei,
Antigone with this equipment
trés bien sembla fille de rei.
very well seemed daughter of king
La menor apèlent Ysmeine:
The younger they-call Ismene
onc ne fu femne meins vilaine;
ever not was woman less base
mout fu juefne, mais bien fu duéte
very she-was young but well she-was taught
et bien corteise et bien leiduéte.
and well courteous and well well-mannered
Ysmeine fu amie Aton,
Ismene was beloved (of-)Ates

et ot vestu un ciclaton;
and had clothed a ciclatoun
la manche destre en ot sevree,
the sleeve right thereof she-had severed
que ele aveit Aton donee;
which she had to-Ates given
desoz, une pelice hermine:
under a pelisse ermine
onc ne vesti meillor reïne;
ever not clothed better queen
les manches sont bien engolees;
the sleeves are well trimmed
a terre tochent, tant son lees.
to earth they-touch so-much they-are wide
Desfublee chevauche Ysmeine
Uncloaked rides Ismene
le palefrei Aton demeine;
the palfrey (of-)Ates own
sor son poign tint un espervier,
on her fist she-held a sparrowhawk
que pot de l'éle d'un plovier.
which fed of the-wing of-a plover
De la reïne que direie?
Of the queen what would-I-say
O ses dous filles tint sa veie:
With her two daughters she-held her way
mout vait bien vestue el message,
very goes well clothed in-the message
come dame de son eage,
as lady of her age

et chevauche une mule brune:
and rides a mule brown
onc ne veïstes meillor une.
ever not you-saw better one
O les dames trei danzel vont,
With the ladies three youths go
del mieuz de Thèbes cil trei sont:
of-the best of Thebes these three are
uns niés Aton conduit Ysmeine;
a nephew (of-)Ates conducts Ismene
Antigoné uns enfes meine,
Antigone a child leads
qui mout esteit de haut parage
who very was of high lineage
et mout prochains de son lignage;
and very near of her lineage
li tierz, qui meine la reïne,
the third who leads the queen
fu fiz Hergart, le rei d'Ermine.
was son (of-)Hergart the king of-Armenia
Par eus sés escheriement
By themselves six sparingly
pristrent lor veie al parlement;
took their way to-the parley
et quant il furent de l'ost près,
and when they were to the-host near
a la fontaine del ciprès,
at the fountain of-the cypress
treis chevaliers truevent des Greus:
three knights they-find of-the Greeks

li uns ot non Parthonopeus.
the one had name Parthenopaeus
Parthonopeus fu uns des treis:
Parthenopaeus was one of-the three
riches hon ert, d'Archaide reis,
rich man he-was of-Arcadia king
mout fu sages et bien corteis,
very he-was wise and well courteous
vestuz a guise de Franceis.
clothed in guise of Frenchmen
Un mul chevauchot espaneis,
A mule he-rode Spanish
de beauté semblot estre reis:
of beauty he-seemed to-be king
soz ciel n'a dame, s'el le veit,
under heaven not-has lady if-she him sees
que mout vers lui ne se sopleit.
who much toward him not herself bend
Antigoné, quant el le vit,
Antigone when she him saw
forment en son cuer le covit,
greatly in her heart him coveted
rien ne coveita tant com lui:
anything not she-coveted so-much as him
mout fussent bien josté il dui,
very would-be well joined they two
car il dui sont bien d'un eage,
for they two are well of-one age
d'une beauté et d'un parage.
of-one beauty and of-one lineage

Parthonopeus vit la pucèle:
Parthenopaeus saw the maiden
soz ciel n'en ot une tant bèle.
under heaven not-thereof had one so-much fair
S'il la covit, ne m'en merveil:
If-he her coveted not me-thereof I-marvel
soz ciel n'eüst tant gent pareil.
under heaven not-would-have so-much noble match
Vers lei en vait isnèlement,
Toward her thence goes swiftly
salua la corteisement:
greeted her courteously
«Dame,» fait il, «ne me celez
Lady says he not from-me conceal
«qui vous estes et ou alez.»
who you are and where you-go
Li danzeaus respont qui la meine:
The youth answers who her leads
«Suer est,» fait il, «le rei demeine,
Sister she-is says he (of-)the king own
«et ele et cele autre meschine
both she and that other maiden
«que a la destre manche hermine;
who has the right sleeve ermine
«en cest ost viénent a lor frére,
into this host they-come to their brother
«et ceste dame qu'est lor mére:
and this lady who-is their mother

«Mout voudreient cerchier et querre
Very they-would-wish to-search and to-seek
«come il fust fin de ceste guerre.»
how it might-be end of this war
O lei torna Parthonopeus
With her turned Parthenopaeus
et conduist la en l'ost des Greus;
and conducted her into the-host of-the Greeks
il meïsmes la dame meine,
he himself the lady leads
de lei servir a gré se peine.
of her to-serve to liking himself strives
Il la mena, que fairel sot,
He her led as to-it-do he-knew
tant franchement come il plus pot:
so-much nobly as he most could
onques en cele compaignie
ever in that company
n'ot mot parlé de vilanie
not-was word spoken of baseness
ne de grant sen ne de sermon,
nor of great sense nor of sermon
se d'amistiez et de gas non.
if of-friendships and of jests not
Parthonopeus pas ne s'oblie,
Parthenopaeus at-all not himself-forgets
mout li prée qu'el seit s'amie:
much to-her he-prays that-she be his-beloved
«Par Deu,» ço respont la pucèle,
By God that answers the maiden

«ceste amor serreit trop isnèle.
this love would-be too swift
«Pucèle sué, fille de rei:
Maiden I-am daughter of king
«Legiérement amer ne dei,
Lightly to-love not I-ought
«ne dei amer par legerie,
nor I-ought love by lightness
«dont l'on puésse dire folie.
whereof one can say folly
«Ensi deit on preier bergiéres
Thus ought one woo shepherdesses
«et ces autres femnes legiéres.
and these other women light
«Ne vos conois n'onc ne vos vi
Not you I-know nor-ever not you I-saw
«ne mais ore que vos vei ci:
nor but now that you I-see here
«Se or vos doign d'amer parole,
If now to-you I-give of-loving word
«bien me poez tenir por fole.
well me you-can hold for foolish
«Por ço nel di, celer nel quier,
For that not-it I-say to-conceal not-it I-seek
«ne vos eüsse fortment chier,
not you I-would-have strongly dear
«se estïez de tal lignage
if you-were of such lineage
«que vos fussiez de mon parage,
that you were of my lineage

«et ço fust chose destinee
and that were thing destined
«qu'a femne vos fusse donee;
that-as wife to-you I-were given
«car beaus estes sor tote gent:
for fair you-are above all folk
«Onc ne vi mais home tant gent.»
Ever not I-saw more man so-much noble
Parthonopeus l'en a dit veir,
Parthenopaeus to-her-thereof has said truth
que il est reis de grant poeir:
that he is king of great power
se il la prent, bien iert venue,
if he her takes well she-will-be come
car il est reis de grant tenue.
for he is king of great holding
«Parlez en,» fait ele, «o ma mére,
Speak thereof says she with my mother
«et par le conseil de mon frére,
and by the counsel of my brother
«qui voz parenz conoist et vos,
who your kinsmen knows and you
«seit acordez li plaiz de nos.
be accorded the plea of us
«Se il l'agréent, jo l'otrei:
If they it-accept I it-grant
«Ja ne serra desdit par mei.»
Ever not it-will-be gainsaid by me
Si come ele li enseigna,
So as she to-him instructed

cil o la mére s'acointa:
he with the mother himself-acquainted
forment l'ama, ne s'en pot taire,
greatly her-he-loved not himself-thereof could silence
o lé parla d'icest afaire;
with her he-spoke of-this affair
dist qui il est, noma sa terre,
said who he is named his land
começa lé sa fille a querre.
began her her daughter to seek
Ele conut bien son lignage:
She knew well his lineage
bien otreie le mariage;
well she-grants the marriage
mout volentiers la li dorra,
very willingly her to-him she-will-give
mais o son fil en parlera.
but with her son thereof she-will-speak
Tant ont parlé priveement
So-much they-have spoken privately
d'amistié font aleiement.
of-friendship they-make alliance
A tant en sont en l'ost entré,
At this thence they-are into the-host entered
mais icel fu estre lor gré:
but that was against their will
que por rire, que por joer,
that-both for laughing and for playing
que por priveement parler,
and for privately speaking

ne lor pesast, ainz vousissant
not to-them it-would-weigh rather they-would-have-wished
que li hoz fust grant piéce avant.
that the host were great while further
Par l'ost chevauchent les pucèles
Through the-host ride the maidens
et dient tuit que mout sont bèles:
and say all that very they-are fair
por les veeir éssent des trés
for them to-see issue from-the tents
plus de cinquante mile Grés;
more than fifty thousand Greeks
la plus bèle en vuelent choisir,
the most fair thereof they-wish to-choose
mais il n'i pueent avenir,
but they not-there can arrive
car de lor beauté n'est mesure:
for of their beauty not-is measure
par estuide les fist nature.
by study them made nature
Parthonopeus li proz les meine
Parthenopaeus the valiant them leads
de si qu'al tréf le rei demeine.
from so-far as-to-the tent (of-)the king own
Li trés fu merveillos et granz
The tent was marvelous and great
et entailliez a flors par panz:
and carved with flowers by panels
ne fu de chanve ne de lin,
not it-was of hemp nor of linen

ainz fu de porpre outremarin;
rather it-was of purple from-overseas
de porpre fu inde et vermeille,
of purple it-was indigo and red
et peint i ot mainte merveille.
and painted there had many-a marvel
A compas i fu mapamonde
With compass there was mappa-mundi
enlevee, tote roonde,
raised all round
el pan davant desus l'entree,
on-the panel before above the-entrance
a or batu menu ovree.
with gold beaten finely wrought
Par cinc zones la mape dure
By five zones the map lasts
si peintes com les fist nature;
so painted as them made nature
car les dous que sont deforaines
for the two which are outermost
de glace sont et de neif pleines,
of ice they-are and of snow full
et orent inde la color,
and had indigo the color
car auques tornent a freidor;
for somewhat they-turn to cold
et la chaude, qu'est el mé lou
and the hot-one which-is in-the middle place
cele est vermeille por le fou.
that-one is red for the fire

