MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN SERIES · VOLUME 54

German Tales of the Thirteenth Century

Gesammtabenteuer

German Tales of the Thirteenth Century

The Stricker, Konrad von Würzburg, and Others

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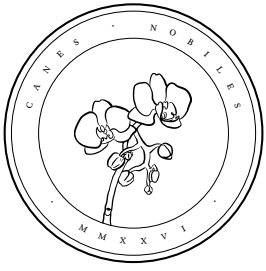
with a word-for-word interlinear English translation

preserving the original word order



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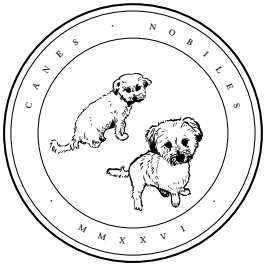

Volume 54 of the Canes Nobiles Middle High German interlinear texts

The Middle High German text follows Gesammtabenteuer: Hundert altdeutsche Erzählungen, herausgegeben von Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen, 3 vols. (Stuttgart and Tübingen: J. G. Cotta, 1850); Kleinere Gedichte von dem Stricker, herausgegeben von Karl August Hahn (Quedlinburg and Leipzig: Gottfried Basse, 1839); Kleinere Dichtungen Konrads von Würzburg I, herausgegeben von Edward Schröder (Berlin: Weidmann, 1924); Zwei altdeutsche Schwänke, herausgegeben von Edward Schröder (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1913)

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The verses are numbered as each editor numbers them, every fifth verse in the outer margin; a verse von der Hagen supplies whole in brackets and does not count stands unnumbered, a verse in angle brackets is one Schröder supplies, and ∗∗∗ marks a verse the manuscript has lost. The circumflex and the quotation marks are each editor's own, and so are the tales' German titles, save the first, which Hahn numbers and does not name; the order of the tales and the English heads are this press's.

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Der kluge Knecht

I · THE CLEVER SERVANT

A farmer's wife sends her husband to the forest before dawn and feasts the priest while he is away. Unwilling to accuse her outright, the servant turns back for forgotten mittens and hides; missing him, the master drives home early. Begging a meal, the servant tells of a wolf: a piglet as big as the one she hid, a stone as big as her cake, blood to fill her can of mead, till the wolf hid like the priest under the bench. The master makes the priest ransom himself and beats his wife. The Stricker praises cleverness that serves with tact.

Hœret waz einem manne geschach,
Hear what to-a man happened,

an dem sîn êlich wîp zebrach
on whom his wedded woman broke

beide ir triwe und ir reht.
both her faithfulness and her right.

dô het er einen gefüegen kneht,
then had he a skillful servant,

der wart des an ir innen,
who became of-it in her aware,

daz si begunde minnen
that she began to-love

heimlîchen ir pharræ̈re.
secretly her priest.

daz was dem knehte swæ̈re.
that was to-the servant grievous.

er halz den meister umbe daz,
he concealed-it the master for that,

er vorhte er wurde im gehaz,
he feared he would-become to-him hateful,

ob er im des verjæhe,
if he to-him of-it avowed,

ê er die wârheit sæhe.
before he the truth saw.

der wirt vuor ze acker und zeholz.
the host fared to field and to-wood.

daz wîp höfsch unde stolz,
the woman courtly and proud,

sô si in den hof sach rûmen,
when she him the court saw vacate,

sone wolde siz niht sûmen,
so would she-it not delay,

si koufte met unde wîn:
she bought mead and wine:

swaz guoter spîse mohte sîn,
whatever good food might be,

der briet si vil unde sôt.
of-that roasted she much and boiled.

sô si dem phaffen denne enbôt,
when she to-the priest then sent-word,

daz der wirt was entwichen,
that the host was gone-away,

sô kom er dar geslichen,
so came he thither slunk,

als ein minne diep von rehte sol.
as a love thief by right shall.

so si denne gâzen harte wol,
when they then had-eaten very well,

so begundens an ein bette gân
so began-they to a bed to-go

und begunden dâ kurzwîle hân.
and began there pastime to-have.

alsô vertriben si mangen tak.
thus spent they many day.

ie nahtes sô der wirt lak
ever by-night when the host lay

bî dem wîbe unde slief,
by the woman and slept,

sô phlac si daz sin ane rief,
so was-wont she that she-him on called,

unz er sîn slâfen muose lân:
until he his sleeping must leave:

sie hiez in balde ûf stân
she bade him quickly up stand

und hiez in hin ze holze varn.
and bade him hence to wood fare.

si sprach „wilt du die vart sparn,
she spoke „(if)-wilt thou the journey spare,

unz uns diu naht gerûmet,
until for-us the night clears,

sô hâst du dich versûmet:
so hast thou thyself neglected:

die tage sint zemâzen lanc,
the days are in-measure long,

daz nim in dînen gedanc
that take into thy thought

und var enwek balde.
and fare away quickly.

ez ist verre hinze walde,
it is far hence-to forest,

ouch sint diu rinder harte laz:
also are the oxen very slack:

du solt dich vrüen deste baz.“
thou shalt thyself early-rise the better.“

„dêswâr“ gedâhte der kneht,
„truly“ thought the servant,

„ez wære billich unde reht,
„it would-be fair and right,

west mîn meister iwern muot,
(if)-knew my master your mind,

waz ir untriwen uns tuot.
what you of-faithlessness to-us does.

dêswâr mag ichz gefüegen,
truly (if)-may I-it bring-about,

ich wil iuch schiere rüegen
I will you quickly accuse

sô rehte mit der wârheit,
so rightly with the truth,

daz ez iu wirt ein herzeleit."
that it to-you becomes a heart's-sorrow."

dô si zuo dem fiwer quâmen
when they to the fire came

und ir gwant an sich genâmen,
and their clothing on themselves took,

dô swuor der kneht dâ vür,
then swore the servant there before,

ern kœme tâlanc vür die tür,
he-not came today before the door,

ern wær vil wol enbizzen ê;
he-unless were very well breakfasted first;

im tæte der hunger sô wê,
to-him did the hunger so woe,

daz er enbîzen solde,
that he breakfast should,

ê er inder varn wolde.
before he anywhere fare would.

daz was der vrowen ungemach.
that was to-the lady displeasing.

iedoch dô si den ernst ersach,
yet when she the earnest saw,

dô brâht si einen kæs und brôt.
then brought she a cheese and bread.

si sprach „nu iz den grimmen tôt.
she spoke „now eat the grim death.

dune tuost ez durch den hunger niht:
thou dost it for the hunger not:

maht du daz werk gesûmen iht,
(if)-mayst thou the work delay at-all,

des bistu alle zît bereit
for-that art-thou all time ready

durch dîne grôze schalkeit.“
for thy great roguery.“

si âzen als si wolden
they ate as they would

und fuoren als si solden.
and fared as they should.

do si verre quâmen an die vart,
when they far came on the way,

„meister, nemt disen gart“
„master, take this goad“

sprach der kneht wider in,
spoke the servant to him,

„unde vart ein wîle hin.
„and fare a while hence.

ich muoz hin widere gân,
I must hence back go,

ich hân dâ heime verlân
I have there at-home left

mîne fiustelinge und mînen huot.“
my mittens and my hat.“

des wart der meister ungemuot.
of-that became the master ill-spirited.

Doch sprach er „nu louf balde“
Yet spoke he „now run quickly“

und vuor er hin zewalde.
and fared he hence to-forest.

daz was dem knehte harte liep.
that was to-the servant very dear.

er verstal sich tougen als ein diep
he stole himself secretly as a thief

hin in daz hûs an einen gmach,
hence into the house into a chamber,

dâ man in hôrte noch ensach.
where one him heard nor saw.

sîn vrowe diu was vil gemeit;
his lady she was very joyful;

si greif an ir gewonheit
she grasped to her custom

und bereite vil guot spîse.
and prepared very good food.

dô wânde diu unwîse,
then weened the unwise-one,

ez wære harte wol verholn
it were very well concealed

und alder werlde vor verstoln,
and all-the world from stolen,

dâ si sich selben mit betrouk.
where she herself self with deceived.

ein schœne varch daz dennoch souk,
a fair piglet that still sucked,

daz fult si unde brietez wol:
that stuffed she and roasted-it well:

ein kannen guotes metes vol,
a can of-good mead full,

die holt si dâ sin veile vant:
it fetched she where she-it for-sale found:

dar zuo buoch si zehant
there to baked she at-once

ein vochenz wîz als ein snê
a cake white as a snow

und sande aber alsam ê
and sent again just-as before

heimlîchen nâch dem phaffen.
secretly after the priest.

dochn mohtes niht geschaffen,
yet might-she not bring-about,

daz si die spîse bereitte,
that she the food prepared,

unz si sô lange gebeitte,
until she so long waited,

dos zetische wârn gesezzen,
when-they at-table were sat,

ê si begunden ezzen,
before they began to-eat,

daz der wirt hin wider heim quam.
that the host hence back home came.

dô man dâ sîn kunft vernam,
when one there his coming heard,

dô wânde der pharrære,
then weened the priest,

daz ez der kneht wære:
that it the servant were:

dâ von erkômen sie niht.
there from were-frightened they not.

durch die niuwen geschiht,
for the new event,

daz der kneht dâ heime beleip
that the servant there at-home remained

und daz der meister selbe treip
and that the master self drove

sîniu rinder von dem walde,
his oxen from the forest,

er lief zuo der tür balde
he ran to the door quickly

und stiez dar an mit grimme.
and pushed there on with fury.

dô schuof des wirtes stimme
then caused the host's voice

und ouch der zornklîche stôz,
and also the wrathful push,

daz si bi einander verdrôz,
that them by each-other irked,

beide den phaffen und daz wîp.
both the priest and the woman.

„vrowe, hilf daz ich den lîp
„lady, help that I the body

behalte“ sprach der phaffe.
keep“ spoke the priest.

„ich wirde ein rehter affe,
„I become a right ape,

begrîfet mich der wirt hie.
(if)-seizes me the host here.

ichn gwan sô grôze angest nie:
I won so great fear never:

ich hœre wol, im ist zorn:
I hear well, to-him is anger:

ich wæn ich hân den lîp verlorn.“
I ween I have the body lost.“

do gewan si manigen gedanc
then won she many thought

und hiez in under eine banc
and bade him under a bench

in einen winkel ligen gân.
into a corner lie go.

daz si dâ gâz solden hân,
what they there eaten should have,

daz barc si allez von dem wege.
that hid she all from the way.

daz nam der kneht in sîne phlege,
that took the servant into his care,

daz er wol sach, war siz bark,
that he well saw, where she-it hid,

er was der vrouwen ze kark.
he was for-the lady too cunning.

do den wirt niemen in liez,
when the host no-one in let,

mit grimme er aber an stiez
with fury he again on pushed

und begunde dez wîp schelten.
and began the woman to-scold.

noch balder denne zelten
yet quicker than ambling

lief si dô hin zuo der tür.
ran she then hence to the door.

si sprach „ob ich den lîp verlür,
she spoke „if I the body lost,

ichn mohte niht ê her komen.
I might not sooner hither come.

ich het ein werk in dhant genomen,
I had a work in-the hand taken,

dazn mohte ich drûz gewerfen niht.
that might I there-out throw not.

sag an, wirret dir iht,
say on, troubles to-thee anything,

daz du sô vruo komen bist?
that thou so early come art?

waz meinet, daz dir zorn ist?“
what means-it, that to-thee anger is?“

unze diu rede wart vernomen,
until the speech was heard,

dô was der kneht hin umbe komen
then was the servant hence around come

und began zem tor in gên,
and began to-the gate in to-go,

dâ er si ensamt sach stên.
where he them together saw stand.

Dô sprach der meister wider in
Then spoke the master to him

„welch tîvel het dich hiute hin,
„which devil held thee today hence,

daz du niht kœme hin wider?
that thou not camest hence back?

du leist daz werk vaste nider.“
thou layest the work fast down.“

dô mahte er ein mære
then made he a tale

und sagte daz er wære
and said that he were

vil wundern unmüezec sît.
very wondrously busy since.

dô lie der meister den strît.
then let-go the master the quarrel.

er was biderbe, der kneht;
he was worthy, the servant;

dâ von was des meisters reht,
there from was the master's right,

daz er einen kleinen zorn
that he a small anger

vil schiere hæte verkorn.
very quickly had forgiven.

„vart enwek“ sprach daz wîp,
„fare away“ spoke the woman,

„und enspart rinder noch den lîp
„and not-spare oxen nor the body

und bringet holzes genuok,
and bring of-wood enough,

daz ir hinze sumere den phluok
that you toward summer the plow

niht ensûmet durch die holzvart.
not neglect for the wood-journey.

ir habt iuch übele bewart,
you have yourselves ill guarded,

daz ir iuch alsô sûmen solt;
that you yourselves so delay should;

unz ir zwei fuoder noch geholt,
until you two loads yet fetched,

sô ist iz weizgot vinster naht.
so is it God-knows dark night.

dâ von gâhet über maht:
there from hasten beyond might:

ir tuot uns anders grôzen schaden.“
you do us otherwise great harm.“

si half den wagen selbe entladen.
she helped the wagon self unload.

si sprach „lât ot iu wesen gâch:
she spoke „let but to-you be haste:

ir habet iuch versûmet nâch.“
you have yourselves delayed nearly.“

Dô sprach der kneht dem meister zuo
Then spoke the servant the master to

„ez ist benamen noch sô fruo,
„it is truly yet so early,

daz ich zwei fuoder wol gehol.
that I two loads well fetch.

herre meister, tuot sô wol
lord master, do so well

und lât uns ein wênic ezzen.
and let us a little eat.

mich hât der hunger sô besezzen,
me has the hunger so beset,

daz ich den lîp niht kan bewarn,
that I the body not can guard,

sol ich sô hin ze holze varn,
(if)-shall I so hence to wood fare,

daz ich des ezzens enbir.
that I of-the eating do-without.

ezzet ein wênic mit mir.
eat a little with me.

swes ir dar nâch an mich gert,
whatever you there after of me desire,

des sît ir gar von mir gewert.
of-that are you wholly by me granted.

ist aber daz des niht geschiht,
(if)-is however that it not happens,

son geniezet ir mîn nimmer niht.“
so profit you of-me never anything.“

Der meister sprach „daz sî getân.
The master spoke „that be done.

wir suln entriwen ezzen gân.
we shall in-truth to-eat go.

swie lützel ich gezzen mak,
however little I eat may,

ich æze ê allen disen tak,
I would-eat rather all this day,

ê ich dich von hunger verlür.“
before I thee from hunger lost.“

dô giengen si in dâ zer tür.
then went they in there at-the door.

daz gie dem wîbe anden lîp.
that went to-the woman at-the body.

ez müet ein ieglich wîp,
it grieves an every woman,

diu einen zuoman hât,
who a lover has,

ob man in be ir begât.
if one him by her finds.

unz si die hende heten gedwagen,
until they the hands had washed,

dô het si ûf den tisch getragen
then had she on the table carried

brôt, kæse und ein tuoch.
bread, cheese and a cloth.

si tet in tougen mangen vluoch.
she did to-them secretly many curse.

Doch sprach si „ezzet vaste.“
Yet spoke she „eat fast.“

über zwô unt trîzek raste
over two and thirty miles

wærn si ir lieber beide
were they to-her dearer both

denne an ir ougen weide.
than in of-her eyes pasture.

der wirt sprach zuo dem knehte
the host spoke to the servant

„dîn vrowe diu tuot rehte
„thy lady she does rightly

hiute allen den tak sam si dich
today all the day as-if she thee

sêrre vürhte danne mich.
more fears than me.

ich weiz wol, het ich ir nuo
I know well, had I her now

ze ezzen gevoderet alsam duo,
to eat asked just-as thou,

sin wær mir nimmer sô gereht.“
she would-be to-me never so obliging.“

„entriwen, meister“ sprach der kneht,
„in-truth, master“ spoke the servant,

„ich hân nu lange den sin,
„I have now long the sense,

mit swem ich her gewesen bin,
with whomever I hither been am,

daz man mîn nie niht engalt,
that one for-me never anything paid,

wan zeiner zît: dô was der walt
except at-one time: then was the forest

mit loube wol behangen:
with leaves well hung:

dô kom ein wolf gegangen
then came a wolf going

hin under mînes meisters swîn.
hence among my master's swine.

diu schulde enwas niht elliu mîn,
the guilt was not all mine,

wan ich sîn leider niht ensach
for I it alas not saw

sô lange unz mir ein leit geschach,
so long until to-me a sorrow happened,

daz er begreif ein wêngez swîn.
that he seized a little pig.

daz was reht als daz värhelîn,
that was right as the piglet,

daz dart ûf lît gebrâten.
which over-there on lies roasted.

ichn kan des niht errâten,
I can of-it not guess,

wederz ir grœzer wære."
which-of-two-it of-them greater were."

„sich bezzernt dîniu mære"
„itself improve thy tales"

sprach der meister wider in.
spoke the master to him.

er gie vil vrœlîchen hin
he went very gladly hence

und nam daz varch dâ erz gesach.
and took the piglet where he-it saw.

der kneht aber dô sprach
the servant again then spoke

„do der wolf zuo den swînen quam
„when the wolf to the swine came

und ich ir schrîen vernam,
and I their screaming heard,

dô kom ich dar geloufen sâ.
then came I thither running at-once.

dô lâgen breite steine dâ:
then lay broad stones there:

der selben wart mir einer:
of-the same became to-me one:

der was grœzer noch kleiner,
it was greater nor smaller,

wan als diu vochenz diu dort stât.
than as the cake which over-there stands.

ich enweiz wer si gemezzen hât:
I not-know who them measured has:

ich gesach nie niht sô gelich.“
I saw never anything so alike.“

„unser herre got gesegen dich“
„our lord God bless thee“

sô sprach der meister zehant,
so spoke the master at-once,

„dîniu mære diu sint wol bewant.“
„thy tales they are well turned.“

er nam die vochenz her abe.
he took the cake hither down.

dô sprach der kündige knabe
then spoke the clever lad

„dô ich den selben stein genam,
„when I the same stone took,

ê daz der wolf von mir quam,
before that the wolf from me came,

dô warf ih'n an daz houbet,
then threw I-it at the head,

daz er wart sô betoubet,
that he was so stunned,

daz er mir vil kûme entran
that he from-me very scarcely escaped

und eine wunden gewan,
and a wound won,

diu bluote, des ich sweren wil,
which bled, of-that I swear will,

vil volliclîchen alse vil,
very fully as much,

ê daz er kœme dannen,
before that he came thence,

als des metes in der kannen,
as of-the mead in the can,

die ir dort hinden sehet stên.“
which you there behind see stand.“

do begunde der meister dar gên
then began the master thither to-go

und nam die kannen her für.
and took the can hither forth.

er sprach „entriwen ich spür
he spoke „in-truth I perceive

die sælde an dînen mæren wol,
the fortune in thy tales well,

daz ichs immer gerne hœren sol:
that I-them ever gladly hear shall:

si sint beide guot unt reht.“
they are both good and right.“

„entriwen, meister“ sprach der kneht,
„in-truth, master“ spoke the servant,

dô ih den wolf alsô traf
when I the wolf so struck

und im engienc sîn bestez saf,
and from-him went-out his best sap,

dô moht er lützel vliehen.
then might he little flee.

do begunde ich im nâch ziehen:
then began I him after to-draw:

dô slouf er in ein veste:
then slipped he into a thicket:

dâ wârn ronen nnd este
there were stumps and branches

sô vil zesamene geslagen,
so many together struck,

daz ich in mê niht mohte gejagen.
that I him more not might hunt.

dar under leit er sich nider
there under laid he himself down

und sach vil rehte her wider,
and looked very rightly hither back,

als jener phaffe iezuo siht,
as yonder priest now looks,

ern trouwet ouch genesen niht,
he trusts also to-survive not,

der dort stecket under jener bank."
who over-there sticks under yonder bench."

der meister zornlich ûf sprank
the master wrathfully up sprang

und gevie den pfaffen bî dem hâre.
and seized the priest by the hair.

er sprach „nu bin ich zewâre
he spoke „now am I truly

dîner mære an ein ende komen
of-thy tales to an end come

unde hân vil rehte vernomen,
and have very rightly heard,

wes mich dîn vrowe ûz jaget
why me thy lady out hunts

ze allen zîten ê ez taget."
at all times before it dawns."

Der phaffe wart gebunden
The priest was bound

sô sêre in kurzen stunden,
so sorely in short hours,

unz er dem wirte gehiez,
until he to-the host promised,

daz er vil kûme wâr geliez,
that he very scarcely aught left,

sînes guotes alsô vil,
of-his goods so much,

daz im wære ein kindes spil,
that to-him were a child's play,

het er daz wîp nie gesehen.
had he the woman never seen.

er muose des ze sælden jehen,
he must of-it as fortune avow,

swaz er schaden an dem guote nam,
whatever he harm in the goods took,

daz er mit dem lîbe danne quam.
that he with the body thence came.

daz wîp diu wart ouch geslagen,
the woman she was also beaten,

daz si den lîp mohte klagen
that she the body might lament

von schulden über manigen tac.
by rights over many day.

swie wol si sît des wirtes phlac,
however well she since of-the host took-care,

ern wart ir dar nâch niemer mê
he became to-her there after never more

sô rehte holt als er was ê.
so rightly devoted as he was before.

der kneht was dem meister liep,
the servant was to-the master dear,

daz er im zeigte sînen diep
that he to-him showed his thief

so gefuoge ân bœsiu mære.
so skillfully without wicked tales.

ez wære ein michel swære,
it would-be a great grief,

het er imz anders geseit.
had he to-him-it otherwise said.

der vriuntlîche kündikeit
who friendly cleverness

mit rehter fuoge kan begân,
with right skill can practice,

dern hât dar an niht missetân.
he has there in not done-wrong.

Kündikeit hât grôzen sin.
Cleverness has great sense.

er rewirbet valschen gwin,
he wins false gain,

der si mit valsche zeiget:
who it with falsehood shows:

der hât sîn lop geveiget.
he has his praise doomed.

der dâ friuntlîchen wirbet mite,
who there friendly deals with,

daz ist ein höfschlîcher site.
that is a courtly custom.

man mac mit kündikeit begân,
one may with cleverness accomplish,

daz vil höfschlîchen ist getân.
what very courtly is done.

daz merket bî dem knehte.
that mark by the servant.

het er gesprochen rehte
had he spoken straight

„der phaffe minnet iwer wîp,
„the priest loves your woman,

als tuot si sêre sînen lîp“
just-so does she sorely his body“

daz het der meister niht verswigen
that would-have the master not kept-silent

und hete sis zehant gezigen
and would-have her at-once accused

und hetes ouch lîhte geslagen.
and would-have-her also perhaps beaten.

so begunde siz dem phaffen sagen:
so would-begin she-it to-the priest to-tell:

sô schuofen lîhte ir sinne,
so would-contrive perhaps their senses,

daz der wirt ir zweier minne
that the host of-them two's love

nimmer rehte erfüere
never rightly found-out

und ze jungist wol geswüere,
and at last well swore,

der kneht hiete in betrogen
the servant had him deceived

und hete die vrowen an gelogen
and had the lady on lied

durch sînen bœsen haz,
for his wicked hatred,

und wurde im vient umbe daz.
and became to-him enemy for that.

daz was allez hin geleit
that was all hence laid

mit einer gefüegen kündikeit.
with a skillful cleverness.

desn hazze ich kündikeit niht,
for-that hate I cleverness not,

dâ si mit fuoge noch geschiht.
where it with skill yet happens.

Drî wunsche

II · THE THREE WISHES

A poor man and his wife pray day and night for riches. When the man spurns an angel's warning, insisting God has wronged him, the angel grants him three wishes. The wife claims one and wishes for the finest gown any woman ever wore. Enraged, the husband wishes it into her belly; she screams, her kinsmen threaten his life, and he spends the last wish to make her whole. Nothing is gained, and the husband dies of the mockery. The Stricker names three kinds of fools and holds that only one who does God's will is wise.

Ein man sprach ze sînem wîbe:
A man spoke to his woman:

»an unser zweier lîbe
»on of-us two bodies

tuot Got grôze ungenâde schîn
does God great disfavor shown

daz er uns sust læt arme sîn:
that he us thus lets poor be:

sol ich unz an mînen tôt
(if)-shall I until to my death

von armuot lîden sulhe nôt:
from poverty suffer such distress:

ich wolde mich selbe tœten ê;
I would myself self kill before;

mir tuot armuot sô wê,
to-me does poverty so woe,

daz ich enweiz, wie ich gebâren sol.
that I not-know, how I behave shall.

ich bin zornes und leides vol,
I am of-anger and of-sorrow full,

ichn' kan des niht versinnen mich,
I can of-that not recall myself,

daz ich mich inder wider dich
that I myself anywhere against thee

verworht habe, oder wider Got:
sinned have, or against God:

hâstu inder Gotes gebot
(if)-hast-thou anywhere God's command

zebrochen, daz solt dû mir sagen;
broken, that shalt thou to-me tell;

ich hilfe dir die buoze tragen,
I help thee the penance bear,

unz ich dich dîner schulde
until I thee from-thy guilt

bringe an Gotes hulde.«
bring into God's grace.«

Si sprach: »swaz ich begangen hân,
She spoke: »whatever I committed have,

daz ist gar mit dir getân.«
that is wholly with thee done.«

Er sprach: »sô ist mir niht bekant,
He spoke: »so is to-me not known,

war umbe uns Got habe gepfant
where for us God have stripped

êren und grôzes guotes;
of-honors and of-great goods;

Got ist sô rehtes muotes,
God is so of-righteous spirit,

gert(en) wir's, als wir solten,
(if)-desired we-it, as we should,

er wert' uns swes wir wolten:
he would-grant us whatever we would:

wir suln wachen über maht
we shall wake beyond strength

und biten in tak unde naht,
and pray him day and night,

daz er uns gebe michel guot;
that he us give great goods;

ersiht er unsern stæten muot
(if)-sees he our steadfast spirit

und die grôzen arbeit dar zuo,
and the great labor there to,

die wir beide spât unt vruo
which we both late and early

mit der bete lîden muezen,
with the prayer suffer must,

er beginnet uns sîn lîhte buezen.« —
he begins for-us it perhaps to-amend.«—

»Daz tuon ich gerne,« sprach daz wîp
»That do I gladly,« spoke the woman

»sol ich's verliesen den lîp,
»(if)-shall I-for-it lose the body,

sô tuot mir baz ein kurzer tôt,
so does to-me better a short death,

denne daz ich ein lange nôt
than that I a long distress

vor armuot muezе lîden;
from poverty must suffer;

die wil ich gerne mîden.«
that will I gladly shun.«

Sine sûmten sich niht mêre,
They tarried themselves not more,

sie bâten Got vil sêre
they prayed God very sorely

umb wer(l)tlîche rîcheit,
for worldly riches,

und liden michel arbeit
and suffered great labor

mit wachen und mit vasten,
with waking and with fasting,

sin enliezen ir lîp niht rasten
they let their body not rest

mit venie unde mit gebet,
with prostration and with prayer,

swaz ie man mit gebet(e) tet,
whatever ever one with prayer did,

des liezen sie niht under wegen;
of-that let they not under ways;

des begunden sie sô lange pflegen,
of-that began they so long to-take-care,

unz Got ir tumpheit schande
until God their folly disgraced

und in sîn[en] engel sande,
and to-them his angel sent,

der kwam, dâ er den man vant,
who came, where he the man found,

zuo dem sprach er ze hant:
to him spoke he at once:

»dun' ensolt niht biten umbe guot;
»thou shalt not pray for goods;

Got hât sô genædigen muot,
God has so gracious spirit,

soldestu guot gehabet hân,
shouldst-thou goods had have,

er hete dir rehte getân,
he would-have to-thee rightly done,

als er den andern rehte tuot,
as he to-the others rightly does,

die er læt haben michel guot.
whom he lets have great goods.

Ich bin der engel, der dîn pfliget;
I am the angel, who of-thee takes-care;

daz dir diu tumpheit an gesiget.
that thee the folly over conquers.

Des verliuse ich mîn arbeit,
Of-that lose I my labor,

daz ist mir inneklîchen leit.«
that is to-me inwardly sorrowful.«

er sprach: »daz ich niht guot hân,
he spoke: »that I not goods have,

dâ hat mir Got gewalt getân;
there has to-me God violence done;

ich wær' als wol guotes wert,
I were as well of-goods worthy,

sam alle die er guotes hât gewert;
as all whom he with-goods has granted;

gæbe er mir'z, sô sol ich ez hân;
(if)-gave he to-me-it, so shall I it have;

ir muezt genâde an mir begân,
you must mercy on me commit,

ich bit' dich immer umbe guot,
I pray thee ever for goods,

unz daz er mînen willen tuot.«
until that he my will does.«

Dô sprach der himelische bot':
Then spoke the heavenly messenger:

»sit dû dem oberisten Got
»since thou the highest God

niht gelouben wil, noch mir,
not believe wilt, nor me,

sô wil ich guotes geben dir
so will I of-goods give to-thee

noch mêre, denne ein michel teil,
yet more, than a great part,

daz dû versuochest dîn heil;
that thou triest thy luck;

wirstu danne ein armer man,
(if)-becomest-thou then a poor man,

dâ bistu selbe schuldik an.
there art-thou self guilty in.

Habe drîer wunsche gewalt;
Have of-three wishes power;

swie dîne wunsche sint gestalt,
however thy wishes are shaped,

die ersten drî die werden wâr;
the first three they become true;

soldestu leben tûsent jâr,
shouldst-thou live thousand years,

dû hâst mêre, danne vil,
thou hast more, than much,

ob daz guot mit dir wesen wil.«
if the goods with thee be will.«

Er sprach: »sô bin ich rîche.«
He spoke: »so am I rich.«

er gie vil vrôlîche
he went very gladly

hin heim se sînem wîbe,
hence home to his woman,

[er sprach:] »unser zweier lîbe
[he spoke:] »of-us two bodies

hât Got ir nôt verendet,
has God their distress ended,

er hât uns guot gesendet
he has to-us goods sent

mêr dan wir in gebeten hân,
more than we him asked have,

wir mugen in wol mit vride lân
we may him well in peace leave

und mugen wol mit vröuden leben:
and may well with joys live:

er hât drî wunsche mir gegeben,
he has three wishes to-me given,

die werdent wâr alle drî;
they become true all three;

nû rât, waz uns daz beste sî.
now counsel, what to-us the best be.

Dunket dich daz wol gewant,
(If)-Seems to-thee that well turned,

sô wil ich wünschen ze hant
so will I wish at once

vol goldes einen grôzen berk,
full of-gold a great mountain,

und dar umbe ein sô vestez werk
and there around a so firm work

von einer hôhen mûre guot,
of a high wall good,

daz uns daz vihe niht entuot;
that to-us the cattle not does;

daz wünsche ich ze einem wunsche wol.
that wish I as a wish well.

oder ich wünsch' einen schrîn vol
or I wish a shrine full

swie guoter pfenninge ich wil,
of-however good pennies I will,

der immer sî gelîch(e) vil,
which ever be equally much,

swie vil ich drûz genemen kan,
however much I out-of-it take can,

und swem ich drûz ze nemen gan:
and to-whomever I out-of-it to take grant:

daz er doch sî gelîche vol.«
that it yet be equally full.«

dô sprach daz wîp: »ich hœre wol,
then spoke the woman: »I hear well,

wir haben mêre, danne vil;
we have more, than much;

nû tuo, des ich dich biten wil,
now do, what I thee ask will,

dû solt mir einen wunsch geben,
thou shalt to-me one wish give,

und solt dâ wider niht streben,
and shalt there against not strive,

dû hâst genuok an den zwein;
thou hast enough in the two;

dû weist wol, daz ich mîniu bein
thou knowest well, that I my legs

sô vil dar nâch gebogen hân;
so much there after bent have;

ez hât Got alsô wol getân
it has God so well done

durch mîn gebete, sam durch daz dîn;
for my prayer, as for the thine;

ein wunsch ist billîch(e) mîn.«
one wish is rightly mine.«

Er sprach: »nû habe dir einen,
He spoke: »now have to-thee one,

ichn' gib' dir mê deheinen,
I give to-thee more none,

und sich, daz dû in bestatest sô,
and see, that thou it bestowest so,

daz es alliu diu werlt werde vrô.«
that of-it all the world become glad.«

»Dô wolte Got,« sprach sie ze hant
»Then would God,« spoke she at once

»hete ich daz beste gewant
»had I the best garment

ie zuo an mînem lîbe,
ever to on my body,

daz an keinem wîbe
that on any woman

ze dirre werlt ie wart gesehen.«
in this world ever was seen.«

als der wunsch was geschehen,
when the wish was happened,

dô hete sie daz gewant an.
then had she the garment on.

»wê mir wê!« sprach der man
»woe to-me woe!« spoke the man

»dû vil (un)sæligez wîp,
»thou very (un)blessed woman,

dû möhtest aller wîbe lîp
thou mightest of-all women body

vil wol zuo dir gekleidet hân,
very well to thee clothed have,

und hetest dannoch baz getân,
and wouldst-have yet better done,

wærstu ie man holt gewesen:
wert-thou ever to-man loyal been:

dîn sêle ist immer ungenesen,
thy soul is ever unsaved,

daz du nie mans vriunt gewesen bist;
that thou never of-man friend been art;

daz wolde der heilige Krist,
that would the holy Christ,

sît dû triuwen bist lære,
since thou of-faithfulness art empty,

daz ez dir in dem bûche wære,
that it to-thee in the belly were,

daz dû gewandes wurdest sat!«
that thou of-garment became sated!«

daz wart wâr an der stat,
that became true on the spot,

daz gewant was in dem wîbe
the garment was in the woman

daz hete si in dem lîbe
that had her in the body

vil nâch gezerret en zwei;
very nearly torn in two;

vil ungevuoge sie schrei,
very monstrously she cried,

wan ir was wirs, danne wê,
for to-her was worse, than woe,

sie schrei ie mê unde mê.
she cried ever more and more.

Dô man gehôrte disen schal,
When one heard this din,

die gebûren kômen über al,
the peasants came over all,

unt vrâgten, waz ir wære.
and asked, what to-her were.

dô sagete si in daz mære,
then told she to-them the tidings,

daz ez ir von ir manne geschach.
that it to-her from her man happened.

daz was ir vriunden ungemach,
that was to-her friends discomfort,

die dröuten im mit schalle,
they threatened him with din,

und sprâchen daz alle:
and spoke that all:

»lœset ir uns niht daz wîp
»(if)-release you to-us not the woman

wir nemen iu ie zuo den lîp.«
we take from-you ever to the body.«

Sie zukten ir mezzer und ir swert
They drew their knives and their swords

und drungen vaste dar wert.
and pressed fast thither toward.

Dô er wol hôrt' unde sach,
When he well heard and saw,

beide, des wîbes ungemach
both, the woman's discomfort

unde sîner vînde drô,
and of-his foes threat,

dô macht' er s' alle samt vrô,
then made he them all together glad,

er sprach: »daz wolde Got, unser trôst,
he spoke: »that would God, our comfort,

daz sie sanfte wære erlôst,
that she gently were released,

daz sie gesunt wær', als ê.«
that she sound were, as before.«

do enwart ir aber niht wê mê,
then became to-her however not woe more,

sie was ir ungenâden vrî.
she was of-her misfortunes free.

Und heten die wunsche alle drî
And had the wishes all three

ein schentlîch ende genomen,
a shameful end taken,

und wâren sie des ze ende komen,
and were they of-it to end come,

daz sie niht guotes solten hân.
that they not goods should have.

sie heten beide missetân:
they had both misdone:

doch wart dem man[ne] der schult verjehen,
yet was to-the man the guilt avowed,

dem was ouch vaste misseschehen,
to-him was also fast ill-happened,

des wart im wol vergolten,
for-that was to-him well repaid,

er wart sô vil gescholten
he was so much scolded

und wart sô gar der werlde spot,
and became so wholly of-the world mockery,

daz er unsern herren Got
that he our lord God

niht anders bat, wan umb den tôt;
not otherwise prayed, except for the death;

sîn schade was ein grôze nôt,
his harm was a great distress,

dô wart sîn unwerdikeit
then became his unworthiness

vil volliklîch ein herzen leit,
very fully a heart's sorrow,

sîn laster und sîn schande
his disgrace and his shame

vulten alle in dem lande
filled all in the land

[beide] naht unt tak ir ôren,
[*both*] *night and day their ears,*

er wart vor allen tôren
he was before all fools

mit [den] worten ungeschœnet
with [*the*] *words unspared*

und wart sô gar verhœnet,
and was so wholly mocked,

daz er vor leide verdarp
that he from sorrow perished

und durch daz leit vor leide starp.
and for the sorrow from sorrow died.

Swer sô vil guotes noch verlür,
Whoever so much of-goods yet lost,

swie grôzẹ klage er drumbe erkür,
however great lament he there-for chose,

er möht' ez volle klagen niht,
he might it fully lament not,

als uns der tôren sit(e) jiht:
as to-us the of-fools custom tells:

unrehtiu gir, unrehte bejagen,
wrong greed, wrong getting,

und nâch vluste unrehtez klagen,
and after loss wrong lamenting,

daz ist der tôren ahte.
that is the of-fools way.

die tôren sint drîer slahte:
the fools are of-three kinds:

die niht sinne hânt gewunnen,
those-who no senses have won,

din enwizzen, noch enkunnen;
they not-know, nor can;

die andern wellent wizzen niht,
the others will know not,

die sint noch vür baz ein wiht;
they are yet further better a nothing;

sô sint die dritten sinne vol,
so are the third of-senses full,

die kunnen unde wizzen wol,
they can and know well,

unt tuont daz bœste dâ bî;
and do the worst there by;

swie ez in allen kunt sî,
however it to-them all known be,

manik tôre ist des muotes,
many fool is of-the mind,

ob er vil vröude und [vil] guotes
if he much joy and [much] goods

gewinnen und behalten kan,
win and keep can,

sô dunk[e]t er sich ein wîse man.
so seems he to-himself a wise man.

Swaz vröude er hât, swie rîch er ist,
Whatever joy he has, however rich he is,

und ist der heilige Krist
and (if)-is the holy Christ

sîn vriunt niht alters eine,
his friend not all alone,

sô hilft ez allez kleine,
so helps it all little,

swaz er vriunde und guotes hât,
whatever he of-friends and of-goods has,

swenne er vriunde und guot lât,
when he friends and goods leaves,

ist im diu sêle danne ungenesen,
(if)-is to-him the soul then unsaved,

sô ist er ie ein tôr' gewesen.
so is he ever a fool been.

Swer die sêle niht ernert,
Whoever the soul not saves,

der ist ein tôre, swie er vert.
he is a fool, however he fares.

Ezn' hât nie man wîsen muot,
It has never man wise spirit,

wan, der Gotes willen tuot.
except, who God's will does.

Der begrabene êman

III · THE BURIED HUSBAND

A husband swears to believe whatever his wife tells him. She calls noon night, and when he doubts her she threatens to leave until he kneels for pardon. After that he calls a cold bath warm and takes back his reproach when she comes from the barn and the priest she loves. At last she tells him he is dead; he lies down, confesses, takes the sacrament, and is carried to the grave, thinking it another test. When he cries out at the burial, the priest calls it the devil, and he is buried alive for making a foolish woman his master.

Ein man sprach wider sîn wîp:
A man spoke to his woman:

»dû bist mir liep alsô der lîp,
»thou art to-me dear as the life,

z'wâre, wærest dû mir
in-truth, wert thou to-me

sô rehte holt, als ich dir,
so rightly loyal, as I to-thee,

daz næm' ich vür der Kriechen golt;
that would-take I before the of-Greeks gold;

dun enmöhtest mir nimmer sô holt
thou mightest to-me never so loyal

werden, als ich dir bin;
become, as I to-thee am;

mir ist daz herze und der sin
to-me is the heart and the sense

sô rehte sêre an dich geslagen,
so right sorely on thee struck,

daz ich dir nimmer kan gesagen.«
that I to-thee never can tell.«

Si sprach: »daz lâ werden schîn;
She spoke: »that let become shown;

ich tet durch den willen dîn,
I did for the will thy,

swes dû mich ie gebæte,
whatever thou me ever askedst,

und bin dran immer stæte.
and am in-it ever steadfast.

Tuo ein dink, des ich dich bit’;
Do one thing, which I thee ask;

dêswâr, dâ wirbest dû mit,
truly, there obtainest thou with,

ez si wênik oder vil,
it be little or much,

daz ich ez immer allez tuon wil,
that I it ever all do will,

swes dû gesinnest ane mich,
whatever thou desirest of me,

und wil des inne bringen dich,
and will of-it inside bring thee,

daz dû noch lieber bist mir
that thou yet dearer art to-me

tûsent stunt, dan ich dir.«
thousand times, than I to-thee.«

Er sprach: »nû sage, waz ist daz?
He spoke: »now say, what is that?

ich tuon ez michel vür baz,
I do it much further better,

danne dû’s immer gegerest;
than thou-it ever desirest;

dar umbe daz dû mich des gewerest,
there for that thou me of-it grantest,

daz du alsô sêre minnest mich
that thou so sorely lovest me

mit triuwen immer, als ich dich.«
with faithfulness ever, as I thee.«

Si sprach: »des geloube mir,
She spoke: »of-that believe me,

mîn trût, swaz ich gesage dir,
my darling, whatever I say to-thee,

ez muet ein ietslîch wîp,
it vexes an every woman,

und gêt ir rehte an den lîp,
and goes to-her right to the life,

swaz si gesaget ir man,
whatever she says to-her man,

daz er des niht gelouben kan,
that he of-it not believe can,

uns entuot kein dink sô wê.«
to-us does no thing so woe.«

er sprach: »enist des niht mê,
he spoke: »is of-it nothing more,

des dû mich bitest?« si sprach: »nein.«
of-what thou me askest?« she spoke: »no.«

er sprach: »daz wær' ein mort und [ein] mein,
he spoke: »that would-be a murder and [a] perjury,

(en)wær' ich dir des vil bereit;
(not-)were I to-thee of-it very ready;

ich wil dir sweren einen eit,
I will to-thee swear an oath,

durch daz dû mir sô wol behagest,
for that thou to-me so well pleasest,

swaz dû (immer) mir gesagest,
whatever thou (ever) to-me sayest,

daz ich des gelouben wil;
that I it believe will;

dîner triuwen ist sô vil,
of-thy faithfulness is so much,

sô dû mich minnest, als ich dich,
since thou me lovest, as I thee,

daz dû nimmer getriugest mich.«
that thou never deceivest me.«

Als er der rede volle vuor,
When he of-the speech fully went,

daz er ir den eit geswuor,
that he to-her the oath swore,

dô gedâhte si dar an:
then thought she there on:

»wie versuoch' ich, ob mîn man
»how try I, whether my man

gelouben welle daz ich sage?«
believe will what I say?«

Daz was an einem mitten tage,
That was on a mid day,

si sprach: »geselle, ez ist naht,
she spoke: »companion, it is night,

ich hân uns z'ezzen gemaht,
I have for-us to-eat made,

wir sullen ezzen und slâfen gân.«
we shall eat and to-sleep go.«

er sprach: »wie hâstu sô getan?
he spoke: »how hast-thou so done?