Que por le fou, que por les neis,
Both for the fire and for the snows
n'abite rien en celes treis.
not-dwells anything in those three
Entre chascune daerraine
Between each outermost
et la chaude, qu'est meiloaine,
and the hot-one which-is middlemost
en ot une que fu tempree:
thereof had one which was tempered
devers gualerne est habitee.
toward northwest it-is inhabited
Iluec sont les citez antives
There are the cities ancient
o murs, o tors et o eschives:
with walls with towers and with bulwarks
a or batu sont li torrel
with gold beaten are the turrets
et li portail et li tornel.
and the portals and the turrets
Tuit li reaume et tuit li rei
All the realms and all the kings
sont iluec peint chascuns par sei,
are there painted each by himself
et li setante et dui language,
and the seventy and two languages
et mer betee et mer sauvage;
and sea frozen and sea wild
mer roge i est, faite a neiel,
sea red there is made in niello

et li pas as fiz Israel;
and the passage of-the sons (of-)Israel
de Paradis li quatre flun,
of Paradise the four rivers
Ethna qui art et giéte fun.
Etna which burns and throws smoke
Monstres i ot de mil maniéres,
Monsters there had of thousand manners
oiseaus volanz et bestes fiéres;
birds flying and beasts fierce
et li nostre home i sont bien peint,
and the our men there are well painted
cil d'Ethiope de neir teint.
those of-Ethiopia of black dyed
Oceanus cort par l'ardant,
Oceanus runs by the-burning
Egeon ses braz i espant.
Aegeon his arms there spreads
Mapamonde fu si grant chose,
Mappa-mundi was so great thing
qui l'esguarde pas ne repose:
who it-looks-at at-all not rests
tant veit en mer et tant en terre
so-much he-sees in sea and so-much in earth
en grant peine est de tot enquerre.
in great pain he-is of all to-inquire
Esmeraudes, jaspes, sardones,
Emeralds jaspers sardonyxes

berils, sardes et calcedones
beryls sards and chalcedonies
et jagonces et crisolites
and jacinths and chrysolites
et topaces et ametistes
and topazes and amethysts
ot tant en l'or, qui l'avironent,
there-had so-many in the-gold which it-surround
contre soleil grant clarté donent.
against sun great brightness they-give
De l'autre part, el destre pan,
On the-other side on-the right panel
sont peint li doze meis de l'an:
are painted the twelve months of the-year
estez i est o ses amors,
summer there is with its loves
o ses beautez et o ses flors;
with its beauties and with its flowers
o ses colors i est estez;
with its colors there is summer
ivers i fait ses tempestez,
winter there makes its tempests
qui vente et pluet et neige et gresle
which blows and rains and snows and hails
et ses orez ensemble mesle.
and its storms together mixes

Après i fist peindre li reis
After there made paint the king
et les justices et les leis
both the justices and the laws
que menérent si ancessor,
which led his ancestors
qui de Grece furent seignor;
who of Greece were lords
des reis de Grece i fist l'estore,
of-the kings of Greece there he-made the-history
ceus qui sont digne de memore,
those who are worthy of memory
les proeces et les estors
the prowesses and the battles
que chascuns d'eus fist en ses jors.
which each of-them did in his days
En la cortine d'environ
In the curtain from-around
sont peint lepart, ors et leon.
are painted leopards bears and lions
La liste fu d'un paile brun,
The border was of-a silk brown
onc ne veïstes meillor un,
ever not you-saw better one
entailliee a menuz marreaus
carved with small lozenges
et a pilers et a quarreaus.
and with pillars and with squares
Colombe ot une en mé la boge,
Column there-had one in midst the vault

d'ivuére fu et teinte roge,
of-ivory it-was and dyed red
que sostint l'aigle et l'escharboncle
which held-up the-eagle and the-carbuncle
qui fu Flori le rei, son oncle,
which was (of-)Flori the king his uncle
que il conquist quant il prist Terse
which he conquered when he took Tarsus
et il venqui les Turs de Perse.
and he conquered the Turks of Persia
Tant com li trés dure desoz,
So-far as the tent lasts beneath
de bons tapiz fu jonchiez toz;
with good carpets it-was strewn all
li paisson qui tiénent le tréf
the stakes which hold the tent
sont de color vermeil et bléf;
are of color red and blue
les cordes sont d'argent treciees
the ropes are of-silver braided
et environ totes sachiees.
and around all drawn
Cinc cent chevalier tuit o armes,
Five hundred knights all with arms
et mil borgeis o granz jusarmes,
and thousand burghers with great guisarmes
le rei guardent quant il conseille
the king guard when he counsels
et quant il dort et quant il veille.
and when he sleeps and when he wakes

El tréf esteit Capaneüs,
In-the tent was Capaneus
Polinicès et Tydeüs:
Polynices and Tydeus
a une part sieent il trei,
to one side sit they three
ou il conseillent o le rei,
where they counsel with the king
et dient lui que les assaille,
and say to-him that them he-assail
que la cité prendra senz faille.
that the city he-will-take without fail
A tant les dames sont venues:
At this the ladies are come
davant le tréf sont descendues.
before the tent they-are dismounted
Parthonopeus li proz les guie
Parthenopaeus the valiant them guides
et par la main meine s'amie.
and by the hand leads his-beloved
Riant dit a Polinicès:
Laughing he-says to Polynices
«Ci a de voz parenz mout près.»
Here has of your kinsmen very near
Polinicès reguarde ariére;
Polynices looks back
sa mére vit, que mout ot chiére,
his mother he-saw whom very he-had dear
et ses serors: le cuer ot lié,
and his sisters the heart he-had glad

mais des ueuz plore de pitié;
but from-the eyes he-weeps for pity
des ueuz plore, ne pot muer,
from-the eyes he-weeps not he-could change
por eles, qu'iluec vit ester.
for them whom-there he-saw stand
Vers eles vint isnèlement
Toward them he-came swiftly
et baisa les mout doucement.
and kissed them very sweetly
Al baisier veïssiez tal presse,
At-the kissing you-would-have-seen such press
l'une a l'autre por rien ne laisse.
the-one to the-other for anything not leaves
Cele que ainceis en ot aise,
She who first thereof had ease
o mére o suer, primes le baise;
or mother or sister first him kisses
la ou puet avenir chascune,
there where can arrive each
cent feiz le baise come une;
hundred times him kisses as one
et neporquant plorent tant fort
and nevertheless they-weep so-much strongly
com s'eles le veïssent mort.
as if-they him had-seen dead
De la joie que font les domes,
From the joy which make the ladies
firent plorer plus de mil homes.
they-made weep more than thousand men

Polinicès que corteis fist,
Polynices who courteously did
qui sa mére par la main prist;
who his mother by the hand took
la la mena ou li reis sist:
there her led where the king sat
li reis se liéve, si l'assist;
the king himself raises so her-seated
pués la baisa et les pucèles;
then her kissed and the maidens
demande lor de lor novèles,
asks them of their news
de ceus dedenz, com se contiénent,
of those within how themselves they-bear
le traïtor por quei sostiénent,
the traitor for why they-support
qui vers son frére se parjure
who toward his brother himself perjures
et estre ne vueut a dreiture:
and to-be not wishes at right
«Içо pueent il saveir bien
This can they know well
«que ja n'en tornerai por rien,
that ever not-thence I-shall-turn for anything
«ne por perdre tote ma terre,
nor for losing all my land
«primes n'achief d'iceste guerre.»
first not-I-achieve of-this war

The First Battle

XV

Jocasta proposes that the brothers share the land, Eteocles holding the overlordship. Tydeus says Eteocles will break any treaty once the Greeks go home, Capaneus agrees, and Adrastus holds to the first agreement of alternate years. Squires kill a tame tiger that has wandered from Thebes, and the men at the gate sally after them. The Thebans pour out and a general battle begins. Parthenopaeus kills Itier and sends his horse to Antigone, who promises him her love.

La reïne par sen respont:
The queen with sense answers
«N'en pueent mais, se il le font:
Not-thereof they-can more if they it do
«Cil est ainz nez, et s'est saisiz,
That-one is first born and himself-is seized
«et les recez a toz guarniz;
and the retreats has all garrisoned
«ses homes tient bien en destreit,
his men he-holds well in constraint
«car, par ombre d'un poi de dreit,
for by shadow of-a little of right
«qui en sei a pou de valor,
who in himself has little of worth
«par force puet tenir honor.
by force can hold domain
«Mais qui porreit cerchier et querre
But who could search and seek
«com partissent par mé la terre,
how they-might-share through midst the land

«que chascuns eüst sa dreiture,
that each might-have his right
«içọ serreit sen et mesure:
this would-be sense and measure
«Cest plait cuit jo que en fereit,
This treaty think I that he-thereof would-do
«que la terre li partireit,
that the land to-him he-would-share
«si que fussent pér ambedui,
so that they-were peers both
«fors tant que cist tenist de lui.»
except so-much that this-one should-hold of him
As barons pas nen acorage
To-the barons at-all not-it pleases
que ja cist li face homenage;
that ever this-one to-him do homage
la cort le rei pas nen otreie
the court (of-)the king at-all not-it grants
que cist de lui rien tenir deie.
that this-one of him anything to-hold must
Parolent en tuit li vassal,
Speak thereof all the vassals
et mout le tiénent a grant mal;
and very it hold for great ill
parolent en et povre et riche,
speak thereof both poor and rich
et tiénent le a mout grant briche.
and hold it for very great trap

Li reis lor prée que se taisent
The king them prays that themselves they-silence
et la reïne parler laissent:
and the queen to-speak let
tot ço die que li plaira,
all that let-her-say which to-her will-please
et il sei conseit qu'en fera:
and he himself let-counsel what-thereof he-will-do
«Sire,» fait ele, «dit en ai
Lord says she said thereof I-have
«le meillor conseil que jo sai:
the best counsel that I know
«Ainceis qu'en fust autre maus faiz,
Before that-thereof were other ill done
«cel li fereie aveir en paiz.»
that to-him I-would-make have in peace
Li reis a une part en vait:
The king to one side thence goes
ceus que lui plaist apeler fait.
those whom him pleases to-call he-makes
Li bacheler, li soudeier,
The bachelors the soldiers
cil reméstrent al doneier,
those remained at-the courting
et préent Deu que ja cist plaiz
and pray God that ever this treaty
ne prenge bien ne ne seit faiz
not take well nor not be made
jusqu'en seient voidiees sèles,
until-thereof be emptied saddles

si que le veient les pucèles.
so that it see the maidens
Ismeine dist: «Tost le verron:
Ismene said Soon it we-shall-see
«Ja quatre jorz n'i demorron;
Ever four days not-there we-shall-tarry
«se il n'agréent hué la fin,
if they not-accept today the end
«jol vos plevis, jusqu'al matin
I-it to-you pledge until-the morning
«i porra l'on ferir senz faille
there will-be-able one strike without fail
«o un coutel d'une maaille.»
with a knife of-a halfpenny
Ismeine est assez bèle tose,
Ismene is enough fair girl
mais ele est mout contraliose;
but she is very contrary
mout fu juefne, mais bien parole:
very she-was young but well she-speaks
esté en a a bone escole.
been thereof she-has at good school
Mais l'autre fu tant franche chose
But the-other was so-much noble thing
que a vis onques parler ose:
that at face ever to-speak she-dares
cele empendeit devers les Greus,
she inclined toward the Greeks
por ço qu'en ert Parthonopeus.
for that that-thereof was Parthenopaeus

Li bacheler joent et rient
The bachelors play and laugh
et o Ismeine contralient.
and with Ismene contend
Li reis est de son tréf eissuz,
The king is from his tent issued
o lui cinquante de ses druz:
with him fifty of his intimates
assist sei soz l'ombre d'un teil,
he-seated himself under the-shade of-a lime
o ses barons prist son conseil;
with his barons he-took his counsel
demande lor del plait qu'il oent
asks them of-the treaty which-they hear
saveir qu'en dient et qu'en loent.
to-know what-thereof they-say and what-thereof they-counsel
N'ot baron guaires en la place
Not-had baron much in the place
que bien ne lot que il le face;
who well not counsels that he it do
mais de l'omenage qu'il quiert,
but of the-homage which-he seeks
ço dient que ja faiz nen iert,
that they-say that ever done not-it will-be
mais laist cil ester l'omenage
but let-leave that-one to-be the-homage
et partent par mé l'eritage;
and let-them-share through midst the-heritage
et se cil le mescreit de rien,
and if that-one him mistrusts in anything