Ez ist noch kûm' mitter tak.« —
It is yet scarcely mid day.«—

»daz ich dîn ie sô wol gepflak,«
»that I of-thee ever so well took-care,«

sprach daz wîp »daz ist mir leit.
spoke the woman »that is to-me sorrowful.

nû hœre ich die wârheit,
now hear I the truth,

daz der manne triuwe bœse ist,
that the men's faithfulness wicked is,

sit dû mein eit worden bist
since thou false oath become art

in sô kurzer wîle wider mich;
in so short while toward me;

ich wolt' und hân versuochet dich,
I would and have tried thee,

ob dîn triuwe und dîn eit
whether thy faithfulness and thy oath

heten deheine stætikeit:
had any steadfastness:

nû sich ich unde hœre wol,
now see I and hear well,

daz ich dich immer haben sol
that I thee ever have shall

vür ein triuwelôsez vaz.
as a faithless vessel.

waz hete dir geworren daz,
what would-have to-thee troubled that,

doch ich dir sagte, ez wær' naht,
though I to-thee said, it were night,

hetestu dich wârhaft gemaht,
hadst-thou thyself truthful made,

und hetest gesprochen: ›ez ist wâr?‹
and hadst spoken: ›it is true?‹

ich hân mê danne ein halp jâr
I have more than a half year

[noch] baz getriutet dînen lîp,
[*yet*] *better cherished thy body,*

dannoch ie dehein wîp
than-yet ever any woman

ir manne mê getæte:
to-her man more did:

sô ist dîn triuwe unstæte,
so is thy faithfulness unsteadfast,

des scheidet sich (diu) vriuntschaft nû.
for-that parts itself (the) friendship now.

ich sach ez alsô wol, als dû,
I saw it as well, as thou,

daz ez kûm mitte(r) tak ist,
that it scarcely mid day is,

wan, daz ich ez tete durch den list,
except, that I it did for the craft,

daz ich dich dâ mit ervuor.«
that I thee there with tested.«

vil sêre si bî ir lîbe swuor,
very sorely she by her life swore,

(er) gewünne ir hulde nimmermê.
(he) would-win her favor nevermore.

diu drô diu tet im alsô wê,
the threat it did to-him so woe,

daz er vil kûme genas,
that he very scarcely survived,

wan im daz wîp sô liep was.
for to-him the woman so dear was.

Daz wort er trûriklîchen sprach:
The word he sorrowfully spoke:

»o wê, daz ez mir ie geschach,
»o woe, that it to-me ever happened,

daz leit unde daz unheil!
the sorrow and the misfortune!

dâ von lîde ich grôzen meil
there from suffer I great stain

an allem mînem lîbe,
on all my body,

daz ich mînem wîbe
that I my woman

niht gevolget hân sô vil
not followed have so much

an irem tugenthaften spil,
in her virtuous game,

daz ist mir leit vil sêre,
that is to-me sorrowful very sorely,

unt klag' ez vrouwen Ere,
and lament it to-lady Honor,

und muoz ouch [daz] Got erbarmen;
and must also [that] God pity;

ez was mir werlt armen
it was to-me world poor-one

vergezzen, sam mir mîn lîp.«
forgotten, as to-me my life.«

dô kniete er nider vür daz wîp,
then knelt he down before the woman,

[er sprach:] »liebe vrouwe suezze,
[he spoke:] »dear lady sweet,

gunne mir, daz ich ez buezze,
grant to-me, that I it atone,

und daz ich ez immer mê getuo;
and that I it ever more do;

ich wil dir geloben dar zuo,
I will to-thee vow there to,

geschæh' ez mir iht mê,
(if)-happened it to-me anything more,

daz ez immer unversuenet stê.«
that it ever unatoned stand.«

Si sprach: »sô wil ich ez varn lân;
She spoke: »so will I it go let;

dû solt daz vil gewis hân,
thou shalt that very certain have,

ez muet mich nû sô sêre,
it vexes me now so sorely,

getuostu'z immer mêre,
(if)-dost-thou-it ever more,

sô ist diu vriuntschaft dâ hin,
so is the friendship there hence,

unt kumest nimmer, dâ ich bin.«
and comest never, where I am.«

Dô was er vrô, daz si den zorn
Then was he glad, that she the anger

sô schiere hete verlorn.
so quickly had lost.

Dar nâch in zwelf tagen
There after in twelve days

begunde si im aber sagen
began she to-him again to-tell

ein gelogen mære, umbe daz,
a lied tale, about that,

daz si in versuochen wolte baz;
that she him try would better;

si dûhte an disem mære,
she seemed-to-herself in this tale,

daz si sîn meister wære,
that she his master were,

des wart si stolz unde balt:
of-that became she proud and bold:

si macht' ein vol bat daz was kalt,
she made a full bath that was cold,

und sprach: »gank in, ez ist warm.«
and spoke: »go in, it is warm.«

dô was er des muotes sô arm,
then was he of-the spirit so poor,

daz er dâ wider niht ensprach;
that he there against nothing spoke;

wan er sich aber des versach,
for he himself again of-it expected,

daz er ir hulde verlür;
that he her favor lost;

swie sere er in dem bade vrür,
however sorely he in the bath froze,

er sprach: »ez ist warm genuok.«
he spoke: »it is warm enough.«

wan er daz sô wol vertruok,
since he that so well endured,

des wart ir herze vröuden vol,
of-that became her heart of-joys full,

sît bôt si'z im alsô wol,
afterward offered she-it to-him as well,

sam si dâ vor ê getæte,
as she there before before did,

und beleip dar an sô stæte,
and remained there in so steadfast,

daz si in ir machte sô holt,
that she him to-her made so loyal,

hete si gesprochen: »diu erde ist golt,«
had she spoken: »the earth is gold,«

er hete gesprochen: »ez ist wâr.«
he would-have spoken: »it is true.«

daz tet si ouch wol ouch wol ein halp jâr.
that did she also well also well a half year.

Dô was ein pfaffe in der stat,
Then was a priest in the town,

der si des lîbes dikke bat,
who her for-the body often asked,

swen er'z gevuegen kunde;
whenever he-it arrange could;

daz treip er an die stunde,
that drove he to the hour,

daz si in minnen began.
that she him to-love began.

eines tages sach si ir man
one day saw her her man

von im ûz ir stadel gân,
from him out-of her barn go,

er sprach: »daz ist missetân,
he spoke: »that is misdone,

daz dû dem pfaffen [sô] heimlîch bist.«
that thou to-the priest [so] intimate art.«

si sprach: »dû liugest, wizze Krist!
she spoke: »thou liest, know-it Christ!

Ez muet aber dînen sin,
It vexes however thy sense,

daz ich dir sô holt bin;
that I to-thee so loyal am;

ezn' wart nie wîp, geloube mir,
it became never woman, believe me,

ir manne holder, danne ich dir;
to-her man more-loyal, than I to-thee;

wil dû mir des gelouben niht,
(if)-wilt thou me of-it believe not,

und sprichest dû dâ wider iht,
and (if)-speakest thou there against anything,

ich tuon dir sulhen zorn schîn,
I do to-thee such anger shown,

daz wir gescheiden immer sîn.
that we parted ever be.

Swaz ich gespriche und begân,
Whatever I speak and commit,

wil dû daz niht vür guot hân,
(if)-wilt thou that not for good have,

daz soltu balde sagen mir,
that shalt-thou quickly tell to-me,

sô wil ich mich scheiden von dir.«
so will I myself part from thee.«

Er sprach: »ez ist allez guot,
He spoke: »it is all good,

swaz dîn reiner lîp getuot;
whatever thy pure body does;

dîniu wort [diu] sint alle wâr;
thy words [they] are all true;

soldestu leben tûsend jâr,
shouldst-thou live thousand years,

ich gezîhe dich nihtes mê.«
I accuse thee of-nothing more.«

dô tet si im aber baz, dan ê,
then did she to-him again better, than before,

si bôt ez im wol und dannoch baz;
she offered it to-him well and yet better;

sô lange bezzerte si daz,
so long bettered she that,

unz si in dar zuo brâhte,
until she him there to brought,

daz er ze allen zîten dâhte:
that he at all times thought:

»ich hân daz aller beste wîp,
»I have the of-all best woman,

diu ie gewan wîbes lîp.«
who ever won woman's body.«

Doch wart ez sô geschaffen,
Yet was it so shaped,

daz si den selben pfaffen
that she the same priest

sô sere minnen began,
so sorely to-love began,

daz ir erleidet' ir man,
that to-her grew-loathsome her man,

daz tet si schîn, ich sag' iu, wie.
that made she shown, I tell you, how.

eins tages do er von akker gie,
one day when he from field went,

do begunde si in ane sehen,
then began she him at to-look,

si sprach: »waz ist dir geschehen?
she spoke: »what is to-thee happened?

Daz ich mîn leben ie gewan!« —
That I my life ever won!«—

»waz meinstu, liebe?« sprach der man
»what meanest-thou, dear?« spoke the man

si sprach: »dâ bistu garwe
she spoke: »there art-thou wholly

tôt an dîner varwe;
dead in thy color;

dir wil des tôdes smerze
to-thee will the death's pain

ie zuo gên an dîn herze;
ever to go to thy heart;

da enist leider niht wider.
there is alas nothing against.

gank an dîn bette und lege dich nider.
go to thy bed and lay thee down.

Wê mir, dû wilt sterben!
Woe to-me, thou wilt die!

lâ mich dir den pfaffen erwerben,
let me for-thee the priest obtain,

daz er dir die sêle bewar.«
that he to-thee the soul guard.«

dô brâhte si den pfaffen dar,
then brought she the priest thither,

und hiez in sprechen sîn bîhte.
and bade him speak his confession.

des erbat si in vil lîhte,
of-that persuaded she him very easily,

er wolt' an allen dingen
he would in all things

ir willen vollen bringen.
her will full bring.

Des twank in zweier hande nôt,
Of-that compelled him of-two kinds distress,

daz si('z) im sô wol erbôt,
that she(-it) to-him so well offered,

und ouch daz nie dehein man
and also that never any man

ein wîp sô rehte liep gewan.
a woman so rightly dear won.

Dô si sîn bîhte vernâmen,
When they his confession heard,

und er Gotes lîchamen
and he God's body

zuo dem tôde (dâ) genam,
for the death (there) took,

und der pfaffe danne kwam,
and the priest then came,

dô gab sim an sîne hant
then gave she-him into his hand

ein kerze, diu was schôn enbrant,
a candle, which was finely kindled,

unt tet im diu ougen zuo.
and did to-him the eyes shut.

si sprach: »lieber man, nû tuo,
she spoke: »dear man, now do,

sam die ouch sint in dirre nôt;
as those also are in this distress;

wan leider mir, dû bist tôt;
for alas to-me, thou art dead;

dun' ensolt' dich nimmer mê geregen.«
thou shalt thyself never more stir.«

Si begunden in ûf die bâre legen,
They began him onto the bier to-lay,

die brâhte si vil schiere dar.
it brought she very quickly thither.

dô kômen ir gebûren gar,
then came her neighbors wholly,

die naht man im wachte,
the night one for-him watched,

unz sich der tak ûf machte,
until itself the day up made,

zuo der kirchen man in truok.
to the church one him bore.

dô roufte si sich unde sluok,
then tore she herself and struck,

si gienk im weinunde mite
she went him weeping with

und hete klegelîche site.
and had lamentable manners.

Die sêle messe man im sank;
The soul mass one for-him sang;

die wîle idoch vil unlank
the while however very unlong

dar nâch truok man in ze grabe.
there after bore one him to grave.

si kômen sîn beide gerne abe,
they came of-him both gladly off,

daz wîp und ouch der pfaffe:
the woman and also the priest:

dannoch wânt' der affe,
yet weened the ape,

si versuocht' in aber alsô
she tried him again so

und wolt' in dar nâch machen vrô,
and would him there after make glad,

daz wolt' er vil gewis hân.
that would he very certain have.

sô lange het er den wân,
so long had he the weening,

unz man in in daz grap huop
until one him into the grave raised

und in vil balde begruop.
and him very quickly buried.

Do ez im an die rehten nôt gie,
When it to-him to the right distress went,

dô rief er an alle die,
then cried he to all those,

die da umb daz grap wâren,
who there around the grave were,

und begunde gebâren,
and began to-behave,

als, den dâ twinget der tôt.
as-one, whom there constrains the death.

der pfaffe in allen dô gebôt,
the priest to-them all then commanded,

daz si einen segen vür sich tæten
that they a blessing before themselves made

und Got vil sêre bæten,
and God very sorely prayed,

daz er den tiuvel dâ vertribe,
that he the devil there drove-out,

daz er niht lenger dâ belibe
that he not longer there remained

bî dem armen lîchamen.
by the poor body.

si sprach: »daz werde wâr.« — »amen!«
she spoke: »that become true.«— »amen!«

sprach dô man unde wîp.
spoke then man and woman.

alsô verlôs er sînen lîp,
so lost he his life,

swaz er gerief und geschrei,
whatever he called and cried,

dô sprâchen doch disiu zwei,
then spoke yet these two,

diu dâ westen diu mære,
who there knew the tidings,

daz ez der tiuvel wære,
that it the devil were,

und liezen in niht ûz graben.
and let him not out dig.

den schaden muost' er des haben,
the harm must he of-it have,

daz er sazt' ein tumbez wîp
that he set a foolish woman

ze meister über sînen lîp.
as master over his body.

Daz heiȥe îsen

IV · THE HOT IRON

A wife asks her husband to prove his fidelity by carrying the red-hot iron. He hides a chip of wood in his sleeve, carries the iron unharmed, and then demands that she take the same ordeal. She begs off with arguments: women are weak, God made them so, and he should excuse her one lover, then two, then three, offering money for the indulgence. He forgives her lovers and still makes her carry the iron, and her hand is burned so badly that her guilt is shown. He declares her unwelcome and promises to add to her disgrace.

Ein wîp sprach zuo ir man:
A woman spoke to her man:

»daȥ ich dîn künde ie gewan,
»that I of-thee acquaintance ever won,

des wil ich immer wesen vrô;
of-that will I ever be glad;

Got hât dich gezieret sô
God has thee adorned so

an schœne und an vrümikeit,
in beauty and in prowess,

und hât sô gar an dich geleit,
and has so wholly on thee laid,

swaȥ einem manne wol gezimt,
whatever to-a man well befits,

daȥ mir diu sorge den lîp benimt,
that from-me the care the life takes,

die ich dîn vor andern wîben han;
which I for-thee before other women have;

wær' dîn muot nû sô getân,
were thy mind now so made,

daȥ dû mich des gewis tætest,
that thou me of-it certain madest,

daz dû niht ander wîp hætest,
that thou no other woman hadst,

daz wolt' ich immer mêre
that would I ever more

gedienen alsô sêre,
repay so sorely,

daz dû des selben jæhest,
that thou of-the same avowedst,

sô dû die wârheit sæhest,
when thou the truth sawest,

daz nie kein wîp iren man
that never any woman her man

von herzen alsô liep gewan.«
from heart so dear won.«

Er sprach: »vil liebiu minne mîn,
He spoke: »very dear love my,

ichn' ger keines wîbes, den dîn,
I desire any woman, than thine,

dû bist mir lieber, danne liep;
thou art to-me dearer, than dear;

ich sî ein ungenæmer diep,
I be an unpleasing thief,

hân ich deheine, wan dich;
(if)-have I any, except thee;

sô dir Got, niht enzîhe mich,
so-help thee God, not accuse me,

daz ich solhez iht tuo,
that I such anything do,

dâ bistu mir ze liebe zuo;
there art-thou to-me too dear to;

ich bin dir gerne bereit
I am to-thee gladly ready

aller der gewisheit,
for-all the certainty,

der dû an mich geruochest,
which thou of me deignest,

daz dû wol versuochest,
that thou well triest,

daz ich dînen lieben lîp
that I thy dear body

minnen wil vür alliu wîp.«
love will before all women.«

Si sprach: »unde tuostu daz,
She spoke: »and (if)-dost-thou that,

sô wart nie kein man baz
so was never any man better

gehandelt von sî[ne]m wîbe,
treated by his woman,

dan[ne] dû von mînem lîbe
than thou by my body

gehandelt immer werden muost,
treated ever be must,

ob dû mir ein gerihte tuost,
if thou to-me an ordeal doest,

des ich dich wil bewîsen:
which I thee will show:

trag mir daz heize îsen,
carry for-me the hot iron,

als liep ich dir ze vriunde sî,
as dear I to-thee as friend be,

dâ wil ich rehte sehen bî,
there will I rightly see by,

welch liebe dû zuo mir hâst,
what love thou toward me hast,

und ob dû âne schulde stâst,
and whether thou without guilt standest,

des wil ich von dir niht enbern;
of-that will I from thee not forgo;

und wilt dû mich es niht gewern,
and (if)-wilt thou me of-it not grant,

so hâstu immer mînen haz,
so hast-thou ever my hatred,

sô læstu ez niht, wan umbe daz,
so leavest-thou it not, except for that,

daz dû minnest ander wîp
that thou lovest other women

und enahtest niht ûf mînen lîp.«
and heedest not upon my body.«

Er sprach: »diu rede ist âne nôt,
He spoke: »the speech is without need,

mir wær' lieber der bitter tôt,
to-me were dearer the bitter death,

danne ich erwurbe dînen haz;
than I earned thy hatred;

ich tuon vil gerne allez daz,
I do very gladly all that,

dâmit ich dir gedienen mak;
there-with I to-thee serve may;

ichn' wil dir weder naht, noch tak
I will to-thee neither night, nor day

dînes willen niht versagen;
thy will not refuse;

ich wil daz îsen iezuo tragen
I will the iron at-once carry

darumbe, daz Got bescheine,
there-for, that God show,

daz dich alters eine
that thee all alone

mit triuwen minnet mîn lîp,
with faithfulness loves my body,

und anders an dehein wîp
and otherwise on any woman

nie gewan keinen muot.«
never had any mind.«

daz îsen wart zehant gegluot,
the iron was at-once heated,

zwên' steine wâren dâ bereit,
two stones were there ready,

dâ wart daz îsen ûf geleit,
there was the iron upon laid,

dâ ez nâch sînem rehte lak.
where it after its right lay.

si sprach: »hebe ûf unt trak,
she spoke: »lift up and carry,

daz ich dîne triuwe ervar.«
that I thy faithfulness learn.«

der man neigte sich dar:
the man bent himself thither:

dô het er einen gevuegen spân
then had he a fitting chip

vor in den ermel getân,
before into the sleeve put,

den liez er vallen in die hant,
it let he fall into the hand,

daz es daz wîp niht bevant,
that it the woman not perceived,

darûf nam er daz îsen:
there-upon took he the iron:

er sprach: »nû sol Got wîsen,
he spoke: »now shall God show,

daz dir mîn lîp, noch mîn gedank
that to-thee my body, nor my thought

noch nie getet keinen wank
yet never did any swerve

und dir was ie mit triuwen mit.«
and to-thee was ever with faithfulness with.«

er truog ez mêr dan sehse schrit;
he carried it more than six steps;

dô daz schiere was getân,
when that quickly was done,

dô bark er aber sînen spân
then bid he again his chip

unde lie si die hant sehen.
and let her the hand see.

si sprach: »ich wil dir immer jehen,
she spoke: »I will to-thee ever avow,

daz dû dich wol bewart hâst
that thou thyself well guarded hast

und alles valsches âne stâst,
and of-all falseness without standest,

diu hant ist schœne, als ein golt,
the hand is fair, as a gold,

ich wil dir immer wesen holt.«
I will to-thee ever be loyal.«

Er sprach: »des lône dir Got;
He spoke: »for-that reward thee God;

nû ist mîn bet' und mîn gebot,
now is my request and my command,

daz ouch dû mir daz îsen tragest;
that also thou for-me the iron carry;

ichn' state niht, daz dû mir'z versagest,
I allow not, that thou to-me-it refusest,

ez muoz hie zehant geschên,
it must here at-once happen,

ich wil ouch dîne triuwe sehen.«
I will also thy faithfulness see.«

Si sprach: »trût geselle mîn,
She spoke: »darling companion my,

darzuo wil ich dir ze liep sîn,
thereto will I to-thee too dear be,

daz ez immer kœm' in dînen gedank,
that it ever came into thy thought,

daz ich dir [sô] getæte keinen wank;
that I to-thee [so] did any swerve;

dû weist doch wol, wie mir ist,
thou knowest yet well, how to-me is,

daz dû mir tûsentstunt bist
that thou to-me thousand-times art

lieber danne diu sêle mîn.«
dearer than the soul my.«

er sprach: »lâ die rede sîn,
he spoke: »let the speech be,

dune woldest mich sîn niht erlân,
thou wouldst me of-it not release,

z'wâr, alsô wirst ouch dû getân,
in-truth, so art also thou done,

dune kanst dich sîn niht entsagen,
thou canst thyself of-it not refuse,

dû muost daz îsen iezuo tragen.«
thou must the iron at-once carry.«

Zehant er'z in daz viuwer truok
At-once he-it into the fire carried

unde gluot' ez sêre genuok
and heated it sorely enough

und leit' ez, dâ ez ouch im lak,
and laid it, where it also for-him lay,

er sprach: »hebe ûf unt trak
he spoke: »lift up and carry

diewîle und ez die hizze hât.«
the-while and it the heat has.«

si sprach: »ist es kein rât?« —
she spoke: »is of-it no remedy?«—

»Nein ez, entriuwen,« sprach er
»No it, in-truth,« spoke he

»dû hebest dich wærlîche her,
»thou raisest thyself truly hither,

und muost ez tragen, als ouch ich.«
and must it carry, as also I.«

si sprach: »geselle, sô bit' ich dich
she spoke: »companion, so ask I thee

einer vil wênigen gebe,
for-a very little gift,

daz gediene ich immer unz ich lebe,
that repay I ever until I live,

swaz ich dir liebes ie getete,
whatever I to-thee of-dear ever did,

gewerstu mich der selben bete,
(if)-grantest-thou me the same request,

des gedenke mir hie mite
of-that think of-me here with

unt tuo nû, des ich dich bite.
and do now, what I thee ask.