Polinicès l'asseürt bien,
Polynices him-assures well
par les barons et par le rei,
by the barons and by the king
que paiz li tienge et li port fei.
that peace to-him he-hold and to-him bear faith
A une part Tydeüs sist; 4185
To one side Tydeus sat
oïr poez que il en dist:
hear you-can what he thereof said
«Seignor,» fait il, «mout me merveil
Lords says he much I-myself marvel
«que li donez ital conseil:
that to-him you-give such counsel
«A ço que jo dire vos oi,
By that which I to-say you hear
«vos amez le suen pro mout poi. 4190
you love the his profit very little
«Por quei forsjugiez vos cestui,
For why judge-out you this-one
«quant vos ci ne veez celui?
when you here not see that-one
«Etioclès est mout mauduéz,
Eteocles is very ill-taught
«mout engeignos et mout leiduéz:
very crafty and very ill-mannered
«Assez legiérement fera 4195
Enough lightly he-will-do
«tot quant que l'on li requerra:
all whatever that one to-him will-require

«Ne li chaut qual plait qu'il i face,
Not to-him matters what treaty that-he there do
«mais solement cest host desface,
but only this host let-him-undo
«car il sét bien notre coveine,
for he knows well our case
«que nostre terre est mout lointaine,
that our land is very distant
«et que n'est pas chose legiére
and that not-is at-all thing light
«ramener sempres host arriére:
to-bring at-once host back
«Se ceste feiz nos en enveie,
If this time us thence he-sends
«n'a mais poor que ja nos veie.
not-has more fear that ever us he-see
«Quant nos serron en nos contrees
When we shall-be in our countries
«as bons vins beivre as cheminees,
at-the good wines drinking at-the hearths
«et nos feron nostre jafuer
and we shall-make our sport
«et quant que nos vendra a cuer,
and whatever that us will-come to heart
«cist remandra ci folement:
this-one will-remain here foolishly
«Ocirront le legiérement;
They-will-kill him lightly

«de quant que pramis li avra
of whatever that promised to-him he-will-have
«ja un sol point ne l'en tendra.
ever one single point not him-thereof he-will-hold
«De son sairement n'ai jo cure,
Of his oath not-have I care
«car, qui une feiz se parjure,
for who one time himself perjures
«legiére chose li est mais
light thing to-him is more
«sei parjurer toz tens adès.
himself to-perjure all times ever
«Qui le premier plait changera,
Who the first treaty will-change
«bien sai que il foleiera;
well I-know that he will-play-the-fool
«mais quiére cist sa fin premiére
but let-seek this-one his end first
«et ne s'en traie giens ariére.
and not himself-thence let-draw at-all back
«Bien sai que cil n'en fera mie,
Well I-know that that-one not-thereof will-do at-all
«ainz le tendra a grant folie:
rather it will-hold for great folly
«Il avra tort, nos avron dreit.
He will-have wrong we shall-have right
«N'est pas sages qui içe creit,
Not-is at-all wise who this believes
«que de nos se puéssent defendre;
that from us themselves they-can defend

«et se poon la vile prendre,
and if we-can the town take
«a nos toz iert honor et glore,
to us all will-be honor and glory
«et al rei iert mout grant victore;
and to-the king will-be very great victory
«car, pués que nos l'avron assise,
for since that we it-shall-have besieged
4230 «n'en torneron si serra prise,
not-thence we-shall-turn so it-will-be taken
«si que l'on die après noz morz:
so that one say after our deaths
««Ne fu mais faiz si granz esforz.»
Not was more done so great force
«Et por metre la terre en paiz,
And for to-put the land in peace
«que n'en seit mais autre maus faiz,
that not-thereof be more other ill done
4235 «prenge li reis le traïtor,
let-take the king the traitor
«et si le mete en une tor;
and so him let-put in a tower
«iluec le laist l'on assez vivre:
there him let-leave one enough to-live
«Ja ne s'en veie mais delivre.»
Ever not himself-thence let-see more free
Capaneüs fu druz le rei:
Capaneus was intimate (of-)the king
4240 «Sire,» fait il, «entent a mei.
Lord says he attend to me

«Qui autre rien t'en loera
Who other thing thee-thereof will-counsel
«ne autre conseil t'en dorra,
nor other counsel thee-thereof will-give
«ne di d'autre mais que de mei,
not I-say of-other more than of me
«s'il est voz hon, ment vos sa fei:
if-be is your man be-belies you his faith
«C'est bons conseuz que cist vos done:
It-is good counsel which this-one to-you gives
«N'a dreit en terre quil soone.»
Not-has right on earth who-it opposes
Li reis respont: «Et jo l'otrei:
The king answers And I it-grant
«Par mes idres et par ma lei,
By my idols and by my law
«n'en crerrai autre loement,
not-thereof I-shall-believe other counsel
«ne ja mais n'iert fait autrement.»
nor ever more not-it-will-be done otherwise
Dolent en sont tuit li plusor:
Grieving thereof are all the most
mieuz loassent partir l'onor,
better they-would-counsel to-share the-domain
et dient que par fol esdail
and say that by foolish disdain
les vuelent metre en grant travail.
them they-wish to-put in great toil

Li reis s'en torne el tréf arriére
The king himself-thence turns into-the tent back
et fait mout felonesse chiére;
and makes very felonious face
jure les deus de son païs
he-swears the gods of his country
que tot en a son conseil pris:
that all thereof he-has his counsel taken
«N'en iert mais fin faite des meis,
Not-thereof will-be more end made of-the months
«se cele non qu'en fu ainceis.»
except that not which-thereof was before
As dames le dit ensement:
To-the ladies it he-says likewise
«N'en fera autre acordement,
Not-thereof he-will-make other agreement
«se la fin non que primes firent,
except the end not which first they-made
«quant il l'onor par anz partirent.
when they the-domain by years shared
«Polinicès la fin prendra,
Polynices the end will-take
«qui parsivre la li voudra:
who follow it to-him will-wish
«Se sis frére d'iço li boise,
If his brother in-this to-him cheats
«bien puet saveir qu'en avra noise.
well he-can know that-thereof he-will-have noise
«Car, par cest chief,» fait il, «chanu,
For by this head says he white-haired

«n'i somes pas por ço venu
not-there we-are at-all for that come
«que ja la vile nos estorce,
that ever the town from-us escape
«jusque l'aion prise par force.
until it-we-have taken by force
«Qui me dorreit tot l'or de Frise,
Who me would-give all the-gold of Frisia
«n'en tornereie si iert prise:
not-thence I-would-turn so it-will-be taken
«Ainz en ferai cinc cenz colees
Rather thereof I-shall-make five hundred blows
«doner de lances et d'espees;
be-given with lances and with-swords
«ainz en morront mil chevalier
rather thereof will-die thousand knights
«soz la cité par le gravier.»
under the city on the gravel
Si firent il: jusqu'a la nuét,
So did they until-to the night
en morurent seissante et uét:
thereof died sixty and eight
por neient et por legerie
for nothing and for lightness
comença le jor la folie.
began the day the folly
En la vile une tigre aveit,
In the town a tiger there-was
soz ciel sa pér on ne saveit.
under heaven its peer one not knew

Oïr en poez grant merveille:
Hear thereof you-can great marvel
ele ne tochast une oeille,
it not would-have-touched a sheep
car privee ert a desmesure:
for tame it-was beyond measure
tote esteit fors de sa nature.
all it-was out of its nature
Donissez lé o char o pain,
Had-you-given it or meat or bread
el le manjast en vostre main;
it it would-eat in your hand
de vin beüst plein un grant cuévre,
of wine it-would-drink full a great tub
donc l'avreiez tote jor évre:
then it-you-would-have all day drunk
idonc saillist, idonc joast,
then it-would-leap then it-would-play
tant que trestot vos enoiast.
until that all you it-wearied
Ele aveit enz el front davant
It had in into-the forehead before
un escharboncle mout luisant:
a carbuncle very shining
ne cuit que onc en nule beste
not I-think that ever in any beast
veïst on itant gente teste;
had-seen one so-much noble head

si aveit ele tot le cors
so had it all the body
plus reluisant que nen est ors.
more shining than not is gold
Ne la vousist perdre li reis
Not it would-have-wished to-lose the king
por treis cenz livres de manceis.
for three hundred pounds of Le-Mans-money
A la noise que ele oï,
At the noise which it heard
de la cité vers l'ost eissi.
from the city toward the-host it-issued
Li escuier qui abevroent
The squires who were-watering
et qui par le champ bohordoent
and who in the field were-jousting
davant la vile l'ont ocise:
before the town it-they-have killed
por sauvage l'ont entreprise.
for wild it-they-have taken
Mais cil qui erent a la porte
But those who were at the gate
virent lor tigre gesir morte:
saw their tiger lie dead
acueillent les demaintenant,
they-attack them at-once
tot dreit vers l'ost les vont menant.
all straight toward the-host them go driving

Li escuier fuient vers l'ost
The squires flee toward the-host
et vont criant: «Eissiez en tost,
and go crying Issue thence soon
«car sailli sont cil de la vile:
for leaped-out are those of the town
«Sivent nos en plus de vint mile.»
Follow us thereof more than twenty thousand
En l'ost ot merveillos esfrei:
In the-host had marvelous fright
chascuns corut a son conrei;
each ran to his equipment
par les herberges s'arment tuit
through the lodgings arm all
et tote l'ost fremist et bruit.
and all the-host trembles and roars
Es chevaus montent come ainz porent,
On-the horses they-mount as soonest they-could
de mainte guise entreseinz orent;
of many-a guise ensigns they-had
brochent et poignent par la chaume,
they-spur and prick through the stubble
bien i reluisent cent mile heaume:
well there shine hundred thousand helmets
onques en l'ost de Romanie
ever in the-host of Romania
ne josta tal chevalerie,
not jousted such chivalry
ne tant n'ot Charles en sa poigne,
nor so-many not-had Charles in his fist

quant il conquist ceus de Saissoigne.
when he conquered those of Saxony
Mais cil de la vile les virent
But those of the town them saw
et qui ainz ainz contre eus eissirent:
and who first first against them issued
eissu en sont a granz esforz
issued thence they-are with great forces
tot le chemin davant les horz,
all the road before the gardens
eissu en sont, si com mei semble,
issued thence they-are so as me seems
seissante et quatre mile ensemble.
sixty and four thousand together
Par la guarenne tuit s'espandent
Through the warren all spread
et par tanz quanz joste demandent;
and by so-many as-many joust ask
davant la geude s'abandonent
before the foot-soldiers themselves-launch
et de joindre les Greus somonent.
and to join the Greeks summon
Li Greu brochent vers eus et poignent
The Greeks spur toward them and prick
et par tanz quanz o eus se joignent;
and by so-many as-many with them themselves join
d'ambesdous parz chascuns se haste
from-both sides each himself hastens
por peceier primes sa haste.
for to-break first his shaft