Dû weist wol, daz sich ein man
Thou knowest well, that himself a man

genuoger dinge enthaben kan,
from-many things restrain can,

er hât starken muot und lîp:
he has strong spirit and body:

sô sî wir swach und brœdiu wîp
so are we weak and frail women

und enmugen uns niht enthaben sô wol;
and may ourselves not restrain so well;

die man sint grôzer krefte vol,
the men are of-great powers full,

des mugen si tuon unde lân
there-for may they do and leave

und mugen dem dinge wider stân;
and may the thing against stand;

daz wir der krefte niht enhân,
that we the powers not have,

daz hât Got an uns getân,
that has God on us done,

des sol uns nieman verdenken,
for-that shall us no-one blame,

ob wir etewenne wenken:
if we sometimes swerve:

dâvon lâ mir vor einen man;
there-from let to-me off one man;

wan ich nie keinen mê gewan,
for I never any more had,

âne dich, des wil ich Got jehen,
except thee, that will I to-God avow,

daz soltu an dem gerihte sehen.« —
that shalt-thou in the ordeal see.«—

»Daz wil ich tuon;« sprach er
»That will I do;« spoke he

»nû hebe dich zuo dem îsen her.«
»now raise thyself to the iron hither.«

Si sprach: »lieber man, nû tuo,
She spoke: »dear man, now do,

des ich dich bite, darzuo,
what I thee ask, thereto,

daz gediene ich alsô,
that repay I so,

daz dû muost immer wesen vrô,
that thou must ever be glad,

daz dû'z ie getæte;
that thou-it ever didst;

sô ist ouch immer stæte
so is also ever steadfast

diu herzelîche vriuntschaft
the heartfelt friendship

mit inniklîcher triuwen kraft
with inward faithfulness's power

und diu liebe, die ich zuo dir hân,
and the love, which I toward thee have,

sô hâstu wol zuo mir getân,
so hast-thou well toward me done,

daz dû mir noch zwêne vor lâst;
that thou to-me yet two off lettest;

sît dû sô wol zuo mir getân hâst,
since thou so well toward me done hast,

nû tuo wol vollen wider mich,
now do well fully toward me,

daz diene ich immer umbe dich.«
that repay I ever toward thee.«

Er sprach: »daz sî getân;
He spoke: »that be done;

dû muost balt zuo dem îsen gân.« —
thou must quickly to the iron go.«—

»Lieber geselle,« sprach siu
»Dear companion,« spoke she

»ich hân noch guoter pfunde driu,
»I have yet of-good pounds three,

der du einen pfennink niht enweist:
of-which thou a penny not knowest:

nû tuo'z durch Got allermeist,
now do-it for God most-of-all,

und nim diu selben driu pfunt,
and take the same three pounds,

ob dir ie ze keiner stunt
if to-thee ever at any hour

kein liep sî von mir geschên;
any pleasure be from me happened;

daran soltu hiute sên,
thereon shalt-thou today look,

als liep sô dir dîn sêle sî,
as dear as to-thee thy soul be,

und lâ mir ûzen noch drî.«
and let to-me out yet three.«

Er sprach: »die wil ich dir verlân;
He spoke: »them will I to-thee remit;

dû hâst der rede genuok getân,
thou hast of-the speech enough done,

gesprichstu tâlank kein wort mê,
(if)-speakest-thou all-day any word more,

du entragest mir daz îsen ê,
thou unless-carriest for-me the iron before,

dêswâr, ich tuon dir den tôt.«
truly, I do to-thee the death.«

dô muoste si swîgen durch nôt,
then must she be-silent for need,

daz îsen nams' ûf die hant,
the iron took-she on the hand,

und wart alsô sêre verbrant,
and was so sorely burned,

daz si lût schrei mit ungehabe:
that she loudly cried with lamenting:

»owê, mir ist diu hant abe!«
»alas, to-me is the hand off!«

Ein wahs het er gebreitet
A wax had he spread

und ein tuoch darzuo bereitet
and a cloth thereto prepared

und wolte si verbinden.
and would her bind.

des hiez si in erwinden,
of-that bade she him desist,

si sprach: »waz hilfet daz bant?
she spoke: »what helps the band?

mir ist diu hant sô gar verbrant,
to-me is the hand so wholly burned,

daz si mir nû nimmermê
that it to-me now nevermore

ze vrumen mak werden, als ê.«
to use may become, as before.«

Als er daz hôrte unde sach,
When he that heard and saw,

ûz grôzem zorne er dô sprach:
out-of great anger he then spoke:

»hie ist dîn triuwe worden schîn;
»here is thy faithfulness become shown;

nû solt ouch dû des gewis sîn,
now shalt also thou of-it certain be,

daz mir hiute kein wîp
that to-me today no woman

unmærre ist, danne dîn lîp;
more-unwelcome is, than thy body;

und allez daz dir leit ist,
and all that to-thee sorrowful is,

daz wil ich tuon nâch dirre vrist.
that will I do after this time.

Nû hâstu ûf dich geladen,
Now hast-thou upon thyself loaded,

beide, laster unde schaden,
both, disgrace and harm,
diu wil ich dir helfen mêren;
them will I thee help increase;
reht als dû [der] dîner êren
right as thou [the] thy honors
unzher hâst geschônet,
until-now hast spared,
alsô wirt ouch dir gelônet.«
so is also to-thee rewarded.«

Sente Mertînes naht

V · SAINT MARTIN'S NIGHT

On Saint Martin's night a rich farmer and his household drink themselves witless. The boldest of a band of thieves slips into the stall, but dogs bark and the host brings a light. Stripping himself naked, the thief blesses the household and cows, claiming to be Saint Martin, come to repay the wine and guard the goods. The farmer believes him and drinks to the saint until all lie senseless, while the thief drives off the oxen and cows. At dawn the stall is empty, the farmer's wife calls him an ox, and the Stricker warns that a thief is known by deeds, not words.

Ez was ein rîcher bûman,
It was a rich farmer,
der sêre schallen began
who sorely to-revel began
an Sent Mertînes naht,
on Saint Martin's night,
er trank vil vaste über maht.
he drank very fast beyond strength.
Als tet daz gesinde sîn,
So did the household his,
er hete harte guoten wîn.
he had very good wine.

Do si des sô vil getrunken,
When they of-it so much drunk,

daz in die zungen hunken,
that to-them the tongues limped,

dô kwamen karge diebe dar,
then came crafty thieves thither,

die wurden des vil wol gewar
they became of-it very well aware

an den worten, diu si tâten,
by the words, which they made,

daz si niht sinne hâten,
that they no senses had,

dô wurden si des ze râte,
then became they of-it to counsel,

daz si brâchen vil drâte
that they broke very quickly

ein loch in sînen rinderstal.
a hole in his cattle-stall.

doch entsâzen si des wirtes schal,
yet feared they the host's din,

daz ir ietslîcher darûzе beleip
that of-them each there-outside remained

und sînen gesellen drin treip:
and his companion therein drove:

dô was ein kuener under in.
then was a bold-one among them.

der vil vrevellîchen sin
who very audacious sense

zuo diebes ampte truok
to thief's office bore

und was ouch kündik genuok,
and was also clever enough,

der slouf ze jungest darin.
he slipped at last therein.

dô heten im den gewin
then had from-him the gain

zwên' hofwart(e) nâch genomen,
two farm-dogs nearly taken,

die begunden zorniklîchen komen
they began wrathfully to-come

und bullen vaste in den stal.
and barked fast in the stall.

do vernam der wirt disen schal,
then heard the host this din,

und gie mit einem liehte dar,
and went with a light thither,

und wart des diebes gewar.
and became of-the thief aware.

Dô des der diep wart innen,
When of-it the thief became aware,

daz er niht moht' entrinnen,
that he not might escape,

do gewan er grôze ungehabe,
then got he great lamenting,

unt zukte sîn gewant abe,
and tore his clothing off,

daz in der wirt nakket vant,
that him the host naked found,

unt tet [im] mit sîner zeswen hant
and made [to-him] with his right hand

über den wirt und [über] sîniu kint
over the host and [over] his children

und über ieslîchez rint
and over every cow

daz kriuze mê dan[ne] zweinzik stunt,
the cross more than twenty times,

darzuo ruort' er den munt,
thereto moved he the mouth,

reht als er spræche einen segen,
right as-if he spoke a blessing,

des begunde er vlîẓiklîch(e) pflegen.
of-that began he diligently to-take-care.

Dô der wirt daz gesach,
When the host that saw,

dô stuont er, daz er niht ensprach,
then stood he, that he not spoke,

und nam ot sîner geberde war.
and took just of-his bearing heed.

dô winkt' im der diep dar.
then beckoned to-him the thief thither.

Der wirt gie dar nâher baz,
The host went there nearer better,

dô sprach der diep: »sihestu daz,
then spoke the thief: »seest-thou that,

wie ich dîn guot gesegent hân?
how I thy goods blessed have?

ich wil dich niht verliesen lân:
I will thee not to-lose let:

ich bin Sant(e) Mertîn,
I am Saint Martin,

und wil dir gelten dînen wîn,
and will to-thee repay thy wine,

den dû getrunken hâst durch mich;
which thou drunk hast for me;

dîn trinken ist sô grôẓlîch;
thy drinking is so great;

daz dû durch mînen willen tuost,
that thou for my will doest,

daz dû sîn vil wol genieẓen muost:
that thou of-it very well profit must:

hie wâren diebe her komen,
here were thieves hither come,

die wolden dir gern[e] hân genomen
they would from-thee gladly have taken

dîn rinder und dîn ander guot;
thy cattle and thy other goods;

durch daz hân ich mich her gemuot,
for that have I myself hither troubled,

daz ich dîn guot unde dich
that I thy goods and thee

behueten wil; daz lâz an mich,
guard will; that leave to me,

des wil ich vlîziklîch(e) pflegen;
of-that will I diligently take-care;

ich hân getân mînen segen
I have done my blessing

über dich und allez daz dû hâst,
over thee and all that thou hast,

swâ dû nû dîn guot ligen lâst,
wherever thou now thy goods lie lettest,

daz dir nieman niht verstelen kan.
that from-thee no-one anything steal can.

nû lesche daz lieht, lieber man,
now quench the light, dear man,

und gang an dînen gemach hin.
and go to thy ease hence.

dannen ich her komen bin,
whence I hither come am,

dar wil ouch ich hin wider varn,
thither will also I hence back go,

und wil dich immer(mê) bewarn.«
and will thee ever(more) guard.«

Dô weint[e] der wirt vor liebe,
Then wept the host for joy,

und geloubte dem diebe,
and believed the thief,

daz er Sant Mertîn wære:
that he Saint Martin were:

»wol mich armen sündære!«
»well-for me poor sinner!«

gedâhte er in dem muote sîn
thought he in the mind his

»daz mich Sant(e) Mertîn
»that me Saint Martin

hie heim(e) hât gesuochet,
here at-home has visited,

und der gnâden ruochet,
and of-the grace deigns,

daz er mich unde mîn guot,
that he me and my goods,

mit sînem segen hât behuot.«
with his blessing has guarded.«

Er neik vil williklîchen dar
He bowed very willingly thither

unt verlaschte daz lieht gar,
and quenched the light wholly,

und wolte vil gewis sîn,
and would very certain be,

ez wære Sant(e) Mertîn;
it were Saint Martin;

daz kwam von sîner trunkenheit;
that came from his drunkenness;

des was der diep vil gemeit.
of-that was the thief very glad.

Er gie vrœlîch hin wider in:
He went gladly hence back in:

»wol mich, daz ich sô sælik bin!«
»well-for me, that I so blessed am!«

Sô sprach er zuo den sînen
So spoke he to the his-own

»ich hân Sant Mertînen
»I have Saint Martin

mit mînen ougen (hie) gesehen;
with my eyes (here) seen;

mir mag nû nimmer misseschehen.
to-me may now never ill-happen.

Er hât mir des gesaget dank,
He has to-me for-it said thanks,

daz ich ie sô volliklîch(e) trank
that I ever so fully drank

durch sîn(e) grôze liebe;
for his great love;

er jiht, daz ich die diebe
he avows, that I the thieves

gevürhte nimmer mêre;
fear never more;

er hât mich alsô sêre
he has me so sorely

gesegent unde mîn guot,
blessed and my goods,

daz mir deheiner niht entuot.
that to-me none anything does.

Die mir nû triuwen schuldik sîn,
Those-who to-me now faithfulness owing are,

die trinken hîn(te) mînen wîn
they drink tonight my wine

durch Sant Mertînes êre.
for Saint Martin's honor.

ich wil nû nimmer mêre
I will now never more

an sînem lobe gehinken.
in his praise limp.

wölten mîn[e] huener trinken,
(if)-would my hens drink,

den wolde ich schenken.« sprach er.
to-them would I pour.« spoke he.

»schenke vrôlîchen her,«
»pour gladly hither,«

sprach er ze sînem knehte
spoke he to his servant

»ich hân bevunden rehte,
»I have found rightly,

swer die Heiligen êret,
whoever the saints honors,

daz ist vil wol bekêret.
that is very well turned.

Wir suln trinken mînen wîn
We shall drink my wine

sô sêre, daz Sant Mertîn
so sorely, that Saint Martin

immer mêr ein herre sî.
ever more a lord be.

und suln trinken dâ bî,
and shall drink there by,

daz er uns sîn immer dank sage;
that he to-us for-it ever thanks say;

sît ich im sô wol behage,
since I to-him so well please,

daz er mich vor schaden wil bewarn,
that he me from harm will guard,

nu enwil ich nimmer niht gesparn,
now will I never anything spare,

swaz ich gewinne hinnen hin,
whatever I win hence forth,

daz wil ich trinken durch in;
that will I drink for him;

des hân ich rehte schulde.
of-that have I right cause.

wie möhte mich sîn hulde
how might me his favor

immer sanfter ane komen!
ever more-gently on come!

sît ich von im hân vernomen
since I from him have heard

daz er trinken(ne)s gert,
that he drinking desires,

des wirt er von mir wol gewert.«
of-that is he by me well granted.«

Er sprach wider sîn wîp:
He spoke to his woman:

»nû gank, sô dir dîn lîp,
»now go, so-help thee thy life,

unt trag ein[en] alten kæs(e) her,
and carry an old cheese hither,

den sul wir ezzen,« sprach er
it shall we eat,« spoke he

»dâ ist daz trinken guot nâch.«
»there is the drinking good after.«

dô wart dem wîbe vil gâch,
then became to-the woman very hasty,

und brâht' im, swaz er vor sprach.
and brought to-him, whatever he before spoke.

(s)waz [dô] dâ trinken(ne)s geschach,
whatever [then] there of-drinking happened,

des wart (nû) ein vil michel teil;
of-that became (now) a very great part;

si trunken umb(e) diu zwei heil,
they drank for the two salvations,

sîn [sinne] und sînes wîbes,
his [senses] and his woman's,

der sêle und des lîbes,
of-the soul and of-the body,

und der andern [alle] gemeine:
and of-the others [all] in-common:

diu wurden des nahtes kleine.
they became of-the night small.

[Er sprach:] »trinket vaste, lieben kint;
[He spoke:] »drink fast, dear children;

ez ist reht allez ein wint,
it is right all a wind,

swaz hie trinkens ist geschehen,
whatever here of-drinking is happened,

man sol noch solhe trünke sehen,
one shall yet such drafts see,

die wol mit êren mugen sîn.
which well with honors may be.

wôl dir, herre Sente Mertîn,
well to-thee, lord Saint Martin,

wer möhte dir gelîchen!
who might thee equal!

si muezen dir alle entwîchen,
they must to-thee all give-way,

die dâ ze himelrîche sint.
who there in heaven's-kingdom are.

hebet ûf den becher, liebiu kint,
raise up the cup, dear children,

und schenket in des kalten.
and pour to-them of-the cold.

Sant Mertîn muoz es walten,
Saint Martin must it rule,

daz wir hînt' getrînken sô,
that we tonight drink so,

daz unser sêle werden vrô.
that our souls become glad.

Trinket vaste über maht!
Drink fast beyond strength!

welch Heilige hât ouch eine naht
which saint has also a night

sô guot, sô Sant(e) Mertîn!
so good, as Saint Martin!

möhte wir allen mînen wîn
(if)-might we all my wine

noch hînt' allen getrinken ûz,
yet tonight all drink out,

ichn' want' ez niht mit einer grûz.«
I would-change it not with a grit.«

Sus trank er und die sîne
Thus drank he and the his-own

dem guoten Sant Mertîne
to-the good Saint Martin

ze liebe unt ze minnen,
for pleasure and for love,

unz si kwâmen von den sinnen
until they came from the senses

unt keiner wizzen pflâgen
and no wits tended

und enwesten, wâ si lâgen.
and not-knew, where they lay.

Daran geschach dem diebe
There-by happened to-the thief

des nahtes harte liebe,
of-the night very pleasantly,

der treip ûz sînem stalle
he drove out-of his stall

sîn starken ohsen alle,
his strong oxen all,

und darzuo mange guote kuo.
and thereto many good cow.

Dô der wirt des morgens vruo
When the host in-the morning early

erstuont von sîner trunkenheit,
arose from his drunkenness,

und hin ze sînem stalle schreit,
and hence to his stall strode,

dô was er rinder lære.
then was he of-cattle empty.

dô sagt' er bœsiu mære
then told he wicked tidings

und sprach zuo dem gesinde sîn:
and spoke to the household his:

»ich wæn', uns Sant(e) Mertîn
»I ween, from-us Saint Martin

diu rinder elliu hât genomen;
the cattle all has taken;

ichn' weiz niht, war si sint komen.«
I know not, whither they are come.«

Don enwart der morgen, dunket mich,
Then became the morning, seems to-me,

dem âbende ninder gelîch;
to-the evening nowhere like;

dem er des âbendes het wol
to-whom he in-the evening had well

geschenket zweinzik becher vol,
poured twenty cups full,

dem schankt' er nû niht einen;
to-him poured he now not one;

er begunde vaste weinen.
he began fast to-weep.

Also tâten alliu sîniu kint.
So did all his children.

dô sprach sîn wîp, er wær' ein rint
then spoke his woman, he were an ox

an allen [den] wizzen sînen,
in all [the] wits his,

daz er Sant Mertînen
that he Saint Martin

mit sînen ougen wânde sehen.
with his eyes weened to-see.

sust was im schade und schande geschehen;
thus was to-him harm and disgrace happened;

doch klagt' er michel vaster
yet lamented he much faster

den schaden, dan[ne] daz laster.
the harm, than the disgrace.

Dâ mane ich mîne vriunde bî:
There remind I my friends by:

swie guot des diebes rede sî
however good the thief's speech be

und sîn geberde darzuo,
and his bearing thereto,

daz man im doch sîn reht tuo
that one to-him yet his right do

und (in) vür einen dieb hab(e);
and (him) for a thief hold;

er muôz die liute leiten ab(e)
he must the people lead off

mit sînen worten, swâ er mak:
with his words, wherever he may:

ern' werte niht einen tak,
he would-last not one day,

jæhe er selbe, er wær' ein diep;
(if)-avowed he self, he were a thief;

des ist im nôt unde liep,
of-that is to-him need and pleasure,

swâmit er sich gevristen kan.
wherewith he himself save can.

man sol in vür ein[en] getriuwen man
one shall him for a faithful man

durch sîniu wort niht (en)hân,
for his words not hold,

ern' lâze diu werk dernâch gân.
he-unless let the works there-after go.

Ern' triuget niemen sô vil,
He deceives no-one so much,

sô den, der im gelouben wil.
as him, who him believe will.

Der blôze ritter

VI · THE KNIGHT EXPOSED

A traveling knight arrives cold and wet at the house of a host who has heard of his worth and honors him with kisses from his wife and three daughters and a great fire. As the room grows hot, the host has his own coat pulled off and insists that his guest do the same; the knight refuses with every courtesy, and the servants pull the coat over his head. Beneath it he wears neither breeches nor shirt. He would have slain the host had he dared, and leaves in anger, never again his friend. The Stricker warns hosts not to serve a guest against his will.