Tydeüs point par mé les rens,
Tydeus spurs through midst the ranks
toz li premiers cous en fu suens.
all the first blow thereof was his
Tenelaus trueve de Sidogne:
Tenelaus he-finds of Sidon
nel pot guarir escuz ne brogne;
not-him could save shield nor byrnie
el pez le fiert de la lemèle,
in-the breast him strikes with the blade
mort le trebuche de la sèle.
dead him he-fells from the saddle
Aimon feri Orchomenon
Aimon struck Orchomenon
et Perifas Miceneon.
and Periphas Mycenean
Ypomedon joint o Sibart:
Hippomedon joins with Sibart
fiert le devers la destre part
strikes him toward the right side
de son espié par mé le cors,
with his spear through midst the body
que une aune l'en sailli fors.
that an ell him-thereof leaped out
Parthonopeus abat Itier,
Parthenopaeus fells Itier
par la rène prent le destrier.
by the rein takes the charger
Il le feri iriéement:
He him struck angrily

l'auberc desront, tot le porfent;
the-hauberk he-breaks all him cleaves
l'espié li mist par mé le cors
the-spear to-him he-put through midst the body
o tot le gonfanon entors.
with all the banner wrapped
N'est merveille se cil s'esmaie,
Not-is marvel if that-one himself-dismays
car il chiet morz por la grant plaie.
for he falls dead for the great wound
Parthonopeus ést de la presse,
Parthenopaeus issues from the press
a un danzel le destrier laisse:
to a youth the charger leaves
«Amis,» fait il, «alez m'en tost
Friend says he go for-me soon
«as pucèles que sont en l'ost;
to-the maidens who are in the-host
«et o le frein et o la sèle
and with the bridle and with the saddle
«le presentez a la pucèle
it present to the maiden
«que a la porpre inde vestue
who has the purple indigo clothed
«tot senglement a sa char nue:
all singly on her flesh naked
«Par ceste enseigne mant m'amie
By this token send my-beloved
«por lé ai fait chevalerie.»
for her I-have done chivalry

Cil point et broche par l'areine
He spurs and spurs through the-sand
et le destrier en destre meine;
and the charger in right-hand leads
tant a brochié par le chemin
so-much he-has spurred along the road
les dames trueve soz un pin,
the ladies he-finds under a pine
sor un pué ou eles s'ombreient
on a hill where they themselves-shade
et ceus esguardent qui torneient.
and those watch who joust
Cil vait avant, descent a terre:
He goes forward dismounts to earth
le destrier tint pruef de la serre
the charger he-held near by the clasp
par la rène que fu de seie.
by the rein which was of silk
Celé conut cui l'on l'enveie
Her he-knew to-whom one it-sends
a la porpre inde qu'ot vestue.
by the purple indigo which-she-had clothed
Les dames totes treis salue;
The ladies all three he-greets
a une part trait la pucèle,
to one side he-draws the maiden
tal rien li dist que li fu bèle:
such thing to-her said which to-her was fair

«Li reis d'Archaide vostre amis
The king of-Arcadia your friend
«m'a ça,» fait il, «a vos tramis.
me-has here says he to you sent
«Sachiez que hué bien joinst a dreit,
Know that today well he-jousted at right
«un en laissa el champ tot freit:
one thereof he-left on-the field all cold
«N'ot escu ne hauberc tant fort
Not-he-had shield nor hauberk so-much strong
«que le peüst guarir de mort.
that him could save from death
«Tramet vos en le destrier ci.»
He-sends you thereof the charger here
Cele respont: «Soe merci:
She answers His thanks
«Ço sache bien que por cest don
That let-him-know well that for this gift
«li cuit rendre gent guerredon;
to-him I-think to-render noble reward
«ço sache bien senz nule dote
that let-him-know well without any doubt
«que il a mei et m'amor tote.
that he has me and my-love all
«Quant il partira del tornei,
When he will-depart from-the tourney
«mant lui que il parout o mei;
send him that he speak with me
«par ci s'en tort, si le verrai:
by here himself-thence let-him-turn so him I-shall-see

«Ne sai quant i recoverrai.»
Not I-know when there I-shall-recover
Cil prent congié a la pucèle,
He takes leave of the maiden
et o le frein et o la sèle
and with the bridle and with the saddle
le destrier livre a un danzel
the charger delivers to a youth
qui aveit non Estevenel;
who had name Estevenel
arriére torne come ainz pot
back he-turns as soonest he-could
as crois des lances que il ot.
to-the crosses of-the lances which he had

The Battle Renewed

XVI

The tourney is fierce. Eteocles kills Jordan of Africa. Ates unhorses Garsi into a mire while Ismene watches and declares her love for him. Polynices kills Eblon. Garsi kills Floriant, and Floriant's son Antoine avenges him. Capaneus's three thousand drive the Thebans to the gates. Adrastus leads ten thousand white-bearded knights into the battle with their ventails unlaced. Ates scorns them as sheep, but they drive the Thebans inside, and Otes mocks him.

Icil torneis fu merveillos,
That tourney was marvelous
onc hon ne vit tant perillos
ever man not saw so-much perilous
ne si espès ne si meslé.
nor so thick nor so mixed
Maint franc home i ot afolé:
Many-a noble man there had maimed
tante sèle i veïssiez vuée
so-many saddle there you-would-have-seen empty
et de saietes si grant pluée
and of arrows so great rain
et tant cop doner a travers
and so-many blow give at across
et tant vassal gesir envers!
and so-many vassal lie on-back
Tant chevalier veïssiez joindre,
So-many knight you-would-have-seen join
entre les rens brochier et poindre!
between the ranks spur and prick

Onc nus ne vit en nule terre
Ever any not saw in any land
chevalerie si requerre;
chivalry so sought
icel jor fu bien essauciee
that day it-was well exalted
et maintenue et esdreciee.
and maintained and raised-up
Li reis de Thèbes fu mout proz:
The king of Thebes was very valiant
devers les suens i fu sor toz.
toward the his there he-was above all
Par le champ vait criant s'enseigne,
Through the field he-goes crying his-war-cry
n'encontre rien que ne s'en plaigne.
not-meets anything which not himself-thereof complain
Encontré a Jordain d'Aufrique:
Met he-has Jordan of-Africa
niés fu al rei de Salenique.
nephew he-was to-the king of Salonika
Il li chevauche, et cil l'atent;
He to-him rides and that-one him-awaits
fiert l'en l'escu, tot le li fent;
strikes him-therewith the-shield all it to-him he-splits
l'auberc li desront et desmaille:
the-hauberk to-him he-breaks and unmails
ne li valut une maaille;
not to-him was-worth a halfpenny
par le cors li conduist l'espié,
through the body to-him he-drove the-spear

passe l'en outre demé pié.
passes him-therewith beyond half foot
Cil chaï morz, que onques prestre
That-one fell dead that ever priest
n'i fu a tens ne n'i pot estre.
not-there was in time nor not-there could be
Apoignant vint Garsi de Marre
Spurring came Garsi of Marre
et sist sor ferrant de Navarre:
and sat on iron-gray of Navarre
por proece ne por granz cous
for prowess nor for great blows
n'ot tel el regne al rei Anfous.
not-had such in-the realm of-the king Alfonso
Le rei feri si al travers
The king he-struck so at-the across
que, se ne fust li bons haubers,
that if not were-it the good hauberk
mout eüst bien vengié Jordain:
very he-would-have well avenged Jordan
il ne manjast ja mais de pain.
he not would-eat ever more of bread
Ates le veit: cele part point
Ates him sees that side spurs
et o Garsi en un tai joint;
and with Garsi in a mire joins
de vertu broche et esporone:
with strength he-spurs and spurs
haste ot reide, grant cop li done.
shaft he-had stiff great blow to-him gives

Li chevaus soz lui s'agenoille;
The horse under him kneels
Garsi chaï, el tai se soille.
Garsi fell in-the mire himself soils
O le destrier Ates s'en torne,
With the charger Ates himself-thence turns
celui laissa el tai tot morne.
that-one he-left in-the mire all gloomy
Icel coup vit trés bien Ismeine
That blow saw very well Ismene
et le destrier qu'Ates en meine:
and the charger which-Ates thence leads
ele conut trés bien Aton
she knew very well Ates
a la manche del ciclaton
by the sleeve of-the ciclatoun
que il aveit por conoissance
which he had for device
lacié es claveaus de sa lance.
laced on-the nails of his lance
A sa seror le monstre al dei
To her sister him shows with-the finger
bèlement li dit en segrei:
gently to-her says in secret
«Ço est Ates que jo la vei:
That is Ates whom I there see
«Veez com broche a cel tornei!
See how he-spurs at that tourney
«Sor tote rien amer le dei,
Above all thing to-love him I-ought

«car tot içо fait il por mei.
for all this does he for me
«Ja ne seie fille de rei,
Ever not may-I-be daughter of king
«se por s'amor ne me desrei!
if for his-love not myself I-unbridle
«O face bien o jo folei,
Or I-do well or I play-the-fool
«coucherai mei o lui, çо crei.
I-shall-lie myself with him that I-believe
«Car fous n'esprent si en rosei
For fire not-kindles so in reed
«com fait l'amor que est en mei.»
as does the-love which is in me
Polinicès joste o Eblon:
Polynices jousts with Eblon
mort le trebucha el sablon.
dead him he-felled on-the sand
Quant il le vit mort en la lise:
When he him saw dead in the lists
«De vos,» fait il, «est trive prise.
Of you says he is truce taken
«Ci faz chalenge de ma terre:
Here I-make claim of my land
«Deus doinst que la puésse conquerre!»
God grant that it I-can conquer
Poignant s'en torne par l'areine,
Spurring himself-thence turns through the-sand
le liart ros en destre en meine;
the dapple roan in right-hand thence leads

Garsi le livre, et cil i monte:
Garsi it he-delivers and he thereon mounts
morz est, se ne venge sa honte.
dead he-is if not he-avenge his shame
Garsi est montez el destrier,
Garsi is mounted on-the charger
qui fu amenez de baignier:
which was brought from bathing
por torneier ne por bosoigne
for tourneying nor for need
ne remést ital en Gascoigne.
not remained such in Gascony
Entre les rens point a beslif,
Between the ranks he-spurs at slant
Floriant veit ester baïf:
Floriant he-sees stand gaping
sil fiert que lui et son poutrel
so-him strikes that him and his colt
abatié tot en un moncel.
he-felled all in a heap
En son escu le vait ferir,
On his shield him goes to-strike
d'or en autre li fait partir;
from-edge to other to-him he-makes split
l'auberc li desront et defrise:
the-hauberk to-him he-breaks and shatters
ne li valut une chemise;
not to-him was-worth a shirt
le pez et le cuer li trencha,
the breast and the heart to-him he-cut

el gravier mort le trebucha.
on-the gravel dead him he-felled
Un suen fil aveit Florianz:
A his son had Floriant
chevaliers ert proz et vaillanz.
knight he-was valiant and worthy
Li dameiseaus ot duel mout fort
The young-lord had grief very strong
d'iço que vit son pére mort:
of-this that he-saw his father dead
il se pasme sor son destrier,
he himself swoons upon his charger
quant l'en liévent si chevalier.
when him-thence raise his knights
Estaces fu uns suens cosins,
Estace was a his cousin
riches hon fu, cuens de Torins:
rich man he-was count of Turin
«Sire,» fait il, «laissiez ester:
Lord says he let be
«En duel ne vei rien recovrer;
In grief not I-see anything to-recover
«mais espleitiez del bien vengier,
but speed of-the well avenging
«de l'ocire et del detrenchier,
of the-killing and of-the cutting-up
«et vengiez la mort vostre pére,
and avenge the death (of-)your father
«fei que vos devez vostre mére.»
faith that you owe your mother