Ein Ritter kwam an ein(er) vart
A knight came on a journey

sô verre, daz er gast wart
so far, that he guest became

eins wirtes, der in wol enpfienk;
of-a host, who him well received;

ich sag' iu; wâvon daz ergienk:
I tell you; whence that came-about:

ern' hete in nie mêre gesehen,
he had him never more seen,

und hôrt' im grôzer wirde jehen;
and heard of-him great worth avow;

des bôt er im'z dester baz.
for-that offered he to-him-it the better.

der gast was kalt unde naz,
the guest was cold and wet,

dâvon was er des wirtes vrô;
there-from was he of-the host glad;

ouch was der wirt des gastes sô,
also was the host of-the guest so,

daz liez er in wol schouwen:
that let he him well behold:

sîn tohter und sîn vrouwen
his daughters and his lady

hiez er in küssen zehant;
bade he him kiss at-once;

der koch wart sêre gemant
the cook was sorely urged

umbe guote spîse ze naht;
about good food for night;

in wart ein schœne viuwer gemaht,
to-them was a fair fire made,

dâ sâzen si mit vröuden bî.
there sat they with joys by.

er hete schœner tohter drî,
he had fair daughters three,

die sazten den gast zwischen sich,
they set the guest between themselves,

und wurden elliu vrôlîch
and became all glad

ze liebe dem gaste.
for love to-the guest.

daz viuwer bran vil vaste,
the fire burned very fast,

unz ez sô lange alsô gebran,
until it so long so burned,

daz dâ diu hizze gewan
that there the heat won

in der stuben überhant,
in the room upper-hand,

und daz diu kelte verswant;
and that the cold vanished;

des wart in allen sô heiz,
of-that became to-them all so hot,

daz in von hizzen der sweiz
that to-them from heat the sweat

von den stirnen niderran.
from the foreheads down-ran.

dô tet der wirt, als ein man,
then did the host, as a man,

der dâheim wil gemach hân,
who at-home will ease have,

er hiez einen kneht dar gân
he bade a servant there go

unt ziehen im sînen rok abe:
and draw from-him his coat off:

»ich wil, daz hie ieman habe
»I will, that here anyone have

nahtlank« sprach er »ungemach.«
night-long« spoke he »discomfort.«

zuo dem gaste er ouch sprach:
to the guest he also spoke:

»lât ab ziehen iuwern rok;
»let off draw your coat;

irn' habt ninder deheinen lok,
you have nowhere any lock,

sin[en] hangen alle sweizes vol.«
they- [unless] hang all of-sweat full.«

dô sprach der gast: »daz tuot mir wol,
then spoke the guest: »that does to-me well,

ich wil den rok an hân.« —
I will the coat on have.«—

»ir sult in abe ziehen lân.«
»you shall it off draw let.«

sprach der wirt »daz weiz Got,
spoke the host »that knows God,

ez ist mîn bet' und mîn gebot,
it is my request and my command,

daz ir hie habet guoten gemach.«
that you here have good ease.«

der gast zuo dem wirte sprach:
the guest to the host spoke:

»als liep sô ich iu sî
»as dear as I to-you be

und iuwer töhter alle drî,
and your daughters all three,

so erlât mich dirre unzuht;
so release me from-this ill-breeding;

ich læge gerner eine suht,
I would-lie rather a sickness,

danne ich den rok abe tæte,
than I the coat off did,

ob ich noch heizer hæte.«
if I yet hotter had.«

Dô sprach der wirt: »nû lât den strît,
Then spoke the host: »now let the quarrel,

ich weiz wol, daz ir hübsch sît;
I know well, that you courtly are;

sô læge ich zwô sühte,
so would-lie I two sicknesses,

ê ich iuch iuwer zühte
before I you for-your breeding

sô sêre liez' engelten;
so sorely let pay;

ir soldet mich drumbe schelten,
you should me there-for scold,

liez' ich iuch hie haben ungemach.«
(if)-let I you here have discomfort.«

heimlîch er zuo den knehten sprach,
secretly he to the servants spoke,

daz si alle dar giengen
that they all thither went

und im den rok geviengen
and from-him the coat seized

unt zukten [imen] über daz houbet:
and jerked [from-him] over the head:

dô was der gast beroubet
then was the guest robbed

durch die vil grôzen minne
through the very great love

der êren und der sinne;
of-the honors and of-the senses;

er saz, dô er wart âne rok,
he sat, when he became without coat,

reht als ein beschelter stok,
right as a peeled stump,

âne bruoch und âne hemde,
without breeches and without shirt,

diu wâren im beide vremde.
they were to-him both strange.

Dô in die selben vrouwen
When him the same ladies

sô blôz begunden schouwen,
so naked began to-behold,

do erschrâken si sêre vür den gast;
then were-frightened they sorely for the guest;

wan er der hübscheite last
for he the courtliness's burden

getragen hete mangen tak.
borne had many day.

der wirt vor schanden ouch erschrak.
the host for disgraces also was-frightened.

Der gast erschrak sô sêre,
The guest was-frightened so sorely,

ern' trûwet' [ez] an sîn êre
he trusted [it] to his honor

nimmer wider kumen mê;
never back come more;

im tet diu schande (alsô) wê,
to-him did the disgrace (so) woe,

daz er den wirt het' erslagen,
that he the host would-have slain,

trûwet' er daz hin getragen,
(if)-trusted he that hence borne,

daz reht dannen mohte gân:
that right thence might go:

desn' het er aber niht getân;
of-that had he however not done;

er zôch den rok wider an,
he drew the coat back on,

und schiet sô zorneklîche dan,
and parted so wrathfully thence,

daz er dem wirte nimmermê
that he to-the host nevermore

sô holt was, als er was ê.
so loyal was, as he was before.

Dâ warn' ich alle wirte bî:
There warn I all hosts by:

swaz des [lieben] gastes wille sî,
whatever the [dear] guest's will be,

dâ vlîze sich ein wirt zuo,
there exert himself a host to,

daz er darüber niht entuo;
that he there-beyond not does;

ob er im dienest oder guot
if he to-him service or goods

wider des gastes willen tuot,
against the guest's will does,

daz ist vil lîhte gar verlorn,
that is very likely wholly lost,

des wær' ez bezzer verborn.
of-that were it better forborne.

Swes dienst niht ze danke kumt,
Whose service not to thanks comes,

der schadet mê, danne er vrumt.
he harms more, than he profits.

Der nakte bote

VII · THE NAKED MESSENGER

A lord sends his squire ahead to announce him to a knight. Told by a simple child that the host is in the bathhouse, the squire strips, is driven by a dog backward into it, where the host sits with his wife and daughters, and flees naked on his horse. The outraged host arms and gives chase, and the lord, hearing that his servant showed his hinder parts to the ladies, nearly maims him and threatens blindness before the squire can explain. The host makes peace, and the Stricker warns against acting on a mistaken belief.

Ez geschach hievor, sô man seit,
It happened here-before, as one tells,

daz ein herre ûf einer strâze reit,
that a lord on a road rode,

und sant' einen sînen kneht
and sent one of-his servant

vor im hin; daz was reht,
before him hence; that was right,

dô ez âbenden began,
when it to-grow-evening began,

und enbôt einem sînem man,
and sent-word to-one of-his man,

er wolde die naht mit im sîn.
he would the night with him be.

dô tet der kneht sîn reht schîn,
then made the servant his duty shown,

er reit dem herren verre vor,
he rode to-the lord far ahead,

unt kwam hin zuo des wirtes tor,
and came hence to the host's gate,

daz vant er wît ûf getân,
that found he wide up done,

dô sach er in dem hove stân
then saw he in the court stand

ein kint, daz vrâgt' er mære,
a child, it asked he tidings,

ob der wirt dâheime wære.
whether the host at-home were.

»Jâ,« sprach daz kint wider in
»Yes,« spoke the child to him

»gêt in die batstuben hin,
»go into the bathhouse hence,

dâ ist er inne, diu ist warm.«
there is he inside, it is warm.«

dô sah er wol, daz kint was arm
then saw he well, the child was poor

der sinne und ouch des guotes,
of-the senses and also of-the goods,

ouch was er tumbes muotes,
also was he of-foolish spirit,

und envrâget' ez niht vürbaz,
and asked it not further,

er wânde, der wirt umbe daz
he weened, the host for that

in der batstuben wære,
in the bathhouse were,

daz er badet' und schære.
that he bathed and shaved.

Er gedâht': »des ist ouch mir nôt;
He thought: »of-that is also to-me need;

swaz im mîn herre her enbôt,
whatever to-him my lord hither sent-word,

daz gesage ich im in dem bade wol.«
that tell I to-him in the bath well.«

sîn herze was vröuden vol,
his heart was of-joys full,

daz er daz bat bereitet vant,
that he the bath prepared found,

er erbeizte nider sâ zehant
he dismounted down straightway at-once

und enkleite sich vil swinde.
and unclothed himself very swiftly.

er sprach zuo dem kinde:
he spoke to the child:

»siz her ûf diz gewant,
»sit here upon this clothing,

und nim den britel in die hant
and take the bridle in the hand

und halte mir, unz ich gebade,
and hold for-me, until I bathe,

daz mir hie nieman niht enschade,
that to-me here no-one anything harm,

des wil ich dir gelônen wol.«
for-that will I to-thee reward well.«

daz kint daz tet, als ein kint sol,
the child that did, as a child shall,

ezn' sprach dâ niht mê wider,
it spoke there nothing more against,

und saz vil balde darnider.
and sat very quickly there-down.

Daz was in der herbestzît,
That was in the autumn-time,

so der kalde rîfe dikke lît
when the cold hoarfrost thickly lies

und sich wandelnt die winde;
and themselves change the winds;

des heizte daz gesinde
for-that heated the household

die batstuben alle tage.
the bathhouse all days.

sie heten ouch, als ich iu sage,
they had also, as I to-you tell,

ein rehte stube, diu was guot;
a proper room, it was good;

dô was der ritter sô gemuot,
then was the knight so minded,

der dâ ze hûse wirt hiez,
who there at house host was-called,

daz er die heizen niht enliez,
that he it heat not let,

unz der sumer ende nam
until the summer end took

und der kalde winter kwam,
and the cold winter came,

daz die vliegen gar vervlugen
that the flies wholly flew-off

und in die stuben niht enzugen;
and into the room not drew;

durch sôgetâne hübscheit
for such courtliness

schuof der wirt, daz man vermeit.
arranged the host, that one avoided.

Daz man die stuben kalte lie
That one the room cold left

und in (die) batstuben gie
and into (the) bathhouse went

daz gesinde mit der vrouwen;
the household with the lady;

man mohte darinne schouwen
one might therein behold

vil manigen wunnenklîchen lîp,
very many delightful body,

beide, ir tohter und ir wîp
both, her daughters and her women

die hâten s' vür ein werkgaden.
they had it as a workroom.

dô kwam er, der dâ wolde baden
then came he, who there would bathe

alsô nakket an die tür.
so naked to the door.

dô was oben darvür
then was above there-before

guoter wedel' vil geleit,
good whisks many laid,

daz dûhte in ouch ein sælikeit,
that seemed to-him also a blessing,

unz er der einen genam.
until he of-them one took.

dô sach er, daz geloufen kwam
then saw he, that running came

mit grimme ein übel hofwart,
with fury a wicked farm-dog,

der wold' in hân gemachet schart.
who would him have made notched.

Des wert' er mit dem wedel sich.
Of-that defended he with the whisk himself.

dô was der hunt so muelîch,
then was the dog so troublesome,

daz er den knappen des betwank,
that he the squire of-it compelled,

daz er âne sînen dank
that he without his thanks

hinder sich in die stuben gie,
behind himself into the room went,

und erbeitet' kûm, unz er gevie
and waited scarcely, until he caught

die tür, daz er hinin kwam
the door, that he in came

und sich dem hunde benam.
and himself from-the dog removed.

Als in dô die vrouwen
When him then the ladies

sô blôz begunden schouwen,
so naked began to-behold,

do erkômen sie vor schanden
then were-startled they for shames

und verdakten mit den handen
and covered with the hands

diu ougen alle gemeine,
the eyes all in-common,

unz an den wirt eine,
until on the host alone,

der erzeigte im schiere sînen haz:
he showed to-him quickly his hatred:

»owê mir!« sprach er »wer ist daz?
»alas to-me!« spoke he »who is that?

Aller mîner êren!«
Of-all my honors!«

dô begunde sich umbe kêren
then began himself around to-turn

der knappe alrêst, unde sach
the squire first, and saw

sîn laster, als im daz geschach,
his disgrace, as to-him that happened,

dô zukt' er wider ûf die tür,
then jerked he back open the door,

im wart noch gâher hinvür,
to-him became yet hastier hence-out,

danne im darinne was gewesen,
than to-him therein had been,

ern' trûwet' anders niht genesen,
he trusted otherwise not to-be-saved,

wan, daz er sîn gewant nam
except, that he his clothing took

und nakket ûf daz pfert kwam;
and naked onto the horse came;

des het er sich versûmet nâch,
of-that had he himself delayed nearly,

im wart hin wider sô gâch
to-him became hence back so hasty

den wek, den er her reit,
the way, which he hither rode,

daz ez daz pfert kûm erleit.
that it the horse scarcely endured.

Do der ritter [er]sach die unzuht
When the knight [be]held the ill-breeding

und des vil tumben knehtes vluht,
and of-the very foolish servant's flight,

dô het er des vil wol gesworn,
then had he of-it very well sworn,

er het sîn êre verlorn,
he had his honor lost,

ob er'z niht widertæte;
if he-it not undid;

swer in sô gelastert hæte,
whoever him so disgraced had,

der wolde im nemen sîn êre;
he would from-him take his honor;

sînen knehten rief er sêre,
to-his servants cried he sorely,

daz si vil balde gæhten
that they very quickly hastened

und im sîn ros bræhten,
and to-him his steed brought,

unde selbe nâch im riten,
and self after him rode,

des hiez er alle die biten,
for-that bade he all those ask,

den er getrouwen solte.
whom he trust should.

dô man im dar geholte
when one to-him thither fetched

harnasch, schilt unde sper,
harness, shield and spear,

ûf sin ros saz er,
upon his steed sat he,

und reit nâch dem knehte
and rode after the servant

die selben strâzen rehte,
the same road straight,

die er in hin sach rîten.
which he him hence saw ride.

dô sach in kurzen zîten
then saw in short times

der herre sînen kneht komen,
the lord his servant come,

der wolde diu mære hân vernomen,
he would the tidings have heard,

er sprach: »vil balde sage mir,
he spoke: »very quickly tell to-me,

wie kumestu sust? waz wirret dir?
how comest-thou thus? what troubles thee?

Wen sihe ich dorther nâch jagen?«
Whom see I from-there after hunt?«

don[en]getorste der kneht niht sagen,
then-dared the servant not say,

er vorhte grœzern ungewin,
he feared greater loss,

er sweig ot unde rante hin.
he was-silent just and ran hence.

Dô kwam der ritter gerant
Then came the knight running

und hiez den herren zehant
and bade the lord at-once

Got wille komen sîn,
God will welcome be,

er sprach: »lieber herre mîn,
he spoke: »dear lord my,

lât den man niht hin komen,
let the man not hence come,

der mir mit alle hât genomen
who from-me with all has taken

min vröude und mîn êre;
my joy and my honor;

ichn' erkober' mich's nimmermêre,
I recover myself-from-it nevermore,

kumt er sîn so ungenozzen hin.«
(if)-comes he of-it so unpunished hence.«

dô sprach der herre wider in:
then spoke the lord to him:

»den ir dâ jagt, daz ist mîn kneht,
»whom you there hunt, that is my servant,

der sol iu buezen, daz ist reht;
he shall to-you atone, that is right;

nû saget mir sîn schulde,
now tell to-me his guilt,

und mag er iuwer hulde
and (if)-may he your favor

sô sêre verlorn hân,
so sorely lost have,

ez muoz im an den lîp gân.« —
it must to-him to the life go.«—

»Herre,« sprach er »merket daz,
»Lord,« spoke he »mark that,

er gie in die stuben, dâ ich saz
he went into the room, where I sat

bî mînen tohtern und [bî mînem] wîbe,
by my daughters and [by my] woman,

und enhet an sînem lîbe
and had on his body

niht mê danne er iezuo hât,
nothing more than he now has,

unt tet noch grœzer missetât
and did yet greater misdeed

unt kêrt' daz hinder teil hervür,
and turned the hinder part forward,

dô er in gie zuo der tür.«
when he in went to the door.«

Der herre sprach: »daz arnet er.
The lord spoke: »that pays-for he.

gebt mir mîn ros balde her,«
give to-me my steed quickly hither,«

sprach er zuo dem, der ez zôch,
spoke he to him, who it led,

daz was snel unde hôch,
that was swift and tall,

darûf wart im vil gâch,
thereupon became to-him very hasty,

und rante dem knehte nâch.
and ran to-the servant after.

Dô er hiu zuo(z')im kwam,
When he here to(-to)-him came,

mit dem hâre er in nam,
by the hair he him took,

alsô vuort' er in herwider
so led he him back-again

und warf in zorniklîche nider,
and threw him wrathfully down,

er wolde in bestümbelt hân,
he would him maimed have,

daz̨ het er vil nâch getân.
that had he very nearly done.

»Herre,« sprach der arme kneht
»Lord,« spoke the poor servant

»lât mich, durch Got und durch reht,
»let me, for God and for right,

sagen, waz̨ diu rede sî.«
say, what the matter be.«

dô was der ritter dâbî,
then was the knight there-by,

den man daz̨ laster hôrte klagen,
whom one the disgrace heard lament,

der sprach: »herre, lât in sagen,
he spoke: »lord, let him tell,

warumbe er ez̨ tæte;
why he it did;

waz̨ ich im getân hæte?«
what I to-him done had?«

Dô sprach der herre: »nû sage,
Then spoke the lord: »now tell,

dû muost von disem selbem tage
thou must from this same day

unz an dîn ende wesen blint.«
until to thy end be blind.«

er sprach: »herre, ich vant ein kint
he spoke: »lord, I found a child

in sînem hove, daz vrâget' ich,
in his court, it asked I,

wâ der wirt wære; dô wîst' ez mich
where the host were; then showed it me

in eine batstuben hin,
into a bathhouse hence,

dâ wær' er gegangen in,
there were he gone in,

diu wære warm: dô wânde ich,
it were warm: then weened I,

daz er darinne badet' sich,
that he therein bathed himself,

und wold' ouch ich gebadet hân.
and would also I bathed have.

do ich in die stuben solde gân,
when I into the room should go,

dô kwam ein übel hofwart,
then came a wicked farm-dog,

der twank mich, daz ich gênde wart
it compelled me, that I going became

hinder mich, daz was mir leit,
behind me, that was to-me sorrowful,

der schuof, daz ich die zuht vermeit,
it brought-about, that I the breeding forsook,

er hete mich gebizzen nâch,
it had me bitten nearly,

dâvon wart mir alsô gâch,
there-from became to-me so hasty,

daz ich niht hinder mich ensach,
that I not behind me looked,

ê mir daz laster (dâ) geschach.« —
before to-me the disgrace (there) happened.«—

»Entriuwen,« sprach der ritter dô
»In-truth,« spoke the knight then

»nû wil ich immer wesen vrô,
»now will I ever be glad,

daz ich iuch niht erslagen hân,
that I you not slain have,

sît ez darumbe ist (sus) getân,
since it there-about is (thus) done,

sô wil ich iuwer vriunt wesen,
so will I your friend be,

ir sult vil wol vor mir genesen.«
you shall very well before me be-saved.«

Sust schuof er, daz der kneht genas,
Thus brought-about he, that the servant was-saved,

dem er dâvor sô vînt was.
to-whom he there-before so hostile was.

Wær' dem kneht ein leit geschehen,
Were to-the servant a harm happened,

wirn' solten nimmer gejehen,
we should never avow,

daz er unschuldik wære.
that he guiltless were.

er solde diu rehten mære
he should the right tidings

bedæhtlîch ervarn hân:
thoughtfully learned have:

dô liez er sich an einen wân.
then let he himself on a weening.

Der wân triuget manige(n) man;
The weening deceives many man;

swer daz niht bedenken kan,
whoever that not consider can,

der mag sich lîhte verlân
he may himself easily abandon

sô sêre an etelîchen wân,
so sorely to some weening,

daz er von dem wâne
that he from the weening

wirt sîner êren âne,
becomes of-his honors without,

oder gewinnet sulhen schaden,
or wins such harm,

dâmit er immer ist geladen.
there-with he ever is loaded.

Swaz der man gelæt an den wân,
Whatever the man lays on the weening,

dâ er's wol rât mohte hân,
where he-of-it well counsel might have,

wirt er dâ betrogen an,
(if)-is he there deceived in,

des ist er selbe ein schuldik man.
of-that is he self a guilty man.

Der rihtære und der tiuvel

VIII · THE JUDGE AND THE DEVIL

A rich and sinful judge meets a finely dressed stranger who admits that he is the devil, come to market to take whatever is given him in earnest. The judge binds him with commands in God's name to let him watch. Women curse a pig, a cow, and a child to the devil, and each time he declines, since none of them means it. Then an old, sick widow whose only cow the judge has taken prays in earnest that the devil carry off his soul and body, and the devil seizes him by the hair and flies off. Whoever consorts with the devil, the poet warns, earns an evil reward.

In einer stat saz ein man,
In a town dwelt a man,

des sünde mag ich, noch enkan,
whose sins may I, nor can,

noch ensol ich alle künden;
nor shall I all make-known;

er het an allen sûnden
he had in all sins

sô rehte volliklîchen teil,
so right fully share,

daz ez die liute dûht' ein heil,
that it the people seemed a fortune,

daz in diu erde niht verslant.
that him the earth not swallowed.

zwei dink machten in bekant:
two things made him known:

sô sündik und sô rîche
so sinful and so rich

was dehein sîn gelîche.
was none his equal.

Er was dâ rihtære,
He was there judge,

sîn leben was wîten mære.
his life was widely known.

Er begunde eines marktages jehen,
He began one market-day to-avow,

er wolde rîten, und gesehen
he would ride, and see

sînen liebsten wîngarten.
his dearest vineyard.

des begund' der tiuvel warten,
of-that began the devil to-watch,

des selben morgens vil vruo
the same morning very early

kam er im an dem wege zuo,
came he to-him on the way to,

dô er von dem wîngarten reit;
when he from the vineyard rode;

der tiuvel truok vil rîchiu kleit,
the devil wore very rich clothes,

diu wâren harte wol gesniten.
they were very well cut.

dô kwam der rihtære geriten,
then came the judge ridden,

wan er in vür ein[en] man ersach,
for he him as a man saw,

des gruoʒte er in, unde sprach:
for-that greeted he him, and spoke:

»von wanne sit ir unde wer?
»from whence are you and who?