Quant releva de pasmeisons,
When he-revived from swoonings
o sei ajoste ses barons:
with himself he-joins his barons
set mile furent chevalier,
seven thousand were knights
qui mout furent hardi et fier,
who very were bold and fierce
que ot amenez d'Oriant:
whom he-had brought from-Orient
trestuit li sont apartenant;
all to-him are belonging
cil vengeront la mort Flori
these will-avenge the death (of-)Flori
o lor espié trenchant forbi.
with their spear cutting furbished
Antoines fu fiz Floriant:
Antoine was son (of-)Floriant
l'espié brandist, point l'auferrant,
the-spear he-brandishes spurs the-war-horse
et vait ferir Milon par rage,
and goes to-strike Milon in rage
un chevalier de grant parage.
a knight of great lineage
L'escu li peceie et porfent,
The-shield to-him he-shatters and cleaves
l'auberc li desront et desment;
the-hauberk to-him he-breaks and rends

el cors li mist son gonfanon
in-the body to-him he-put his banner
et de la haste un grant tronçon:
and of the shaft a great stump
mort le trebuche de l'arçon,
dead him he-fells from the-saddle-bow
si quel virent si compaignon.
so that-him saw his companions
Pués li dist un mot de folie:
Then to-him he-said a word of folly
«Se mal avez, nel celez mie.
If ill you-have not-it conceal at-all
«Del tomber semblez baleor:
In-the tumbling you-seem acrobat
«Si joérent vostre ancessor.»
So played your ancestors
Estaces refiert un de Frise,
Estace strikes-again one of Frisia
trestot l'escu li fent et brise:
all the-shield to-him he-splits and breaks
tant com la haste li dura,
so-long as the shaft to-him lasted
del fauvel mort le trebucha.
from-the fallow dead him he-felled
Antoines traist le brant d'acier,
Antoine drew the blade of-steel
Garsi en feri son guerrier
Garsi therewith he-struck his enemy
sus en l'eaume devers senestre:
up on the-helmet toward left

de l'autre part chaï sor destre.
on the-other side he-fell on right
Cist mar vit la mort Floriant,
This-one ill saw the death (of-)Floriant
que il aveit ocis davant.
whom he had killed before
Tuit li set mile i ont feru,
All the seven thousand there have struck
chascuns a le suen mort rendu:
each has the his dead rendered
la veïssiez tant coup ferir
there you-would-have-seen so-many blow strike
et tant bon chevalier morir.
and so-many good knight die
Antoines vait sovent jostant,
Antoine goes often jousting
son pére vait mout regretant,
his father he-goes much lamenting
et vait ferir un chevalier
and goes to-strike a knight
de novel venu soudeier:
of new come soldier
par mé l'escu li dona tal
through midst the-shield to-him he-gave such
mort le trebuche del cheval.
dead him he-fells from-the horse
Capaneüs fu de d'a mont,
Capaneus was from from-at up
devers la porte al chief del pont,
toward the gate at-the head of-the bridge

ou il torneie o sa maisniee,
where he jousts with his household
que mout fu bien entreseigniee:
which very was well marked
tant bon heaume ot en sa compaigne,
so-many good helmet there-was in his company
tant escu peint d'azur d'Espaigne,
so-many shield painted with-azure of-Spain
tant bon hauberc menu maillié,
so-many good hauberk finely mailed
tant entreseign bien entaillié,
so-many ensign well carved
tant bon cheval né de Castèle,
so-many good horse born of Castile
tant frein et tante bone sèle,
so-many bridle and so-many good saddle
tante enseigne de tante guise,
so-many ensign of so-many guise
que venteloent a la bise!
which fluttered in the north-wind
Onques en cort a nesun rei
Ever in court at any king
ne veïstes tant gent conrei:
not you-saw so-much noble equipment
tuit sont de maisniee escherie,
all are of household chosen
que li dus ot tote norrie,
which the duke had all nurtured

treis mile fiz de vavasors
three thousand sons of vavasors
et de barons et de contors;
and of barons and of counts
n'en i ot un fil de vilain,
not-thereof there had one son of peasant
ne qui fust nez de basse main.
nor who were born of low hand
Le jor firent grant hardement
The day they-did great boldness
par force et par envaïment;
by force and by onslaught
tuit a un front passent la lice:
all at one front pass the lists
nes pot tenir barre ne clice,
not-them could hold bar nor hurdle
que ceus dedenz si refolérent
that those within so they-drove-back
entrésqu'es portes les menérent.
until-into-the gates them they-led
En un estanc, desoz la vile,
In a pool below the town
en ot neié plus de dous mile.
thereof had drowned more than two thousand
Dementiers que li hoz torneie,
Meanwhile that the host jousts
li reis sa bataille conreie.
the king his battle equips

Fors des herberges en la plaigne
Out of-the lodgings into the plain
s'en est eissuz o grant compaigne:
himself-thence is issued with great company
taus cent mile homes ot a pié,
such hundred thousand men he-had on foot
chascuns d'eus tint lance o espié;
each of-them held lance or spear
et ot quarante mile archiers,
and had forty thousand archers
estre les bachelers legiers,
besides the bachelors nimble
qui sont alé al tornei traire
who are gone to-the tourney to-shoot
et as assis damage faire.
and to-the besieged harm to-do
Li chevalier antif et gros,
The knights ancient and stout
qui auques ont perdu lor los,
who somewhat have lost their praise
ne poinstrent pas sempre al tornei,
not spurred at-all at-once to-the tourney
ainceis reméstrent o le rei.
rather remained with the king
Dez mile sont d'antive geste:
Ten thousand are of-ancient race
chascuns d'eus ot blanche la teste,
each of-them had white the head
les barbes ont fors des ventailles.
the beards they-have outside the ventails

Cil conreérent les batailles
These equipped the battalions
et les menérent sagement,
and them led wisely
le petit pas, serréement.
the small pace closely
Li reis s'areste en mé la lande,
The king himself-stops in midst the heath
toz ses homes taire comande;
all his men to-be-silent commands
ses homes fait escouter toz,
his men he-makes listen all
si a parlé et dist que proz:
so has spoken and said as valiant
«Seignor,» fait il, «nel quier celer,
Lords says he not-it I-seek to-conceal
«mout le font bien cist bacheler;
very it do well these bachelors
«bien les i vei brochier et poindre,
well them there I-see spur and prick
«entre les rens bien a dreit joindre:
between the ranks well at right join
«Vïaz, quant il s'en torneront,
Quickly when they themselves-thence will-turn
«de lor proeces parleront;
of their prowesses they-will-speak
«conteront lor chevaleries,
they-will-tell their chivalries
«et nos feront mout granz envies.
and us will-make very great envies

«Chascuns de nos avra grant ire,
Each of us will-have great wrath
«quant de sei ne porra rien dire.
when of himself not will-be-able anything to-say
«De nos ne serront pas li conte,
Of us not will-be at-all the tales
«et porron tuit aveir grant honte,
and we-shall-be-able all to-have great shame
«quant serron mis ariére dos
when we-shall-be put behind back
«et cil sol avront tot le los:
and these alone will-have all the praise
«Li bacheler avront le brif,
The bachelors will-have the dash
«et nos serron entre eus baïf.
and we shall-be among them gaping
«Mieuz vueil,» fait il, «perdre la vie
Rather I-wish says he to-lose the life
«que n'i face chevalerie;
than not-there I-do chivalry
«la nos estuet poindre et brochier
there us behooves to-prick and to-spur
«et nos proeces refreschier.
and our prowesses to-refresh
«Et vos dirai com le feron:
And to-you I-shall-tell how it we-shall-do
«Les ventailles deslaceron;
The ventails we-shall-unlace

«pareistront les testes chanues
will-appear the heads white-haired
«et les granz barbes encreües;
and the great beards grown
«et semblera mout grant barnage,
and it-will-seem very great baronage
«quant nos poindron par le rivage,
when we shall-prick along the bank
«car ne fu mais, si com mei semble,
for not was more so as to-me seems
«de tal gent tant josté ensemble.
of such folk so-much joined together
«Guardez que devers les chanuz
Take-care that toward the white-haired
«seit li torneis bien maintenuz
be the tourney well maintained
«et que n'i ait fait coardie
and that not-there have done cowardice
«devers la nostre gent florie:
toward the our folk white
«La ou verron maior destreit,
There where we-shall-see greater strait
«poignon ensemble tuit estreit;
let-us-prick together all tight
«guardez que ja uns ne s'en tienge
take-care that ever one not himself-thence hold
«jusque que li murs le retienge.
until that the wall him hold-back
«Ne redotez ja les garçons,
Not fear ever the boys

«n'en remange un entrels arçons,
not-thereof let-remain one between-their saddle-bows
«que il sachent certainement
that they know certainly
«que li reis fait l'envaiement.
that the king makes the-onslaught
«Nostre geude venge deriére,
Our foot-soldiers let-come behind
«le petit pas, par la riviére,
the small pace along the river
«que, se il nos torne a destrece,
that if it to-us turns to distress
«iluec seit nostre forterece.»
there be our fortress
A toz plot ço que dit li reis:
To all pleased that which says the king
dist li uns a l'autre en grezeis
said the one to the-other in Greek
mar ont esté en tante poigne,
ill they-have been in so-many fist
se li faillent d'este besoigne.
if to-him they-fail in-this need
Les ventailles ont deslaciees,
The ventails they-have unlaced
les hastes contre mont dreciees;
the shafts against up raised
vers la vile brochent tot dreit
toward the town they-spur all straight
et tuit ensemble et bien estreit.
and all together and well tight

Une grant enseigne d'orfreis
A great ensign of-orphrey
fait davant sei porter li reis;
makes before himself carry the king
el chief davant cent graisles sonent,
at-the head before hundred bugles sound
al plus coart hardement donent;
to-the most coward boldness they-give
fremist li cieus, fremist la terre:
trembles the heaven trembles the earth
bien resemble dès ore guerre.
well it-resembles from now war
Ates ot les chevaus henir;
Ates hears the horses neigh
guarda trés sei, vit les venir:
he-looked behind himself saw them come
«Veez,» fait il, «com grant compaigne
See says he how great company
«nos vient d'oeilles par la plaigne!»
to-us comes of-sheep through the plain
Otes respont, qui fu dejoste:
Otes answers who was beside
«Gros moz dire guaires ne coste.
Big words to-say much not costs
«S'il sont oeilles, et vos los:
If-they are sheep and you wolves
«Mais, par la fei que jo dei vos,
But by the faith which I owe you
«vos lor muerez tost estal;
you to-them will-hold soon stand