»daʒ ist ein dink, des ich ger,
»that is a thing, which I desire,

daʒ ir mir daʒ rehte saget.« —
that you to-me the right say.«—

»eʒ ist iuch alsô guot verdaget,«
»it is to-you as good kept-silent,«

sprach der tiuvel zehant.
spoke the devil at-once.

»ez muoz mir werden bekant,«
»it must to-me become known,«

sprach der rihter mit zorne
spoke the judge with anger

»oder ir sît der verlorne.
»or you are the lost-one.

Ich hân gewaltes hie sô vil,
I have of-power here so much,

swaz ich iu leides tuon wil,
whatever I to-you of-harm do will,

daz mag mir nieman erwern.«
that may me no-one prevent.«

er begunde zorniklîche swern:
he began wrathfully to-swear:

sagt' er im niht daz mære,
(if)-told he to-him not the tidings,

wannen und wer er wære,
whence and who he were,

er næme im lîp unde guot. —
he would-take from-him life and goods.—

»ê ir mir sô grôzen schaden tuot,
»before you to-me so great harm do,

ich sag' iu ê vil rehte
I tell you before very rightly

mîn namen und mîn geslehte,«
my name and my lineage,«

sprach der vervluochte zehant
spoke the accursed-one at-once

»ich bin'z der tiuvel genant.«
»I am-it the devil named.«

Dô vrâget' der rihtære,
Then asked the judge,

waz sîn gewerftes wære.
what his business were.

Des antwurt' in der tiuvel zehant:
To-that answered to-him the devil at-once:

»ez sol dir werden wol erkant,
»it shall to-thee become well known,

und wil dich ez wizzen lân:
and will thee it know let:

ich sol in dise stat gân,
I shall into this town go,

ez ist hiute diu zît,
it is today the time,

swaz man mir ernstlîche gît,
whatever one to-me in-earnest gives,

daz ich daz allez nemen sol.«
that I that all take shall.«

der rihter sprach: »nû tuo sô wol,
the judge spoke: »now do so well,

und gunne mir, daz ich daz sehe,
and grant to-me, that I that see,

swaz dir ze nemene geschehe
whatever to-thee to take happen

die wîle unz diser market wer.« —
the while until this market last.«—

»des entuon ich niht,« sprach er.
»that do I not,« spoke he.

Der rihter sprach: »sô gebiut' ich dir,
The judge spoke: »so command I thee,

daz dû niht kumest von mir,
that thou not comest from me,

ê dû mich hiute sehen lâst
before thou me today see lettest

allez daz dû hie begâst;
all that thou here committest;

daz gebiut' ich dir bî Gote
that command I thee by God

und bî dem selben gebote,
and by the same command,

dâmit ir alle wurdet gevalt,
there-with you all were felled,

ich gebiut' ez dir bî Gotes gewalt,
I command it thee by God's power,

und bî Gotes zorn dabî,
and by God's anger there-by,

und swie vil der gebote sî,
and however many of-the commands be,

diu immer muezen vür sich gân,
which ever must before themselves go,

den ir niht muget wider stân,
which you not may against stand,

weder dû, noch die genôzen dîn,
neither thou, nor the fellows thy,

dâbî muoz ez dir geboten sîn.
there-by must it to-thee commanded be.

Ich gebiut' dir bî Gotes gerihte,
I command thee by God's judgment,

daz dû nemest ze mîner gesihte,
that thou takest in my sight,

swaz man dir hiute hie gebe.« —
whatever one to-thee today here give.«—

»owê, daz ich iender lebe!«
»alas, that I anywhere live!«

sprach der tiuvel zehant
spoke the devil at-once

»dû hâst mich in sô starkiu bant
»thou hast me in so strong bonds

gevangen und gebunden,
caught and bound,

daz ich ze mangen stunden
that I at many hours

sô grôze nôt nie gewan.
so great distress never had.

swaz ich dernâch gedenken kan,
whatever I there-after think can,

son[en]weiz ich ninder den list,
so-know I nowhere the craft,

wâvür ez dir guot ist.
for-what it to-thee good is.

Sît ez dir âne vrumen sî,
Since it to-thee without profit be,

sô lâ mich dirre dinge vrî.«
so let me of-these things free.«

Der rihter sprach: »des entuon ich niht;
The judge spoke: »that do I not;

swaz mir darumbe geschiht,
whatever to-me there-for happens,

daz muoz mir allez geschehen:
that must to-me all happen:

ich wil dîn nemen hiute sehen.«
I will thy taking today see.«

Der tiuvel sprach: »ez muoz ergân;
The devil spoke: »it must come-about;

daz dû mich's niht wilt erlân,
that thou me-of-it not wilt release,

daz ist mir swære unde leit;
that is to-me heavy and sorrowful;

erkentest dû die wârheit,
(if)-knewest thou the truth,

dû liezest dîn twingen mich sîn.
thou wouldst-let thy constraining me be.

mîn genôze und die dîn
my fellows and those thy

die tragent einander grôzen haz,
they bear each-other great hatred,

und werdent daran nimmer laz;
and become there-in never slack;

des soldest dû mich lâzen varn,
for-that shouldst thou me let go,

woldest dû dîn reht bewarn.«
(if)-wouldst thou thy right guard.«

Dô sprach der rihtære:
Then spoke the judge:

»ezn' sî dir nie sô swære,
»it be to-thee never so heavy,

daz ich mit dir gên wil;
that I with thee go will;

ez sî wênik oder vil,
it be little or much,

swaz dir hie hiute wirt gegeben
whatever to-thee here today is given

mit willen, âne widerstreben,
with will, without resisting,

daz wil ich dich sehen nemen;
that will I thee see take;

ob ez mir solte missezemen,
if it to-me should ill-befit,

ichn' erlâz' es dich benamen niht;
I release of-it thee surely not;

und sprichest dû dâwider iht,
and (if)-speakest thou there-against anything,

daz wære als(ô) guot verborn.« —
that were as good forborne.«—

»nû lâ belîben dînen zorn,«
»now let remain thy anger,«

sprach dô der vervluochte geist
spoke then the accursed spirit

»dâ dû vil lüzzel umbe weist,
»of-what thou very little about knowest,

des vindest dû noch hiut' ein teil.« 115
of-that findest thou yet today a part.«

daz dûht(e) den rihtær' ein heil,
that seemed to-the judge a fortune,

daz er dâ wunder solde sehen,
that he there wonder should see,

dâ was im liebe an geschehen.
there was to-him pleasure in happened.

In die stat giengen si sâ,
Into the town went they at-once,

dô was des tages market dâ 120
then was of-the day market there

und was der liute dâ genuok.
and was of-the people there enough.

dem rihtær(e) man dar truok
to-the judge one thither bore

vil manik trinken an die hant.
very many drink to the hand.

don[en] was dâ nieman bekant,
then was there no-one known,

wer sîn geselle wære; 125
who his companion were;

dem bôt der rihtære
to-him offered the judge

daz trinken ouch an der stunt.
the drink also at the hour.

er tet ez aber niht an den munt;
he put it however not to the mouth;

wan der tiuvel wolt' sîn niht.
for the devil would of-it not.

Do ergie ein sôgetân geschiht,
Then came-about a such event,

daz einem wîbe dâ geschach
that to-a woman there happened

von einem swîne ein ungemach,
from a pig a discomfort,

daz treip si balde vür ir tür:
it drove she quickly before her door:

»nû gank ze dem tiuvel hinvür!«
»now go to the devil hence-out!«

Sô sprach daz zornige wîp
So spoke the angry woman

»der nem dir hiute dînen lîp.«
»he take from-thee today thy life.«

Der rihter sprach: »geselle mîn,
The judge spoke: »companion my,

nû nim vil balde daz swîn,
now take very quickly the pig,

dû hœrst wol, daz man dir sîn jiht.« —
thou hearest well, that one to-thee of-it avows.«—

»ez ist ir ernest leider niht;«
»it is her earnest alas not;«

sprach der tiuvel wider in
spoke the devil to him

»ich vuort' ez williklîchen hin,
»I would-lead it willingly hence,

gæbe si mir ez mit der wârheit:
(if)-gave she to-me it with the truth:

næme ich ir'z, ez wære ir vil leit.«
(if)-took I from-her-it, it would-be to-her very sorrowful.«

Si giengen an den market baz;
They went to the market further;

dan[en]weiz ich niht aber, waz
then-know I not however, what

einem andern wîp geschach,
to-an other woman happened,

daz si zuo (z')einem rinde sprach:
that she to (to)-a cow spoke:

»dem tiuvel sîst dû gegeben,
»to-the devil be thou given,

der nem dir hiute dîn leben!«
he take from-thee today thy life!«

Dô sprach der rihtære:
Then spoke the judge:

»nû hœrstu wol diu mære,
»now hearest-thou well the tidings,

daz dir diz rint gegeben ist.« —
that to-thee this cow given is.«—

»ez irret ein vil karger list:«
»it hinders a very crafty craft:«

sprach der tiuvel aber dô
spoke the devil again then

»si wære ein jâr darumbe vnvrô,
»she would-be a year there-for unglad,

und wurde si des innen,
and (if)-became she of-it aware,

daz ich ez vuerte hinnen:
that I it led hence:

ichn' hân niht an dem rinde.«
I have nothing in the cow.«

Dô sprach ein wîp ze ir kinde:
Then spoke a woman to her child:

»dun enwilt niht tuon durch mich,
»thou wilt not do for me,

der übel tiuvel neme dich!« —
the evil devil take thee!«—

»Nû nim daz kint:« sprach der man. —
»Now take the child:« spoke the man.—

»ichn' hân dâ leider reht niht an;«
»I have there alas right none in;«

sprach der tiuvel sâ ze stunt
spoke the devil at-once at hour

»si næme niht zwei tûsent pfunt,
»she would-take not two thousand pounds,

daz si mir's alsô günde,
that she to-me-it so granted,

daz ich mich sîn underwünde;
that I myself of-it took-charge;

ich næm' ez gerne, möhte ich.«
I would-take it gladly, (if)-might I.«

Dô giengen si aber vür sich
Then went they again before themselves

unz mitten an den market,
until amid to the market,

der was alsô gestarket,
which was so strengthened,

daz si dâ wâren alle gar,
that they there were all wholly,

die des tages wolten dar;
who of-the day would thither;

dâ begunden si stille stên.
there began they still to-stand.

do begunde ein witwe zuo gên,
then began a widow to to-go,

diu was, beide, siech und alt,
who was, both, sick and old,

ir armuot diu was manikvalt,
her poverty it was manifold,

des was vil grôz ir ungehabe,
of-that was very great her lamenting,

si gie vil kûme an einem stabe.
she went very scarcely on a staff.

Dô si den rihter ane sach,
When she the judge at saw,

si begunde weinen, unde sprach:
she began to-weep, and spoke:

»o wê dir, rihtære!
»o woe to-thee, judge!

daz dû sô rîche wære,
that thou so rich were,

und ich sô arme bin gewesen,
and I so poor am been,

und dû trûtest niht genesen,
and thou trustedst not to-be-saved,

dun[en]habest mir, âne schulde
thou- [unless]-hadst from-me, without guilt

und wider Gotes hulde,
and against God's grace,

mîn einez kuelîn genomen,
my one little-cow taken,

dâ daz allez von solde komen,
where that all from should come,

des ich vil arme solde leben,
by-which I very poor-one should live,

mirn' ist diu kraft niht gegeben,
to-me is the strength not given,

daz mir der lîp sô vil tuge,
that to-me the body so much avail,

daz ich darnâch gên muge,
that I there-after go may,

dâ man mir ez gebe durch Got.
where one to-me it give for God.

desn' hâstu niht wan dînen spot.
of-that hast-thou nothing except thy mockery.

Nû bit' ich Got durch sînen tôt
Now pray I God by his death

und durch die grimmelîche(n) nôt,
and by the grim distress,

die er an sîner menscheit
which he in his manhood

durch uns arme alle leit,
for us poor all suffered,

daz er gewer mich armez wîp,
that he grant me poor woman,

daz dîne sêle und dînen lîp
that thy soul and thy body

der tiuvel muezе vueren hin!«
the devil must lead hence!«

dô sprach der tiuvel wider in:
then spoke the devil to him:

»sich, daz ist ernest, nû nim war!«
»see, that is earnest, now take heed!«

er greif in vaste in daz hâr
he grasped him fast in the hair

und begunde ze berge gâhen,
and began to mountain to-hasten,

daz ez alle die an sâhen,
that it all those at saw,

die an dem market wâren.
who at the market were.

im moht' diu vart wol swâren,
to-him might the journey well grow-heavy,

er muoste kumberlîcher varn,
he must more-wretchedly fare,

denne daz huon mit dem arn.
than the hen with the eagle.

Dem tiuvel wart von dannen gâch.
To-the devil became from thence hasty.

die liute sâhen allez nâch.
the people looked all after.

Ichn' weiz, waz darnâch geschach,
I-not know, what there-after happened,

dâ man in aller verrest sach.
where one him of-all farthest saw.

Dâ endet sich daz mære.
There ends itself the tale.

sust was der rihtære
thus was the judge

mit sige worden sigelôs;
with victory become victoryless;

er wânde gewinnen, er verlôs.
he weened to-win, he lost.

Ez ist ein vil unwîser rât,
It is a very unwise counsel,

der mit dem tiuvel umbe gât;
who with the devil around goes;

swer gerne mit im umbe vert,
whoever gladly with him around fares,

dem wirt ein bœser lôn beschert.
to-him is a wicked reward allotted.

Er kan so mangen grimmen list,
He can so many grim craft,

daz er vil guot ze vürhten ist.
that he very well to fear is.

Daz wart wol an dem rihter schîn
That became well on the judge shown

Got lœs' uns von der helle pîn!
God release us from the hell's pain!

Der künig im bade

IX · THE NAKED KING

A mighty king orders the verse of the Magnificat that God casts down the mighty struck from every book. While he bathes, an angel takes his shape and his place, and the king is beaten, thrown out naked, and mocked. His cupbearer takes him in as a fool and brings him to court, where the courtiers jeer and the queen calls him mad. The angel then reveals himself, tells the king that God exalts and lowers whom He will, and bids him believe the priests and be merciful. The king repents, receives back his kingdom, and has the verse written again.

Wer an im selbe niht bewart
Whoever in himself self not guards-against

unzuht und unrehte hôchvart,
ill-breeding and wrong arrogance,

den lezzet Got dort oder hîe.
him hurts God there or here.

nû hœret, wie ez hievor ergie
now hear, how it here-before went

einem künege hêre,
to-a king lordly,

an dem lak michel êre,
on whom lay great honor,

der was ouch sô gewaltik,
he was also so mighty,

daz er vil manikvaltik
that he very manifold

wirde vuorte an sîner hant,
worth carried in his hand,

Diutschiu zunge und Welschiu lant
German tongue and Romance lands

dienten im vorhtiklîche,
served to-him fearfully,

und allez Rômisch riche,
and all Roman realm,

im was diu werlt undertân.
to-him was the world subject.

des wolde er den gelouben hân,
of-that would he the belief have,

daz nieman möhte ob im sîn:
that no-one might above him be:

dô wart im offenlîchen schîn,
then became to-him openly apparent,

daz unser herre Jêsus Krist
that our Lord Jesus Christ

ein voget ob allen vürsten ist.
a lord above all princes is.

Daran geloubte er kleine;
There-on believed he little;

in dûhte, daz er eine
to-him seemed, that he alone

solde ob allen vürsten wesen.
should above all princes be.

Er hôrt' eines âbendes lesen,
He heard one evening read,

sô stêt geschriben an einer stat
so stands written in a place

in dem heiligen Magnificat:
in the holy Magnificat:

»Deposuit potentes,
»He-has-put-down the-mighty,

et exaltavit humiles.«
and has-exalted the-humble.«

[dô wolt' der künik wizzen ez]
[*then would the king know it*]

diz wart im harte swære:
this became to-him very grievous:

doch vrâgt' er, wie dem wære,
yet asked he, how it were,

die wolgelêrten liute.
the well-learned people.

die brâhten im ze diute,
they brought to-him to meaning,

waz Got mit sîner erde tuot:
what God with his earth does:

»er hœhet alle dêmuot,
»he exalts all humility,

und nidert hôchvertikeit.«
and lowers arrogance.«

diu rede was dem künige leit,
the speech was to-the king sorrowful,

er sprach: ez möhte niht geschên;
he spoke: it might not happen;

wâ der künik ie würde gesehen,
where the king ever were seen,

der sîn möhte gewaltik wesen?
who of-him might mighty be?

er hiez den vers niemer lesen,
he bade the verse never read,

in solde nieman hœren;
it should no-one hear;

man muoste die schrift zestœren,
one must the writing destroy,

von sînem gewalte durch die nôt,
by his power for the need,

in allen landen er gebôt,
in all lands he commanded,

daz man den vers wider abschribe;
that one the verse back off-wrote;

an swelhen buochen er belibe,
in whatever books it remained,

diu wolt' er gar verbrennen.
them would he wholly burn.

ez muosten boten rennen
it must messengers run

ze allen sînen pfaffen,
to all his priests,

mit den hiez er schaffen,
with them bade he arrange,

swer den vers »Deposuit«
whoever the verse »He-has-put-down«

læse, der mueste sîn beste lit
read, he must his best limb

vil balde ze hove senden,
very quickly to court send,

dâmit wolde er in pfenden.
therewith would he him distrain.

Alsô wâren disiu wort
So were these words

ein wîle von im zestôrt,
a while by him destroyed,

daz nieman sô turstlîch was,
that no-one so daring was,

der in offenlîchen las,
who it openly read,

oder an deheiner vesper sank.
or at any vesper sang.

nû stuont ez darnâch vil unlank,
now stood it there-after very not-long,

daz in Jêsus Kristus lie
that him Jesus Christ let

innen werden, daz er hie
aware become, that he here

gewaltik was und immer ist.
mighty was and ever is.

nû hœret, welich ein spæhen list
now hear, what a clever craft

Got dem künige erzeigete,
God to-the king showed,

sîn sælde er balde veigete.
his fortune he quickly doomed.

Er gie eines in daz bat;
He went once into the bath;

dô kom ein engel an sîn stat,
then came an angel into his place,

in aller der gebære,
in all the bearing,

als ez der künik wære;
as-if it the king were;

wan nieman anders in erkôs.
for no-one other him recognized.

der künik sîn êre dâ verlôs
the king his honor there lost

und allen sînen rîchtuom;
and all his wealth;

und wolde doch haben sînen ruom
and would yet have his fame

in küniges wîse vür sich dar;
in king's manner before himself there;

dô nam man sîn vil kleine war,
then took one of-him very little heed,

und wart dem engel zuo gesehen;
and was to-the angel to looked;

swaz der wolte, daz was geschên:
whatever he would, that was done:

des küniges wart vergezzen.
of-the king was forgotten.

idoch was er gesezȝen
yet was he sat

zuo dem engel ûf die bank.
to the angel on the bench.

der bader dâ hervür drank
the bath-man there forth pressed

und hiez in dannen sizzen.
and bade him thence sit.

dô sprach der künik mit wizzen
then spoke the king with wits

gegen dem sweiȝbadære,
to the sweat-bath-man,

ob er trunken wære:
if he drunk were:

»ich bin'ȝ, der künik, der herre dîn.« —
»I am-it, the king, the lord thy.«—

»ir müget gar ein tôre sîn,«
»you may wholly a fool be,«

sprach der bader iesâ
spoke the bath-man at-once

»mîn herre der künik sizzet dâ.
»my lord the king sits there.

Ich wæne, ir sît vol von wîn:
I ween, you are full of wine:

wes künik möhtet ir gesîn?
whose king might you be?

Wâ lit iuwer rîche?«
Where lies your realm?«

der künik sprach zornlîche:
the king spoke wrathfully:

»sehet umb disen bœsewiht!
»look about this wretch!

daȝ der einen vür mich siht,
that he one for me sees,

der alreste herin gîenk.«
who first-of-all hither-in went.«

einen kübel er gevienk
a tub he seized

und warf den bader swinde.
and threw the bath-man swiftly.

dô kam daz badergesinde
then came the bath-household

und rouften [in] alsô harte
and plucked [him] so hard

dem künige ûz sîner swarte
to-the king out-of his scalp

sîns hâres vil manik hant vol.
of-his hair very many hand full.

wan daz der engel tet sô wol,
except that the angel did so well,

daz er dem volke werte
that he the folk restrained

und dâ den künik nerte,
and there the king saved,

er möhte anders [ab in] immer klagen,
he might otherwise [over them] ever lament,

im wart sîn nak vil wol zeslagen.
to-him was his neck very well beaten.

Der engel ûz dem bade gie,
The angel out-of the bath went,

den künik er alsô sizzen lie
the king he so sitting let

in eines tôren wîse.
in a fool's manner.

dem engel wol ze prîse
to-the angel well to praise

des küniges wât wart an geleit,
the king's raiment was on laid,

vil schône er zuo der bürge reit.
very finely he to the castle rode.

Dô wart der eine künik blôz,
Then became the one king naked,

der bader und sîn hûsgenôz'
the bath-man and his house-fellows

stiezen in ûzerhalb der tür;
pushed him outside the door;

dô stuont er nakter darvür,
then stood he naked there-before,

und enweste, wes er solde jehen.
and not-knew, what he should avow.

dô sprach er: »swie mir ist geschên,
then spoke he: »however to-me is happened,

ich was ein künik hiute vruo.«
I was a king today early.«

dô geschach vil spottes zuo
then happened much mockery to

von armen und von rîchen,
from poor and from rich,

si sprâchen spottiklîchen,
they spoke mockingly,

wâ sîn gesinde wære?
where his household were?