«encontre iron tuit a cheval:
against we-shall-go all on horse
«Et iert mout lait et grant merveille
And it-will-be very ugly and great marvel
«que la los fuie por oeille.»
that the wolf flee for sheep
Atant astes vos les enfanz,
At-this behold you the children
li plus tendre ot passé cent anz:
the most tender had passed hundred years
onc ne fu mais par nesun rei
ever not was more by any king
ital gent menee a tornei.
such folk led to tourney
Li vieil sont pro: en lor jovent
The old are valiant in their youth
a tal jou joérent sovent,
at such game they-played often
et membre lor del vasselage
and remember to-them of-the prowess
que il orent en lor aage:
which they had in their age
es estreus mout forment s'afichent
in-the stirrups very greatly themselves-fix
et es chevaus esporons fichent;
and into-the horses spurs fix
davant les pez traient les targes,
before the breasts they-draw the targes
que il orent et forz et larges;
which they had both strong and wide

mais les plusors sont si fumees
but the most are so smoked
que totes sont descolorees;
that all are discolored
les hastes aloignent d'osil,
the shafts they-lengthen from-the-roof
que sont teintes del fumeril;
which are dyed by-the smoke-hole
mais se li fous les a nercies,
but if the fire them has blackened
por le bosoign sont encheries.
for the need they-are dearer
Issi dreit serré come il vindrent,
Thus straight close as they came
onc jusqu'as murs rène ne tindrent:
ever until-to-the walls rein not they-held
nel laissent por poeir morir
not-it they-leave for power to-die
que nes augent de bot ferir;
that not-them they-go with butt to-strike
et des lances et des espees
and with-the lances and with-the swords
donent li vieil mout granz colees.
give the old very great blows
Cil dedenz nel porent sofrir,
Those within not-it could suffer
si lor estut le champ guerpir:
so to-them behooved the field to-forsake
les dos tornent et cil les fiérent,
the backs they-turn and those them strike

onc jusqu'as portes nes laissiérent.
ever until-to-the gates not-them they-left
Ates s'en alot tot avant,
Ates himself-thence went all before
qui mout aveit cheval corant.
who very had horse running
Otes li començа a dire:
Otes to-him began to say
«Car retornez, Ates, beaus sire;
So turn-back Ates fair lord
«ces oeilles espoentez,
these sheep frighten
«qui mout nos poignent es costez.»
who very us prick in-the sides
Ates se torne vers Oton:
Ates himself turns toward Otes
«Jo vos tiegn,» fait il, «por bricon:
I you hold says he for rascal
«Se vos ne me laissiez ester,
If you not me let be
«tost vos porra a mal torner.»
soon you will-be-able to ill turn

The Death of Amphiaraus

XVII

Amphiaraus fights from a chariot made by Vulcan, painted with the heavens, the giants' war, and the seven liberal arts. He kills many Thebans, knowing he will die that day, and at evening the earth opens and swallows him. Adrastus grieves for him, and the host spends a sleepless night while the Thebans mock from the walls. In council next morning Adrastus confesses his fear of the earth, and the duke of Mycenae urges a return to Greece. Most of the barons agree, but Adrastus is slow to move.

D'Amphiaras dire vos dei
Of-Amphiaraus to-tell to-you I-ought
com se contint en cel tornei.
how himself he-bore in that tourney
En un curre ert Amphiaras,
In a chariot was Amphiaraus
qui fu faiz outre Saint Thomas:
which was made beyond Saint Thomas
Vulcans le fist par grant porpens
Vulcan it made with great thought
et a lui faire mist grant tens.
and to it make put great time
Par estuide et par grant conseil,
By study and by great counsel
i mist la lune et le soleil,
there he-put the moon and the sun
et tresgeta le firmament
and cast the firmament
par art et par enchantement.
by art and by enchantment

Nuef espères par ordre i fist:
Nine spheres in order there he-made
en la maior les signes mist;
in the greatest the signs he-put
es autres set, que sont menors,
in-the other seven which are lesser
fist les planètes et les cors;
he-made the planets and the courses
la nuefme assist en mé le monde:
the ninth he-set in midst the world
ço est la terre et mer parfonde.
that is the earth and sea deep
En terre peinst homes et bestes,
On earth he-painted men and beasts
en mer peissons, venz et tempestes.
in sea fishes winds and storms
Qui de fisique sot entendre,
Who of natural-science knew to-understand
es peintures pot mout aprendre.
in-the paintings could much learn
Li jaiant sont en l'autre pan,
The giants are on the-other panel
tuit plein d'orgueil et de boban:
all full of-pride and of arrogance
les deus vuelent desheriter
the gods they-wish to-disinherit
et par force del ciel geter.
and by force from-the heaven to-throw
A poier sus ont fait eschale:
To climb up they-have made ladder

onc hon qui vive ne vit tale,
ever man who live not saw such
car un pué ont sor autre mis,
for one hill they-have on other put
plus de set en i ont assis,
more than seven thereof there they-have set
et puéent sus por les deus prendre,
and climb up for the gods to-take
4740 se d'eus ne se pueent defendre.
if from-them not themselves they-can defend
Jupiter est de l'autre part,
Jupiter is on the-other side
une foildre tient et un dart;
a thunderbolt he-holds and a dart
Mars et Pallas sont en après:
Mars and Pallas are in after
cil dui sostiénent tot le fais;
these two hold-up all the burden
4745 tuit li autre qui el ciel regnent
all the others who in-the heaven reign
isnèlement lor armes prenent:
swiftly their arms take
cel d'eus n'i a qui quierge essone,
that of-them not-there has who seek excuse
tuit se combatent par le trone.
all themselves fight by the throne
Et a pierres et a esmaus
And with stones and with enamels
4750 fu faiz deriére li frontaus,
was made behind the front-piece

et enlevees les set arz:
and raised the seven arts
Gramaire i est peinte o ses parz,
Grammar there is painted with her parts
Dialetique o argumenz
Dialectic with arguments
et Rhetorique o jugemenz;
and Rhetoric with judgments
l'abaque tient Arimetique,
the-abacus holds Arithmetic
par la game chante musique;
by the gamut sings music
peint i est Diatessaron,
painted there is Diatessaron
Diapenté, Diapason;
Diapente Diapason
une verge ot Geometrie,
a rod had Geometry
un astrelabe Astronomie:
an astrolabe Astronomy
l'une en terre met sa mesure,
the-one on earth puts her measure
l'autre es esteiles a sa cure.
the-other on-the stars has her care
El curre ot mout sotil entaille:
In-the chariot there-had very subtle carving
bien fu ovrez, onc n'i ot faille.
well it-was wrought ever not-there had fault
Une image i ot tresgetee,
An image there had cast

que vait cornant a la menee;
which goes horning to the call
une autre, que toz tens frestèle
an other which all time pipes
plus clér que rote ne vïèle.
more clear than rote nor viol
L'uevre del curre o la matére
The-work of-the chariot with the matter
vaut bien Thèbes o tot l'empére:
is-worth well Thebes with all the-empire
car li pan sont d'or fin trifuére
for the panels are of-gold fine filigreed
et li timon de blanc ivuére;
and the shafts of white ivory
les roes sont de crisopase,
the wheels are of chrysoprase
color ont de fou qui embrase.
color they-have of fire which blazes
Le curre traient quatre azeivre:
The chariot draw four zebras
l'esclot n'en puet hon aperceivre
the-track not-thereof can man perceive
en sablon ne en terre mole,
in sand nor in earth soft
car plus tost vont qu'oiseaus qui vole.
for more soon they-go than-bird which flies
Amphiaras point et s'eslaisse
Amphiaraus spurs and himself-launches
la ou il vit la maior presse;
there where he saw the greatest press

l'espee trait que fu forbie,
the-sword he-draws which was furbished
del bien ferir pas ne s'oblie:
of-the well striking at-all not himself-forgets
por doner granz cous maintenant
for to-give great blows at-once
sont tuit li autre a lui pendant.
are all the others to him hanging
Mout trencha bien le jor s'espee,
Very cut well the day his-sword
a ceus dedenz fu mout privee:
to those within it-was very familiar
onc l'espee al duc Godefrei
ever the-sword of-the duke Godfrey
ne mist les Turs en tal esfrei,
not put the Turks in such fright
ne tant genz cous ne fist Turpins
nor so-many noble blows not made Turpin
en Espagne sor Sarrazins
in Spain upon Saracens
com fist l'arcevesques le jor
as made the-archbishop the day
sor ceus de Thèbes en l'estor.
upon those of Thebes in the-battle
Mout fu bien apareilliez d'armes,
Very was well equipped with-arms
des meillors que l'on fait a Parmes:
of-the best which one makes at Parma
al col ot un escu vermeil,
at-the neck he-had a shield red

qui mout reluist contre soleil;
which very shines against sun
bocles d'or i ot plus de set:
bosses of-gold there had more than seven
n'i a cele ou dez mars n'en ait;
not-there has that-one where ten marks not-thereof have
ses haubers fu forz et legiers
his hauberk was strong and light
et plus luisanz que argenz miers:
and more shining than silver pure
qui l'a vestu ne dote plaie.
who it-has clothed not fears wound
A entreseign ot un daumaie,
As ensign he-had a dalmatic
et soz son heaume un veloset
and under his helmet a velvet
de seie blanche bien toset.
of silk white well shorn
Li soleuz luist clér come en mai,
The sun shines bright as in May
el curre d'or fiérent li rai:
on-the chariot of-gold strike the rays
reflambist en sus la montaigne
it-reflames up on the mountain
et de desoz tote la plaigne.
and from below all the plain
Del curre et de ses guarnemenz
At-the chariot and at its fittings
s'esbahissent tuit cil dedenz;
themselves-amaze all those within

cil dedenz s'esbahissent tuit,
those within themselves-amaze all
li plus hardiz avant li fuit,
the most bold before him flees
car cuident que seit aucuns deus
for they-think that it-be some god
qui se combate por les Greus.
who himself fights for the Greeks
Amphiaras sot bien par sort
Amphiaraus knew well by lot
qu'a icel jor recevreit mort;
that-on that day he-would-receive death
par augure sot li guerriers
by augury knew the warrior
que ço esteit sis jorz deriers:
that that was his day last
pués que certainement le sot,
since that certainly it he-knew
empleia le com il mieuz pot.
he-used it as he best could
De ceus dedenz fait grant martire,
Of those within he-makes great martyrdom
ne vieil ne juefne n'en remire;
nor old nor young not-thereof he-spares
quant que il en trueve en sa veie
whatever that he of-them finds in his way
en enfer avant sei enveie.
into hell before himself sends

Grant perte i refont cil defors
Great loss there make-again those outside
de lor chevaus et de lor cors,
of their horses and of their bodies
mais a neient le tenissant,
but at nothing it they-would-hold
se il lui sol ne perdissant.
if they him alone not would-lose
Mout en furent desconseillié:
Very thereof they-were disheartened
de ço se sont esmerveillié
of that themselves are marveled
que il mori en tal maniére,
that he died in such manner
que sa mort fu horrible et fiére;
that his death was horrible and fierce
car al vespre, soentre none,
for at-the evening after none
la terre crolle et li cieus tone,
the earth shakes and the heaven thunders
et, si com Deus l'ot destiné
and so as God it-had destined
et cil l'ot dit et deviné,
and he it-had said and divined
terre le sorbi senz enjan,
earth him swallowed without deceit
com fist Abiron et Datan.
as it-did Abiram and Dathan