»die iuwer soumære
»those your sumpter-beasts

die, wæne, ein teil ze lange sîn;
they, ween-I, a part too long be;

si sint ertrunken in dem Rîn,
they are drowned in the Rhine,

und iuwer gesinde überal.«
and your household over-all.«

er hôrte spot unde schal,
he heard mockery and din,

ez wær' im liep oder leit.
it were to-him dear or sorrow.
der künik stuont mit arbeit
the king stood with hardship
vor sîner eigenlîcher diet.
before his own people.
sîn trûrik herze im geriet,
his mournful heart to-him counseled,
daz er begunde gedenken
that he began to-think
an einen vrumen schenken,
of a valiant cupbearer,
der was dâvor sîn bester rât.
who was there-before his best counsel.
er lief nakket, âne wât,
he ran naked, without raiment,
mit grôzer schame den liuten vor
with great shame the people before
unz hin an des schenken tor.
until hence to the cupbearer's gate.
Der schenke was gesezzen
The cupbearer was sat
ein wîle nâch dem ezzen,
a while after the eating,
wan ez was nâch der inbizzît.
for it was after the meal-time.
der künik dem torwarten schrît'
the king to-the gatekeeper cried
und hiez sich in lâzen,
and bade himself in let,
»daz ich von den verwâzen
»that I from the cursed-ones
kum, die mir loufent nâch.«
come, who me run after.«

dem torwertel was niht gâch,
to-the gatekeeper was not hasty,

dô sprach der portenære,
then spoke the porter,

wer an der pforten wære.
who at the gate were.

Er sprach: »ich bin'z, der künik hie.« —
He spoke: »I am-it, the king here.«—

»entriuwen, sô gesach ich nie
»in-truth, so saw I never

künik sô lesterlîchen stân.
king so shamefully stand.

irn' werdet tâlank herin gelân.«
you-not are today hither-in let.«

Dô schrît' er aber sêre.
Then cried he again sorely.

der schenke sprach durch êre:
the cupbearer spoke for honor:

»sag' an, wer ist an dem tor?« —
»say on, who is at the gate?«—

»herre, dâ stêt einer vor,
»lord, there stands one before,

der jihet, daz er ein künik sî,
who avows, that he a king be,

und ist doch aller wæte vrî
and is yet of-all raiment free

und ist gar ein blôzer man.« —
and is wholly a naked man.«—

»neinâ, lîhe im etswaz an,
»no, lend to-him something on,

und lâz' in herin, durch Got:
and let him hither-in, for God:

si habent hiute grôzen spot
they have today great mockery

ûz dem armen hie getriben;
of the poor-one here driven;

mich wundert, wie er sî beliben,
me wonders, how he be remained,

daz er niht anderswâ gie.«
that he not elsewhere went.«

den künik man dô in lie,
the king one then in let,

in einer snœden wæte,
in a mean raiment,

hin vür den schenken stæte.
hence before the cupbearer steadfast.

Der hiez in willekomen sîn.
He bade him welcome be.

dô sprach der künik: »vriunt mîn,
then spoke the king: »friend my,

wiltu mich niht erkennen baz,
(if)-wilt-thou me not recognize better,

daz muoz ich lâzen âne haz;
that must I let without hatred;

ez ist mir hiute alsô betaget,
it is to-me today so dawned,

daz ich bin wunderlîch verjaget
that I am wondrously driven

von êren und von guote.
from honors and from goods.

vil wol was mir ze muote
very well was to-me in mind

eins dinges, daz wolde ich hân getân:
of-one thing, that would I have done:

dô spræche dû, ich solde ez lân,
then spokest thou, I should it leave,

ez wær' den vürsten ungemach.«
it were to-the princes displeasing.«

der künik dem schenken vil verjach
the king to-the cupbearer much confessed

von heim(e)lîchen sachen,
of secret things,

biz daz er begunde lachen
until that he began to-laugh

und sprach: »diz ist diu wârheit,
and spoke: »this is the truth,

und hât iu'z der tiuvel geseit,
and has to-you-it the devil said,

diz rette mîn her[re] wider mich.«
this spoke my lord to me.«

dô sprach der künik: »der bin ich,
then spoke the king: »he am I,

swie mir ist misselungen
however to-me is miscarried

oder swaz mich hât verdrungen,
or whatever me has thrust-out,

sô weiz doch wol mîns herzen sin,
so knows yet well my heart's sense,

daz ich'z der rehte künik bin.«
that I-it the right king am.«

Der schenke sprach: »ir sît ein man,
The cupbearer spoke: »you are a man,

den nieman ab gerihten kan.«
whom no-one off judge can.«

Er hiez dem armen z'ezzen tragen,
He bade to-the poor-one to-eat carry,

er dâhte: »ich wil dem künege sagen,
he thought: »I will to-the king tell,

dirre tôre wænet, er sî rîch;
this fool weens, he be rich;

daz wirt in dunken gemelîch.«
that will to-him seem amusing.«

Der schenke der was alsô wert,
The cupbearer he was so worthy,

daz man sînes râtes dikke gert',
that one of-his counsel often desired,

und gezam ouch dâ ze hove wol,
and suited also there at court well,

wan er riet allez, daz man sol
for he counseled all, that one shall

ze êren tuon dem rîche;
to honors do to-the realm;

er gienk gezogenlîche
he went courteously

vor den engel dâ zestunt,
before the angel there at-once,

unt tet im disiu mære kunt
and made to-him these tidings known

von sînem spæhen gaste.
of his strange guest.

er smielt' iemitten vaste;
he smiled meanwhile fast;

dô sprach der engel: »wâ ist der?
then spoke the angel: »where is he?

heizet mir in kumen her.«
bid me him come hither.«

Dô hiez der schenke springen,
Then bade the cupbearer spring,

den künik ze hove bringen.
the king to court bring.

Den vuorte man balde ûf den sal.
Him led one quickly up-onto the hall.

daz hovegesinde überal
the court-household over-all

schrîten allesamt zehant:
cried all-together at-once:

»willekom, her künik âne lant!«
»welcome, sir king without land!«

Diu künegin[ne] bî dem engel saz,
The queen by the angel sat,

si sprach: »herre, wer ist daz?«
she spoke: »lord, who is that?«

Dô huob der schenke wider an,
Then raised the cupbearer again on,

er sprach: »vrouwe, daz ist ein man,
he spoke: »lady, that is a man,

der spæhste, den ich ie gesach.«
the strangest, whom I ever saw.«

der engel ze einem ritter sprach:
the angel to a knight spoke:

»heizet die liute stille dagen,
»bid the people quietly be-silent,

daz uns der tôre müge gesagen.«
that to-us the fool may tell.«

Dô gie der arme künik vür.
Then went the poor king forth.

der engel saz in rîcher kür
the angel sat in rich choice

bî der schœnen künigîn,
by the fair queen,

und gruozte den widerwenden sîn,
and greeted the adversary his,

der was im vînt und gehaz,
who was to-him enemy and hostile,

daz er bî sîner vrouwen saz:
that he by his lady sat:

doch saz er bî ir âne vâr.
yet sat he by her without danger.

der engel sprach: »guot man, ist ez wâr,
the angel spoke: »good man, is it true,

sît ir künik, habt ir verjehen?«
are you king, have you avowed?«

er sprach: »ich hab' den tak gesehen,
he spoke: »I have the day seen,

daz ich ouch was gewaltik hie.
that I also was mighty here.

mîn vrouwe diu enpfie mich ie
my lady she received me ever

reht als ein biderb wîp irn wirt:
right as a worthy woman her host:

ir guetlîch gruoz mich gar verbirt,
her kindly greeting me wholly forgoes,

der was mir ê unverseit,
it was to-me before unrefused,

si was ze dienste mir bereit,
she was to service to-me ready,

biz hiute an disen leiden tak;
until today on this sorrowful day;

dô ich nû næhest bî ir lak,
when I now last by her lay,

dô schiede wir uns vriuntlîch[e]:
then parted we ourselves friendly:

dem tuot si nû vil ungelîch[e].«
to-that does she now very unlike.«

Diu künegin[ne] wart sunderrôt,
The queen became especially-red,

si schamte sich, daz tet ir nôt,
she was-ashamed herself, that did to-her need,

si weste niht, ob si in ie gesach;
she knew not, if she him ever saw;

daz er ir dâ ze wîbe jach,
that he her there as woman claimed,

daz was îr inneklîchen leit,
that was to-her heartily sorrowful,

si sprach in ir bescheidenheit
she spoke in her discretion

zuo dem engel: »herre mîn,
to the angel: »lord my,

der man mag wol unsinnik sîn,
the man may well senseless be,

daz er dâ redet, des ist niht.« —
what he there says, of-that is nothing.«—

»swîget, ir rehter bœsewiht!«
»be-silent, you right wretch!«

sprach ein alter hoverîter
spoke an old court-knight

»waz veiges mannes sît ir!
»what of-doomed man are you!

Man sol iuch heizen slîfen.«
One shall you bid drag.«

do begunden nâch im grîfen
then began after him to-grasp

die tœrischen jungelinge;
the foolish youths;

ein grôzer ungelinge
a great misfortune

wær' in (dâ) komen an,
would-have to-him (there) come on,

wan daz in der engel dan
except that him the angel thence

vuorte von in âne schaden
led from them without harm

mit im in ein schœnez gadem,
with him into a fair chamber,

dô sprach der engel, Gotes bot':
then spoke the angel, God's messenger:

»sag' an, geloubestu noch, daz Got
»say on, believest-thou yet, that God

gewaltik ist über alle geschaft?
mighty is over all creation?

sich, wie gar sîn [sterke] Gotes kraft
see, how wholly his [strength] God's power

dich hât verdrungen âne wer!
thee has thrust-out without defense!

waz hilfet dîn michel her?
what helps thy great host?

Wâ volget dir nû ieman mit?
Where follows thee now anyone with?

noch ist wâr »Deposuit
yet is true »He-has-put-down

potentes de sede.«
the-mighty from-the seat.«

Got der tet dir noch wol mê,
God he did to-thee yet well more,

der hât dich gedrükket nider:
he has thee pressed down:

wolt' er, du würdest künik wider.«
(if)-willed he, thou wouldst-become king again.«

Dô sprach der künik: »her[re], nû saget mir,
Then spoke the king: »lord, now tell to-me,

durch iuwer zuht, wer sît ir?
for your breeding, who are you?

Sît ir'z, von dem ir habt geseit,
(If)-Are you-it, of whom you have said,

sô öuget iuwer edelkeit
so show your nobility

an mir armen tœrischen man
on me poor foolish man

und wîset mich doch etswar an.« 280
and direct me yet somewhere on.«

Dô sprach der engel: »ich bin'ʒ niht Got,
Then spoke the angel: »I am-it not God,

ich bin'ʒ ein engel und sin bot',
I am-it an angel and his messenger,

des wâren Jêsus Kristus,
of-the true Jesus Christ,

der hiez mich werben mit dir sus,
who bade me deal with thee thus,

als dir hiute ist widervarn, 285
as to-thee today is befallen,

und liez dich dâvon werden arm,
and let thee there-from become poor,

von dîner hôchvertikeit,
from thy arrogance,

dô man dir die wârheit seit':
when one to-thee the truth told:

»Got hœhet und nidert, swen er wil,«
»God exalts and lowers, whom he will,«

des widerspræche du [gar] ze vil, 290
of-that gainsaidest thou [wholly] too much,

unt touk dir noch ze nihte.
and avails thee yet to nothing.

z'wâr, wan dîn guot gerihte,
truly, except thy good judgment,

dir wær' dîn schulde unvergeben,
to-thee would-be thy guilt unforgiven,

und muestes immer alsust leben.«
and wouldst-have-to ever thus live.«

Do viel der künik hin zetal
Then fell the king hence to-valley

vür den engel manigen val,
before the angel many fall,

er sprach: »nu gebietet über mich;
he spoke: »now command over me;

waz Got wil, daz wil ouch ich.«
what God will, that will also I.«

In hiez der engel ûf stân,
Him bade the angel up stand,

er sprach: »dû solt gelouben hân,
he spoke: »thou shalt belief have,

daz dir die priester künden;
what to-thee the priests proclaim;

weistu si halt in sünden,
(if)-knowest-thou them even in sins,

doch lêrent si dich mit der schrift
yet teach they thee with the scripture

die wâren Kristenlîchen stift.
the true Christian foundation.

Noch râte ich dir mêre,
Yet counsel I to-thee more,

wiltu behalten dîn êre,
(if)-wilt-thou keep thy honor,

sô merke rehte, waz ich sage:
so mark rightly, what I say:

swer dir sînen kumber klage,
whoever to-thee his affliction laments,

gegen dem soltu erbarmik sîn;
toward him shalt-thou merciful be;

unt volgest dû der lêre mîn,
and (if)-followest thou the teaching my,

sô wirstu wider künik, als ê,
so becomest-thou again king, as before,

und bist behalten immermê.«
and art saved evermore.«

Der künik vor vröuden zeher lie,
The king for joys tears let,

er neigte sich biz ûf diu knie,
he bowed himself until onto the knees,

er sprach: »ich volge iu immer gern,
he spoke: »I follow you ever gladly,

durch Got, welt ir mich zehant gewern.«
for God, (if)-will you me at-once grant.«

Der engel bôt im sîne hant
The angel offered to-him his hand

und gab im allez sîn gewant
and gave to-him all his clothing

und ouch sîn künikrîche wider.
and also his kingdom back.

dô leit' der künik daz rökkel nider,
then laid the king the little-coat down,

daz im der schenke lîhen hiez,
which to-him the cupbearer lend bade,

do in sîn torwertel in verliez.
when him his gatekeeper in let.

Der engel vor dem künege versweim,
The angel before the king vanished,

und vuor gegen hîmelriche heim,
and fared toward heaven-realm home,

ze sînem anblikke.
to his sight.

der künik sprach vil dikke:
the king spoke very often:

»gelobet sî der suezе Krist,
»praised be the sweet Christ,

der alsô reht gewaltik ist.
who so rightly mighty is.

Swaz mir der engel hât geseit,
Whatever to-me the angel has said,
daz ist diu rehte wârheit;
that is the right truth;
ich hete hievor kranken sin:
I had here-before weak sense:
ich weiz nû rehte, wer ich bin.
I know now rightly, who I am.
Ich sol wizzeklîcher baden.«
I shall more-wisely bathe.«
Er gie mit vröuden vür daz gadem,
He went with joys before the chamber,
sam einer, der nie leit gewan.
as one, who never sorrow won.
dô vragten in sîn dienstman:
then asked him his servants:
»herre, wâ mag der tôre sîn?«
»lord, where may the fool be?«
dô sprach der künik: »nû gêt herin,
then spoke the king: »now go hither-in,
und schouwet, wie mir ist geschên.«
and behold, how to-me is happened.«
er begunde in offenlîche jehen
he began to-them openly to-avow
und seit' in disiu mære,
and told to-them these tidings,
wie im gelungen wære,
how to-him succeeded were,
der küneginne und den sînen;
to-the queen and to-the his;
von den grôzen pînen,
of the great pains,
die er vor in allen leit,
which he before them all suffered,

und wie er mit dem bader streit.
and how he with the bath-man fought.

Er zeigte in, wâ daz rökkel lak.
He showed to-them, where the little-coat lay.

vil manik rîter des erschrak,
very many knight of-that was-frightened,

si heten alle wol gesworn,
they would-have all well sworn,

lîp und guot daz wær' verlorn.
body and goods that were lost.

Diu künegin[ne] bat in hulde,
The queen begged him for-favor,

si sprach: »ich bin in schulde,
she spoke: »I am in guilt,

ir wârt mir wærlîch[en] unerkant.«
you were to-me truly unknown.«

er slôz ir hende in sîne hant,
he locked her hands in his hand,

und sprach: »nû swîget stille,
and spoke: »now be-silent still,

wan ez was Gotes wille;
for it was God's will;

ouch bekant' ich mîn selbes niht.«
also knew I my self not.«

dô wart der vers »Deposuit«
then was the verse »He-has-put-down«

gar lobelîchen widerbrâht,
wholly praisefully brought-back,

den er dâvor (hât') versmâht,
which he there-before (had) scorned,

den hiez er wider schrîben an,
it bade he again write on,

und wart ein reht biderber man.
and became a right worthy man.

Der Welt Lohn

X · THE WORLD'S REWARD

Sir Wirent of Gravenberg, a knight who has spent his life serving the world for praise and the love of ladies, sits reading a tale of love when a woman of overwhelming beauty enters. She calls him her faithful servant and names herself the World, come to show him his reward. When she turns, her back is crawling with worms, snakes, and toads, and her flesh is eaten to the bone. Wirent leaves his wife and children, takes the cross, and dies in penance. Konrad von Würzburg urges every reader to leave the world and save his soul.

Ir werlte minnære,
You of-the-world lovers,

vernement disiu mære,
hear these tidings,

wie einem ritter gelanc
how to-a knight it-went

der nâch der werlte lône ranc
who after the world's reward strove

beidiu spâte unde fruo.
both late and early.

er dâhte in manige wîs dar zuo
he thought in many ways there to

wâ mite er daz begienge
where with he that achieved

daz er den lôn enphienge
that he the reward received

werltlicher êren.
of-worldly honors.

er kunde wol gemêren
he could well increase

sîn lob an allen orten,
his praise in all places,

mit werken und mit worten
with works and with words

sîn leben was sô vollebrâht
his life was so accomplished

daz sîn zem besten wart gedâht
that of-him at-the best was thought

in allen tiutschen landen.
in all German lands.

er hæte sich vor schanden
he had himself from disgraces

alliu sîniu jâr behuot;
all his years guarded;

er was hübisch unde fruot,
he was courtly and wise,

schœne und aller tugende vol.
fair and of-all virtue full.

swâ mite ein man zer werlte sol
where with a man in-the world shall

bejagen hôher wirde prîs,
hunt-down of-high worth prize,

daz kunde wol der herre wîs
that could well the lord wise

bedenken und betrahten.
consider and ponder.

man sach den vil geslahten
one saw the very well-born-one

ûzerweltiu cleider tragen.
choice clothes wear.

birsen, beizen unde jagen
stalking, hawking and hunting

kunde er wol und treip sîn vil,
could he well and drove of-it much,

schâchzabel unde seitenspil
chess and string-play

daz was sîn kurzewîle.
that was his pastime.

wær über hundert mîle
were over hundred miles

gezeiget im ein ritterschaft,
shown to-him a knighthood,

dâ wær der herre tugenthaft
there would-have the lord virtuous

mit guotem willen hin geriten
with good will thither ridden

und hæte gerne dâ gestriten
and would-have gladly there striven

nâch lobe ûf hôher minne solt.
for praise on high love's wage.

er was den frouwen alsô holt
he was to-the ladies so loyal

die wol bescheiden wâren,
who well discerning were,

daz er in sînen jâren
that he in his years

mit lange wernder stæte
with long lasting constancy

in sô gedienet hæte,
them so served had,

daz alliu sældenhaften wîp
that all blessed women

sînen wünneclichen lîp
his delightful body

lobten unde prîsten.
praised and prized.

als uns diu buoch bewîsten
as us the books showed

und ich von im geschriben vant,
and I of him written found,

sô was der herre genant
so was the lord named

her Wirent dâ von Grâvenberc.
sir Wirent there of Gravenberg.

er hæte werltlîchiu werc
he had worldly works

gewirket alliu sîniu jâr.
worked all his years.

sîn herze stille und offenbâr
his heart quietly and openly

nâch der minne tobte.
after the love raved.

Sus saz der hôchgelobte
Thus sat the highly-praised-one

in einer kemenâten,
in a chamber,

mit fröuden wol berâten,
with joys well provided,

und hæte ein buoch in sîner hant,
and had a book in his hand,

dar an er âventiure vant
there on he adventure found

von der minne geschriben.
of the love written.

dar obe hæte er dô vertriben
there over had he then passed

den tag unz ûf die vesperzît;
the day until to the vesper-time;

sîn fröude was vil harte wît
his joy was very wholly wide

von süezer rede die er las.
from sweet speech which he read.

dô er alsus gesezzen was,
when he thus sat was,

dô quam geslichen dort her
then came crept there hither

ein wîp nâch sînes herzen ger
a woman after his heart's desire

ze wunsche wol geprüevet gar
to wish well tested wholly

und alsô minneclich gevar
and so lovely colored

daz man nie schœner wîp gesach.
that one never fairer woman saw.

ir schœne volleclichen brach
her beauty fully broke

für alle frouwen die nu sint.
before all ladies who now are.

sô rehte minneclichez kint
so right lovely child

von wîbes brüsten nie geslouf.
from woman's breasts never slipped.

ich spriche daz ûf mînen touf,
I speak that upon my baptism,

daz sie noch verre schœner was
that she yet far fairer was

dan Vênus oder Pallas
than Venus or Pallas

und alle die gotinne
and all the goddesses

die wîlen phlâgen minne.
who formerly tended love.

ir antlütz unde ir varwe
her face and her color

diu wâren beidiu garwe
they were both wholly

durliuhtec als ein spiegellîn.
translucent as a little-mirror.

ir schœne gap sô liehten schîn
her beauty gave so bright shine

und alsô wünneclichen glast
and so delightful gleam

daz der selbe palast
that the same palace

von ir lîbe erliuhtet wart.
from her body lit-up was.

der wunsch enhæte niht gespart
the wish had not spared

an ir die sînen meisterschaft,
on her the its mastery,

er hæte sîne grœsten kraft
it had its greatest power

mit ganzem flîze an si geleit.
with whole diligence on her laid.

swaz man von schœnen wîben seit,
whatever one of fair women tells,

der übergulde was ir lîp.
of-them surpassing was her body.

ez wart nie minneclicher wîp
it was never lovelier woman

beschouwet ûf der erde.
beheld on the earth.

ouch was nâch vollem werde
also was after full worth

ir lîp gecleidet schône.
her body clad finely.

diu cleider und diu crône
the clothes and the crown

diu diu selbe frouwe cluoc
which the same lady clever

ûf und an ir lîbe truoc,
on and about her body bore,

diu wâren alsô rîche
they were so rich

daz si sicherlîche
that them surely

nie man vergelten kunde,
never one repay could,

ob man si veile funde.
if one them for-sale found.