Cil qui cele merveille virent
Those who that marvel saw
s'espoentérent et foïrent;
themselves-frightened and fled
mout foïrent a grant desrei,
very they-fled in great disorder
car chascuns ot poor de sei.
for each had fear for himself
Li reis esteit de l'autre part
The king was on the-other side
ou ot fichié son estendart
where he-had fixed his standard
près del mur, al lanz d'une piere:
near the wall at-the throw of-a stone
dit que ne s'en traira ariére;
he-says that not himself-thence he-will-draw back
par force se vueut herbergier.
by force himself he-wishes to-lodge
Davant la porte, en un vergier,
Before the gate in an orchard
iluec comande son tréf tendre
there he-commands his tent pitch
et as autres herberges prendre:
and to-the others lodgings to-take
les fontaines que sont es horz
the fountains which are in-the gardens
lor vueut veer par grant esforz,
to-them he-wishes to-deny with great force
et de l'ève douce sevrer,
and from the-water sweet to-sever

que il n'i puéssent abevrer:
that they not-there can water
issi les cuide bien destreindre,
thus them he-thinks well to-constrain
se environ les pueut aceindre;
if around them he-can encircle
malement les pense deceivre,
badly them he-thinks to-deceive
se destreindre les puet de beivre.
if to-constrain them he-can from drinking
A tant astes vos un message:
At this behold you a messenger
d'Amphiaras dit le damage,
of-Amphiaraus he-tells the harm
com terre mére le sorbi
how earth mother him swallowed
et mil des autres autresi.
and thousand of-the others likewise
Içо poez vos bien saveir
This can you well know
que de mil nen esteit pas veir:
that of thousand not was at-all true
cil en dit plus que n'en saveit,
he thereof says more than not-thereof he-knew
que la merveille grant esteit.
for the marvel great was
Quant li messages le li conte,
When the messenger it to-him tells
li reis se seigne et s'espoonte:
the king himself crosses and himself-frightens

«Di, va,» fait il, «ço est mençonge,
Say go says he that is lie
«tu as iço veü par songe:
thou hast this seen by dream
«Ne cuit que Deus tant nos confonde
Not I-think that God so-much us confound
«que ja la terre soz nos fonde.»
that ever the earth under us founder
As vos un mes après celui,
Behold you a messenger after that-one
mieuz le creï, quant furent dui,
better it he-believed when they-were two
et donc le tierz et pués le quart:
and then the third and then the fourth
desfichier fait son estendart;
unfix he-makes his standard
as herberges li reis s'en torne
to-the lodgings the king himself-thence turns
et fait chiére marrie et morne;
and makes face grieved and gloomy
mout fait grant duel, plore, guaimente
very he-makes great grief weeps laments
et d'Amphiaras se demente.
and over-Amphiaraus himself grieves
Se il fait duel, ne m'en merveil:
If he makes grief not me-thereof I-marvel
mout a perdu de son conseil.
much he-has lost of his counsel

Enseignot lui terre a tenir
He-taught him land to hold
et quant que li ert a venir;
and whatever that to-him was to come
chaïst lui bien o malement,
it-should-fall to-him well or badly
cil le saveit de longement.
he it knew from long
Par l'ost font duel desmesuré:
Through the-host they-make grief beyond-measure
n'en i a nul tant aduré
not-thereof there has any so-much hardened
ne s'amornisse del damage
not himself-sadden from-the harm
et ne s'esmait en son corage.
and not himself-dismay in his heart
Pués que comence a avesprer
Since that begins to grow-evening
et li soleuz a resconser,
and the sun to set
as herberges est l'ost tornee:
to-the lodgings is the-host turned
mout ont bien faite lor jornee.
very they-have well done their day
Mais ço cui chaut? Ne font vantance
But that who cares Not they-make boasting
de coup d'espee ne de lance:
of blow of-sword nor of lance
d'Amphiaras forment lor peise,
of-Amphiaraus greatly to-them weighs

danzeaus n'i rit ne n'i enveise;
youth not-there laughs nor not-there frolics
n'i sone vïèle ne rote,
not-there sounds viol nor rote
ne n'i chante nus ne n'i note;
nor not-there sings any nor not-there plays
n'i fu la nuét rollez haubers,
not-there was the night rolled hauberk
ne branz d'acier ne heaumes ters,
nor blades of-steel nor helmets wiped
ne onc n'i ot drap trait de male.
nor ever not-there had cloth drawn from bag
Mout traistrent tuit fort nuét et male;
Very drew all strong night and bad
as herberges chascuns se chome,
in-the lodgings each himself rests
onc n'i prist uns la nuét bon some,
ever not-there took one the night good sleep
ne n'i mangiérent ne n'i burent,
nor not-there they-ate nor not-there drank
ne soz bons dras la nuét ne jurent.
nor under good clothes the night not lay
Mout sont dolent, triste et pensif:
Very they-are grieving sad and thoughtful
ja n'en cuident estordre vif;
ever not-thence they-think to-escape alive
chascuns se tient a confondu
each himself holds for confounded
d'Amphiaras que ont perdu;
by-Amphiaraus whom they-have lost

de lui font duel, d'eus sont dotos
of him they-make grief of-themselves they-are fearful
et del retorner coveitos;
and of-the returning covetous
plus crement il assez la terre
more fear they enough the earth
que il ne font lor autre guerre.
than they not do their other war
La nuét fu l'ost morne et segreie;
The night was the-host gloomy and silent
par main vuelent tenir lor veie.
by morning they-wish to-hold their way
Mais dedenz font mout grant tomoute:
But within they-make very great tumult
de loign les ot, qui les escoute.
from far them hears who them listens
A mont al mur, par les batailles,
At up on-the wall by the battlements
luisent lanternes, ardent failles;
shine lanterns burn torches
es eschives joent et rient;
in-the bulwarks they-play and laugh
tuit a un front huent et crient;
all at one front hoot and cry
o ceus defors gabent et rient
with those outside mock and laugh
et par eschar serventeis dient:
and by mockery sirventes they-say
«Seignor», dient les eschauguaites,
Lords say the watchmen

«mout avez hué proeces faites,
much you-have today prowesses done
«forment fumes hué assailli,
greatly we-were today assailed
«mais malement estes bailli:
but badly you-are handled
«Vostre roèle a hué failli,
Your wheel has today failed
«vostre maistre a grant saut sailli;
your master has great leap leaped
«par lui vos demostre Deus signe
through him to-you shows God sign
«de nostre terre n'estes digne.
of our land not-you-are worthy
«Alez vos en de nostre terre,
Go you thence from our land
«car neienz est de la conquerre:
for nothing it-is of it to-conquer
«Se nel faites, haste vos peine;
If not-it you-do haste you pain
«entré estes en male estreine.»
entered you-are into bad gift
Par la cité grant joie meinent
Through the city great joy they-lead
d'eus esbaudir forment se peinent;
of-themselves to-embolden greatly themselves they-strive
poi dotent l'ost et poi la crement:
little they-fear the-host and little it they-fear
ja nes prendront s'il nes afement.
ever not-them they-will-take if-they not-them famish

Vers eus sont mout asseüré,
Toward them they-are very reassured
del defendre bien aduré;
of-the defending well hardened
ne feront mais oan la fin
not they-will-make more this-year the end
qu'il offreient hué al matin:
which-they offered today at-the morning
auques les ont hué essaiez,
somewhat them they-have today tested
sévent ques a mout esmaiez
they-know that-them has very dismayed
la perte que ont receü
the loss which they-have received
et li signes que ont veü.
and the sign which they-have seen
Al bien matin, quant l'aube brande,
At-the well morning when the-dawn flames
toz ses barons Adrastus mande:
all his barons Adrastus summons
venu i sont treis cent o plus,
come there are three hundred or more
n'i a cel ne seit cuens o dus.
not-there has that-one not be count or duke
Quant furent tuit el tréf assis,
When they-were all in-the tent seated
li reis lor a conseil requis:
the king to-them has counsel required

«Seignor,» fait il, «conseil vos quier
Lords says he counsel of-you I-seek
«de ço que vos veïstes hier;
of that which you saw yesterday
«conseilliez en et vos et mei,
counsel thereof both you and me
«car, par la fei que jo vos dei,
for by the faith which I to-you owe
«ne vos en quier la verté taire;
not of-you thereof I-seek the truth to-silence
«enserrez sué, ne sai que faire.
shut-in I-am not I-know what to-do
«Car mout m'est mal et mout me griége
For very me-is ill and very me grieves
«que jo guerpisse issi le siége,
that I forsake thus the siege
«et en l'ester ai mout grant dote
and in the-staying I-have very great fear
«que la terre ne nos transglote;
that the earth not us swallow
«mout m'est granz dueus del retorner
very to-me-is great grief of-the returning
«et mout plus crem le sojorner:
and very more I-fear the staying
«De sa maison puet creme aveir,
Of his house can fear have
«qui la son veisin veit ardeir;
who that his neighbor sees burn

«iceste mort par est tant fiére
this death very is so-much fierce
«que tote autre est vers lé legiére.
that all other is toward her light
«Et nel tenez a coardie,
And not-it hold for cowardice
«car cel sachiez, que que j'en die,
for that know whatever that I-thereof say
«n'avrai graignor poor de mei
not-I-shall-have greater fear for me
«qu'ont d'eus tuit cist que jo ci vei;
than-have for-themselves all these whom I here see
«ja nen avrai la maior creme,
ever not-thereof I-shall-have the greatest fear
«car jo sai bien que chascuns s'eme
for I know well that each himself-esteems
«tot autretant com jo faz mei.
all as-much as I do me
«En Deu me fi et en lui crei:
In God me I-trust and in him believe
«Ja ne serrai sorbiz plus tost
Ever not I-shall-be swallowed more soon
«ne plus pechiére de tot l'ost.
nor more sinful of all the-host
«Ne m'en tenez ja por coart,
Not me-thereof hold ever for coward
«car jol met tot en vostre esguart:
for I-it put all in your judgment
«Se vos volez, jo m'en irai,
If you wish I myself-thence shall-go

«et se volez, jo remaindrai.»
and if you-wish I shall-remain
Ço respont li dus de Miceines:
That answers the duke of Mycenae
«Por quei serion ci en vaines,
For why we-should-be here in vain
«pués que nos vient tal aventure
since that to-us comes such adventure
«que la terre nos fait enjure?
that the earth us does injury
«N'i a si fol que bien ne veie
Not-there has so fool that well not see
«que Deus ne vueut pas ceste veie:
that God not wishes at-all this way
«Pués que Deus ne vueut cest afaire,
Since that God not wishes this affair
«com le cuidiez vos a chief traire?
how it think you to end draw
«Qui contre aguillon eschaucire,
Who against goad kicks
«dous feiz se point, tot tens l'oi dire.
two times himself pricks all time it-I-heard say
«Tant com somes issi delivre,
So-long as we-are thus free
«mieuz lo torner en Grece, et vivre
better I-counsel to-turn into Greece and to-live
«la ou vesquirent tuit nostre aive,
there where lived all our grandfathers
«que ci morir a ital glaive.»
than here to-die by such blade

Tuit li plusor al duc s'aponent
All the most to-the duke themselves-agree
et del torner le rei somonent;
and to-the returning the king summon
mais li reis est griés a moveir:
but the king is grievous to move
n'en tornera senz estoveir.
not-thence he-will-turn without necessity

A New Seer

XVIII

The count of Amyclae argues that flight will not save them from God and urges them to choose a new bishop, fast, confess, and sacrifice at the chasm. An old poet names two disciples of Amphiaraus. Melampus is too old, so the Greeks elect the young Thiodamas against his will. After three days of fasting and a barefoot procession, the sky thunders, the earth quakes, and the chasm closes. The Greeks rejoice and ride out to fight, and the Thebans come out to meet them.

Li cuens d'Amicles ot grant cuer,
The count of-Amyclae had great heart
et n'ama mie mout jafuer:
and not-loved at-all much sport
mout preisa plus chevalerie
much be-prized more chivalry
que riveier ne berserie,
than hawking nor hunting
et doner granz cous en estor
and giving great blows in battle
que gesir ne estre en sojor.
than lying nor being in rest

En guerre fu norriz d'enfance,
In war he-was nurtured from-childhood
en tote l'ost n'ot meillor lance,
in all the-host not-had better lance
ne qui sache plus mal cerchier:
nor who know more evil to-seek
li reis Adrastus l'ot mout chier,
the king Adrastus him-had very dear
car en destreit bien le conseille;
for in strait well him he-counsels
et fu mout proz a grant merveille,
and was very valiant at great marvel
et fu uns lons et ot la chiére
and was a tall-one and had the face
brune et alise et auques fiére;
brown and smooth and somewhat fierce
les cheveus ot meslez de chaines.
the hair he-had mixed with gray
Cil respont al duc de Miceines;
He answers to-the duke of Mycenae
mais quant veit que tuit a lui pendent
but when he-sees that all to him hang
et al torner ariére tendent,
and to-the turning back tend
detint sei al comencement
he-held-back himself at-the beginning
et parla mout tempréement:
and spoke very temperately
«Sire,» fait il, «al mien espeir,
Lord says he to-the my hope

«vos dites bien et dites veir:
you say well and say true
«Pués que nos vient tal aventure,
Since that us comes such adventure
«del retorner est bien mesure;
of-the returning it-is well measure
«mais, se vos plaist, n'i dites joi,
but if you please not-there say yes
«laissiez m'i amender un poi,
let me-there amend a little
«si vos dirai que j'en otrei;
so to-you I-shall-say what I-thereof grant
«se vos est vis que je folei,
if you it-is opinion that I play-the-fool
«die qui mieuz le savra dire:
let-say who better it will-know-how to-say
«Ja devers mei n'en sordra ire.
Ever toward me not-thereof will-arise wrath
«D'Amphiaras, qui si est morz,
Of-Amphiaraus who so is dead
«nos est creüz granz desconforz:
to-us is grown great discomfort
«Ne nos poeit venir, ço crei,
Not us could come that I-believe
«maire damages fors del rei.
greater harm except of-the king
«Deus en fist son comandement:
God thereof did his command
«En lui n'a mais recovrement;
In him not-has more recovery

«et autretal de nos fera
and likewise of us he-will-do
«de qual hore que li plaira.
at what hour that to-him will-please
«Cuidiez vos en Grece foïr?
Think you into Greece to-flee
«Ja n'i porron vers lui guandir:
Ever not-there we-shall-be-able toward him to-escape
«Se ne nos vueut faire merci,
If not us he-wishes to-do mercy
«ne guarron la plus que ici;
not we-shall-be-saved there more than here
«cui l'ire Deu voudra confondre,
whom the-wrath (of-)God will-wish to-confound
«ne se porra vers lui repondre.
not himself will-be-able toward him to-hide
«Se volez creire le mien los,
If you-wish to-believe the my counsel
«ne torneron issi le dos,
not we-shall-turn thus the back
«mais un de nos vesque esleison,
but one of us bishop let-us-elect
«par grant esguart et par raison;
by great regard and by reason
«car senz evesque ne senz maistre
for without bishop nor without master
«ne devon nos longement estre.
not must we long be
«Restoron nostre maiestére,
Let-us-restore our ministry

«entendon forment a eslére
let-us-attend greatly to elect
«tal qui seit de bone dotrine:
such who be of good doctrine
«N'i ait amor, n'i ait haïne.
Not-there have love not-there have hatred
«A richece ne a parage
To riches nor to lineage
«n'entendon ja ne a aage,
not-let-us-attend ever nor to age
«car bacheler pas ne deit l'on
for bachelor at-all not ought one
«refuser, se il est proz hon.
refuse if he is valiant man
«Et quant li vesques iert levez,
And when the bishop will-be raised
«li maiestéres achevez,
the ministry achieved
«il auge avant et prét por sei
he let-go forward and let-pray for himself
«et por le pueple et por le rei,
and for the people and for the king
«comant juner, ester en haire
let-him-command fasting standing in hair-shirt
«et par cest host aumosnes faire.
and through this host alms to-make
«Quant li juners iert acompliz,
When the fasting will-be accomplished
«al jor qui sera estabiliz,
at-the day which will-be established

«de nos pechiez seion confès;
of our sins let-us-be confessed
«il auge avant et nos après
he let-go forward and we after
«al sousi qui est en la place,
to-the chasm which is in the place
«un sacrefice grant i face:
a sacrifice great there let-him-make
«Se li sousiz idonc reclot,
If the chasm then recloses
«poez saveir que Deus nos ot.»
you-can know that God us hears
Li saint home, cil qui Deu crement,
The holy men those who God fear
icest conseil loent et ement;
this counsel praise and esteem
mais en mal sont de vesque querre
but in ill they-are of bishop to-seek
qui seit proz hon et de lor terre.
who be valiant man and of their land
Uns poètes vieuz et antis,
A poet old and ancient
qui ot en bos esté mainz dis,
who had in wood been many days
et de sa lei relegious,
and of his law religious
les mist a esléte de dous.
them put to election of two
Il s'en monta sor un perron,
He himself-thence mounted on a block

si lor a fait un brief sermon;
so to-them has made a short sermon
il lor comande aveir silence,
he them commands to-have silence
et il l'ont en tal reverence,
and they him-have in such reverence
pués qu'il le virent en estant,
since that-they him saw in standing
tuit se turent petit et grant,
all themselves silenced small and great
car bien sévent que en sa vie
for well they-know that in his life
n'ot mauvaistié ne tricherie:
not-had wickedness nor trickery
«Di, va,» fait il, «ço est bien dreiz
Say go says he that is well right
«que Deus nos ait issi destreiz,
that God us have thus constrained
«car entre nos regne pechiez
for among us reigns sin
«et coveitise et mauvaistiez.
and covetousness and wickednesses
«Por nos pechiez Deus nos flaièle
For our sins God us flails
«et par son flaiel nos rapèle;
and by his flail us recalls
«de nos pechiez prent sa venjance:
of our sins he-takes his vengeance
«Mais qui retorne a penitance, —
But who returns to penance

«Deus est de grant misericorde, —
God is of great mercy
«legiérement o lui s'acorde.
lightly with him himself-accords
«Por nos forfaiz, si com jo crei,
For our misdeeds so as I believe
«est morz li maistre de la lei:
is dead the master of the law
«N'erion digne, ço espeir,
Not-we-were worthy that I-hope
«de tal pastor sor nos aveir;
of such pastor over us to-have
«par la nostre grant felonie,
by the our great felony
«li a Deus abregié sa vie,
to-him has God shortened his life
«mais ne nos a issi guerpiz
but not us he-has thus forsaken
«que n'aion rains de sa raïz.
that not-we-have branches of his root
«De ses deciples sont remés
Of his disciples there-are remained
«o trei o quatre o cinc o sés;
or three or four or five or six
«après la mort Amphiaras
after the death (of-)Amphiaraus
«nos est remés Thiodamas,
to-us is remained Thiodamas
«que li sainz hon aprist d'enfance:
whom the holy man taught from-childhood

«De lui poon aveir fiance
Of him we-can have trust
«que bien restorera son maistre,
that well he-will-restore his master
«se il a la croce et le scètre.
if he has the crozier and the scepter
«Un autre en i a, Melampus,
An other thereof there has Melampus
«mais il a bien cent ans o plus.
but he has well hundred years or more
«D'eus dous ne puet l'on pas eslére
Of-them two not can one at-all choose
«quaus est mieudre ne li quaus pére:
which is better nor the which worse
«Mout sont sage de bones mors;
Very they-are wise of good manners
«en chascun est saus li honors.
in each is safe the honor
«Mais Melampus est ja mout fraiz,
But Melampus is already very broken
«coviendreit lui mais vivre en paiz:
it-would-behoove him more to-live in peace
«Ne porreit le fais sostenir
Not he-could the burden hold-up
«que il avreit a maintenir.»
which he would-have to maintain
Tuit en sont a une parole
All thereof are of one word
que Thiodamas ait l'estole;
that Thiodamas have the-stole

ensemble l'ont tuit agreé,
together it-have all approved
por ço qu'il est de bon aé.
for that that-he is of good age
Thiodamas s'escuse fort:
Thiodamas himself-excuses strongly
dit que il font pechié et tort,
says that they do sin and wrong
quant bacheler de son aage
when bachelor of his age
vuelent lever en tal barnage;
they-wish to-raise in such baronage
home d'aage i deivent metre,
man of-age there they-must put
sage del siécle et de la letre.
wise in-the world and in the letters
Ne vos en quier plus alongier:
Not you thereof I-seek more to-lengthen
com plus se cuide chalongier,
as more himself he-thinks to-refuse
tant en sont cil plus coveitos;
so-much thereof are those more covetous
evesque en font tot a estros.
bishop thereof they-make all at once
Li Greu par grant devotion
The Greeks with great devotion
firent icele election;
made that election
estre son gré, senz simonie,
against his will without simony

prist Thiodamas la baillie.
took Thiodamas the charge
Quant fu sacrez, toz les aüne,
When he-was consecrated all them he-gathers
comande lor treis jorz jeüne.
commands them three days fast
Al tierz jor, après hore none,
On-the third day after hour nones
ot vestu une neire gone
he-had clothed a black gown
et après sa char une haire:
and next-to his flesh a hair-shirt
procession lor rova faire.
procession them he-bade make
Li Greu par grant devotion
The Greeks with great devotion
firent cele procession:
made that procession
nuz piez et en langes vont tuit,
bare feet and in woolens go all
et il avant, qui les conduit;
and he before who them leads
al sousi viénent, forment plorent;
to-the chasm they-come greatly they-weep
a terre vont, humblement orent.
to earth they-go humbly they-pray
Ainz que fust faite l'oreison,
Before that were done the-prayer
lor fist Deus grant demostreison:
to-them made God great demonstration

tone li cieus, crolle la terre;
thunders the heaven shakes the earth
par treis feiz brait, puis clot et serre.
by three times it-brays then closes and shuts
Li Greu virent la terre close:
The Greeks saw the earth closed
mout furent lié, soz ciel n'a chose
very they-were glad under heaven not-has thing
que il plus vousissent en l'ost.
which they more would-have-wished in the-host
As herberges s'en tornent tost,
To-the lodgings themselves-thence turn soon
et o la joie que il ont
and with the joy which they have
a la cité torneier vont.
to the city to-joust go
Cil dedenz en sont fors eissu
Those within thence are out issued
et qui ainz ainz, par grant vertu:
and who first first with great strength
mout se vuelent a eus combatre
much themselves wish with them to-fight
et de Grece l'orgueil abatre.
and of Greece the-pride to-throw-down