Von Grâvenberce her Wirent
Of Gravenberg sir Wirent

erschrac von ir wol zwirent,
was-frightened by her well twice,

dô si quam geslichen.
when she came crept.

sîn varwe wart erblichen
his color became paled

vil harte von ir künfte dâ.
very hard from her coming there.

in nam des michel wunder sâ
him took of-it great wonder at-once

waz frouwen alsô quæme.
what of-ladies so came.

ûf spranc der vil genæme
up sprang the very pleasing-one

erschrocken unde missevar
frightened and discolored

und enphie die minneclichen gar
and received the lovely-one wholly

vil schône als er wol kunde.
very finely as he well could.

er sprach ûz süezem munde:
he spoke out-of sweet mouth:

'sint, frouwe, gote willekomen!
'be, lady, to-God welcome!

swaz ich von frouwen hân vernomen,
whatever I of ladies have heard,

der übergulde sint ir gar'.
of-them surpassing are you wholly'.

diu frouwe sprach mit zühten dar:
the lady spoke with breeding thither:

'vil lieber friunt, got lône dir!
'very dear friend, God reward thee!

erschric sô sêre niht von mir:
be-frightened so sorely not of me:

ich binz diu selbe frouwe doch
I am-it the same lady indeed

der dû mit willen dienest noch
whom thou with will servest still

und aldâher gedienet hâst.
and all-hitherto served hast.

swie dû vor mir erschrocken stâst,
however thou before me frightened standest,

sô bin ich doch daz selbe wîp
so am I yet the same woman

durch die du sêle unde lîp
for whom thou soul and body

vil dicke hâst gewâget.
very often hast hazarded.

dîn herze niht betrâget,
thy heart not grows-weary,

ez trage durch mich hôhen muot.
it bear for me high spirit.

dû bist hübisch unde fruot
thou art courtly and wise

gewesen alliu dîniu jâr,
been all thy years,

dîn werder lîp süez unde clâr
thy worthy body sweet and bright

hât nâch mir gerungen,
has after me striven,

gesprochen und gesungen
spoken and sung

von mir swaz er guotes kan;
of me whatever it of-good can;

du wære et ie mîn dienestman
thou were just ever my serving-man

den âbent und den morgen,
the evening and the morning,

du kundest wol besorgen
thou couldst well procure

hôhez lob und werden prîs;
high praise and worthy prize;

du blüejest als ein meienrîs
thou bloomest as a May-twig

in manicvalter tugende,
in manifold virtue,

du hâst von kindes jugende
thou hast from child's youth

getragen ie der êren kranz,
borne ever the of-honors garland,

dîn sin ist lûter unde ganz
thy sense is pure and whole

an triuwen ie gein mir gewesen.
in faithfulness ever toward me been.

vil werder ritter ûzerlesen,
very worthy knight chosen,

dar umbe bin ich komen her,
there about am I come hither,

daz dû nach dînes herzen ger
that thou after thy heart's desire

mînen lîp von hôher kür
my body of high choice

beschouwest wider unde für,
beholdest back and forth,

wie schœne ich sî, wie vollekomen.
how fair I be, how perfect.

den hôhen lôn, den rîchen fromen,
the high reward, the rich profit,

den dû von mir enphâhen maht
which thou from me receive mayst

umb dînen dienest vil geslaht,
for thy service very noble,

den solt du schouwen unde spehen.
that shalt thou behold and examine.

ich wil dich gerne lâzen sehen
I will thee gladly let see

waz lônes dir geziehen sol.
what of-reward to-thee befit shall.

du hâst gedienet mir sô wol'.
thou hast served me so well.

Den edeln herren tugentrîch
To-the noble lord virtue-rich

dûhte harte wunderlîch
seemed very wondrous

dirre frouwen tegedinc,
this lady's parley,

wan si der selbe jungelinc
for her the same youth

mit sînen ougen nie gesach,
with his eyes never saw,

und doch diu selbe frouwe sprach,
and yet the same lady spoke,

er wære ir dienestman gesîn.
he had her serving-man been.

er sprach: 'genâde, frouwe mîn,
he spoke: 'mercy, lady my,

165 habe ich iu gedienet iht,
(if)-have I to-you served anything,

entriuwen des enweiz ich niht.
in-truth of-that know I nothing.

mich dunket âne lougen
to-me seems without denial

daz ich mit mînen ougen
that I with my eyes

iuch vil selten habe gesehen.
you very seldom have seen.

170 sît aber ir geruochent jehen
since however you deign to-avow

mîn ze knehte, sælic wîp,
me as servant, blessed woman,

sô sol mîn herze und mîn lîp
so shall my heart and my body

iu ze dienste sîn bereit
to-you to service be ready

mit willeclicher arebeit
with willing labor

175 unz ûf mînes tôdes zil.
until to my death's goal.

ir hânt sô hôher sælden vil
you have so of-high blessings much

und alsô manicvalte tugent,
and so manifold virtue,

daz iuwer fröudeberndiu jugent
that your joy-bearing youth

mir vil wol gelônen mac.
to-me very well reward may.

wol mich daz ich disen tac
well-for me that I this day

gelebet hân! des fröuwe ich mich,
lived have! of-that rejoice I myself,

sît daz ir, frouwe minneclich,
since that you, lady lovely,

mînen dienst enphâhen welt.
my service receive will.

frouwe an tugenden ûzgezelt,
lady in virtues chosen-out,

geruochent künden mir ein teil
deign to-tell to-me a part

durch daz wünnebernde heil
for the delight-bearing salvation

daz an iu, schœniu frouwe, lît:
which in you, fair lady, lies:

von wannen ir geheizen sît
from whence you called are

oder wie ir sît genant,
or how you are named,

iuwer name und iuwer lant
your name and your land

werde mir hie kunt getân,
be to-me here known made,

durch daz ich wizze sunder wân
so that I know without doubt

ob ich in allen mînen tagen
whether I in all my days

ie von iu gehôrte sagen'.
ever of you heard tell'.

Des antwurt im diu frouwe dô,
To-that answered to-him the lady then,

si sprach gezogenlîche alsô:
she spoke courteously thus:

'vil lieber friunt, daz sol geschehen.
'very dear friend, that shall happen.

ich wil dir gerne hie verjehen
I will to-thee gladly here avow

mînes hôchgelobten namen.
my highly-praised name.

dun darft dich niemer des geschamen
thou needest thyself never of-it be-ashamed

daz dû mir undertænic bist.
that thou to-me subject art.

mir dienet swaz ûf erden ist
to-me serves whatever on earth is

hordes unde guotes,
of-hoard and of-goods,

ich bin sô hôhes muotes
I am so of-high spirit

daz keiser und küneges kint
that of-emperors and of-kings children

under mîner crône sint,
under my crown are,

grâven, frîen, herzogen
counts, freemen, dukes

habent mir ir knie gebogen
have to-me their knee bent

und leistent alle mîn gebot.
and perform all my command.

ich fürhte niemen âne got,
I fear no-one except God,

der ist gewaltic über mich.
he is powerful over me.

diu Werlt bin geheizen ich,
the World am called I,

der dû nu lange hâst gegert.
whom thou now long hast desired.

lônes solt du sîn gewert
of-reward shalt thou be granted

von mir als ich dir zeige nû.
by me as I to-thee show now.

hie kum ich dir, daz schouwe dû'.
here come I to-thee, that behold thou'.

Sus kêrtes im den rucke dar:
Thus turned-she to-him the back thither:

der was in allen enden gar
it was in all ends wholly

bestecket und behangen
studded and hung

mit würmen und mit slangen,
with worms and with snakes,

mit kroten und mit nâtern;
with toads and with adders;

ir lîp was voller blâtern
her body was full of-blisters

und ungefüeger eizen,
and of-monstrous boils,

fliegen und âmeizen
flies and ants

ein wunder drinne sâzen,
a wonder therein sat,

ir fleisch die maden âzen
her flesh the maggots ate

unz ûf daz gebeine.
until to the bone.

si was sô gar unreine
she was so wholly unclean

daz von ir brœden lîbe dranc
that from her rotten body pressed

ein alsô egeslicher stanc
a so horrible stench

den niemen kunde erlîden.
which no-one could endure.

ir rîchez cleit von sîden
her rich dress of silk

vil übel wart gehandelt:
very ill was handled:

ez wart aldâ verwandelt
it was all-there changed

in ein vil swachez tüechelîn;
into a very wretched little-cloth;

ir liehter wünneclicher schîn
her bright delightful shine

wart vil jæmerlich gevar,
became very wretchedly colored,

bleich alsam ein asche gar.
pale as an ash wholly.

Hie mit schiet si von dannen.
Here with parted she from thence.

daz si von mir verbannen
that she by me banished

und aller kristenheite sî!
and of-all Christendom be!

der ritter edel unde frî,
the knight noble and free,

dô er diz wunder ane sach,
when he this wonder at saw,

zehant sîn herze im des verjach,
at-once his heart to-him of-it avowed,

er wære gar verwâzen,
he were wholly accursed,

swer sich wolte lâzen
whoever himself would let

an ir dienste vinden.
in her service be-found.

von wîbe und von kinden
from woman and from children

schiet er sich aldâ zehant;
parted he himself all-there at-once;

er nam daz criuze an sîn gewant
he took the cross onto his garment

und huop sich über daz wilde mer
and raised himself over the wild sea

und half dem edeln gotes her
and helped the noble God's host

strîten an die heidenschaft.
fight against the heathendom.

dâ wart der ritter tugenthaft
there was the knight virtuous

an stæter buoze funden.
in steadfast penance found.

er schuof daz zallen stunden,
he brought-about that at-all hours,

dô im der lîb erstorben was,
when to-him the body dead was,

daz im diu sêle dort genas.
that to-him the soul there was-saved.

Nu merkent alle die nu sint
Now mark all who now are

dirre wilden werlte kint
this wild world's children

diz endehafte mære.
this conclusive tale.

daz ist alsô gewære
that is so true

daz man ez gerne hœren sol.
that one it gladly hear shall.

der werlte lôn ist jâmers vol,
the world's reward is of-misery full,

daz hânt ir alle wol vernomen.
that have you all well heard.

ich bin sîn an ein ende komen:
I am of-it at an end come:

swer an ir dienste funden wirt,
whoever in her service found is,

daz in diu fröude gar verbirt
that him the joy wholly forgoes

die got mit ganzer stætekeit
which God with whole steadfastness

den ûzerwelten hât bereit.
to-the chosen has prepared.

Von Wirzeburc ich Cuonrât
Of Würzburg I Konrad

gibe iu allen disen rât,
give to-you all this counsel,

daz ir die werlt lâzet varn,
that you the world let go,

welt ir die sêle bewarn.
(if)-will you the soul preserve.

Aristoteles und Fillis

XI · ARISTOTLE AND PHYLLIS

Alexander's tutor Aristotle parts the young prince from his love Phyllis, the queen's maid. To take her revenge, Phyllis walks barefoot and adorned past the old man's window until he begs her for a night. She agrees on one condition: he must let her ride him. On all fours, saddled and bridled with her girdle, he carries her through the garden while she sings, and the queen and her ladies watch from the battlements. Shamed before the court, Aristotle sails away to an island and writes a book on women's cunning.

In Kriechen was gesezzen
In Greece was settled

ein künik vil vermezzen,
a king very bold,

der was genant Filippus,
he was named Philip,

daz mære saget uns alsus,
the tale tells us thus,

daz er gewaltik wære,
that he mighty were,

milte und êrbære
generous and honorable

was er alliu sîne jâr,
was he all his years,

an lîbe, an muote und an gebâr,
in body, in spirit and in bearing,

nâch wunsche was er volle komen,
after wish was he fully come,

vor andern künigen ûzgenomen,
before other kings out-chosen,

an gewalt und an rîcheit,
in power and in riches,

als uns diu âventiure seit.
as us the adventure tells.

Der selbe künig het ein wîp,
The same king had a woman,

diu was sô schœne, daz nie lîp
who was so fair, that never body

schœnre an wîbe wart gesehen;
fairer in woman was seen;

des muosten alle die jehen,
of-that must all those avow,

die si ie gesâhen,
who her ever saw,

die verren und die nâhen;
the far and the near;

diu was, als uns daz mære seit,
she was, as us the tale tells,

ein bluome reinre wîpheit
a flower of-pure womanhood

und ganzer tügende ein adamas
and of-whole virtues an adamant

und lûter als ein spiegel glas
and clear as a mirror glass

vor wandel und vor missetât,
of fault and of misdeed,

als noch maniger vrouwen stât.
as yet to-many-a lady stands.

Dem künige und der künigîn
To-the king and to-the queen

verlêch Got ein kindelîn,
granted God a little-child,

daz twang dar nâch alliu lant,
that subdued there after all lands,

Alexander was er genant,
Alexander was he named,

daz hôch wol geborne kint;
the high well born child;

alle die nû lebende sint,
all who now living are,

gerihten nie sô verre,
ruled never so far,

als Alexander der herre
as Alexander the lord

sider tet bî sînen tagen.
afterward did in his days.

daz kint wart, als ich hôrte sagen,
the child became, as I heard say,

schœne unde aller tügende vol,
fair and of-all virtues full,

an im was swaz man sehen sol
in him was whatever one see shall

an hôher küniges vrühte;
in high king's offspring;

durch kunst, durch herren zühte,
for learning, for of-lords breeding,

wart daz kint ze schuole gesat.
was the child to school set.

der künig ime gewinnen bat
the king for-him to-win bade

ein[en] meister, der was wîse
a master, who was wise

und gar von alter grîse,
and wholly from age gray,

Aristôteles was er genant;
Aristotle was he named;

der künig sprach: »meister, sît gemant
the king spoke: »master, be reminded

êren unde tügende,
of-honors and of-virtues,

und macht in sînre jügende
and make in his youth

daz kint wîse und lêret ez.« —
the child wise and teach it.«—

»ich tuon.« sprach Aristôteles,
»I do.« spoke Aristotle,

der was sô künsten rîche,
who was so in-arts rich,

daz al[le] diu werlt gelîche
that all the world alike

noch sînre künste lêre
yet of-his arts teaching

hât hiute und ie mer mêre.
has today and ever more more.

Er sprach: »nâch grôzen êren
He spoke: »after great honors

wil ich daz kint lêren
will I the child teach

und wil ime geben stiure
and will to-him give guidance

von al der âventiure,
from all the adventure,

die diu werlt haben sol.«
which the world have shall.«

dô sprach der künig: »dar umbe ich sol
then spoke the king: »there for I shall

und wil iuch sicherlîche
and will you surely

guotes machen rîche.«
of-goods make rich.«

Vor des küniges pâlas
Before the king's palace

ein schœner boum garte was,
a fair tree garden was,

dâ vor ein hûs erbouwen wol;
there before a house built well;

der künig sprach: »meister, diz hûs sol
the king spoke: »master, this house shall

sîn iuwer und des kindes
be yours and the child's

unde des in gesindes,
and of-the in household,

daz ir haben bî iu welt.«
that you have by you will.«

dâ wart dô langer niht getwelt,
there was then longer not tarried,

der meister nam den jungen knaben
the master took the young boy

und lêrte in die buoch staben
and taught him the book letters

a b c d e e e.
a b c d e e e.

daz tet im an dem êrsten wê,
that did to-him at the first woe,

als ez noch tuot den jungen,
as it yet does to-the young,

die dâ sint betwungen
who there are compelled

mit schuole meisterschefte.
with school mastery.

daz kint gevieng mit krefte
the child caught with strength

der künste von dem meister vil,
of-the arts from the master much,

wan sîn sin was âne zil,
for his sense was without limit,

gelernig unde verstanden,
teachable and understanding,

daz man in allen landen
that one in all lands

sô wîsen knaben niht envant.
so wise boy not found.

doch wart er leider gepfant
yet was he alas despoiled

an wizzen unde an sinne;
in wit and in sense;

daz tet diu strenge minne.
that did the stern love.

Diu künigîn het eine maget,
The queen had a maiden,

diu was sô schœne, sô man saget,
who was so fair, as one says,

an lîbe unde an varwe,
in body and in color,

daz man sich an ir garwe
that one himself on her wholly

völleklîchen hete ersehen;
fully had looked-one's-fill;

die schœne an wîben kunden spehen,
who beauty in women could judge,

die sprâchen, daz si wære
they spoke, that she were

schœne unde lobebære.
fair and praiseworthy.

Si was von hôhem künne,
She was of high kin,

der werlte gar ein wünne;
to-the world wholly a delight;

diu sueze vröuden schouwe
the sweet of-joys sight

was der künigîn jung vrouwe
was the queen's young lady

unde was Fillis genant.
and was Phyllis named.

Alexander wart enbrant
Alexander was kindled

in irre minnen gluete,
in her love's glow,

verirret an gemuete
confused in mind

wart der jung herre,
became the young lord,

er gedâhte harte verre
he thought very far

wie ime der sorgen bürde
how to-him of-the cares burden

ein teil geringert würde.
a part lessened were.

Sîn lernen was verirret gar,
His learning was confused wholly,

er nam der jung vrouwen war:
he took of-the young lady heed:

swenne er die niht ensach,
whenever he her not saw,

sô sach man grôz ungemach
so saw one great distress

an dem jüngelinge.
in the youth.

swen nû diu minne twinge,
whom now the love constrains,

der merke, wie im wære:
he mark, how to-him were:

Alexander der martelære
Alexander the martyr

enweste, wie gebâren;
not-knew, how to-behave;

diu minne in tûsent jâren
the love in thousand years

getwang nie sô sêre
constrained never so sorely

eins mannes herze mêre,
of-a man's heart more,

als er von ir betwungen was.
as he by her constrained was.

swâ er stuont oder gesaz,
wherever he stood or sat,

sô was diu reine guote
so was the pure good

Fillis in sînem muote.
Phyllis in his spirit.

Diz werte alsô lange zît,
This lasted so long time,

daz diu jung vrouwe sît
that the young lady since

alse dikke bî im was,
as often by him was,

daz er ie baz unde baz
that he ever better and better

kam in heinlîchen
came into intimacy

mit der minneklîchen,
with the lovely-one,

daz si einen muot gewunnen
that they one spirit won

und nâch ein ander brunnen.
and after each other burned.

Er was betwungen, si noch baz;
He was constrained, she yet more;

alsô lange werte daz,
so long lasted that,

daz diu jung vrouwe zart
that the young lady tender

wol an ime inne wart,
well in him aware became,

daz er nâch ir tobete;
that he after her raged;

dar nâch si im gelobete,
there after she to-him vowed,

dô er si vlîzeklîchen bat,
when he her diligently begged,

si wolte kumen an eine stat
she would come to a place

in den boum garten,
in the tree garden,

dâ wolte si sîn warten.
there would she him await.

Des kômen si beide über ein.
Of-that came they both over one.

dô wart under den gelieben zwein
then was between the lovers two

vriuntschaft unde triuwe,
friendship and faithfulness,

in ganzen vröuden niuwe
in whole joys new

wart ir minne und ir gemach.
became their love and their ease.

alsô dikke daz geschach,
as often that happened,

sô si des state mohten hân.
as they of-it chance might have.

Dô began sich des entstân
Then began himself of-it to-perceive

der meister an dem jungen
the master in the young-one

daz ime was misselungen
that to-him was miscarried

von der jung vrouwen minne,
from the young lady's love,

des wart er dar nâch inne
of-that became he there after aware

unde bevant wol die wârheit.
and found well the truth.

dar umbe er harte sêre streit
there for he very sorely fought

den jungen, unde morten
the young-one, and tormented-him

mit slegen und mit worten,
with blows and with words,

und huot' sîn alle stunde,
and guarded him all hours,

sô er ie beste kunde.
as he ever best could.

Daz half allez niht ein hâr:
That helped all not a hair:

swen er mohte kumen dar,
whenever he might come there,

ez wære spâte oder vruo,
it were late or early,

der lieben gieng er alles zuo
the beloved went he ever to

und hete mit ir guot gemach;
and had with her good ease;

ir beider hant vil gar zebrach,
of-them both hand very wholly broke,

dâ mite si gebunden
there with they bound

wâren ze allen stunden
were at all hours

von der strengen minne,
by the stern love,

ir herze unde ir sinne
their heart and their senses

di sewebeten in vröuden gar
they floated in joys wholly

hôhe alsam ein adel ar.
high just-as a noble eagle.

Diz was dem meister harte swâr,
This was to-the master very heavy,

er gienk zuo dem künige dar
he went to the king there

und seit' ime disiu mære,
and told to-him these tidings,

daz der jung herre wære
that the young lord were

verirret an der schœnen.
confused by the fair-one.

der künig begunde hœnen
the king began to-revile

und strâfen sêre dise maget.
and rebuke sorely this maiden.

si sprach: »herre, waz er saget,
she spoke: »lord, what he says,

da enist dekeiniu schulde mite;
there is no guilt with;

mîn vrouwe erkennet mîne site,
my lady knows my customs,

die sint wol sô stæte,
they are well so steadfast,

daz ich nœte missetæte.«
that I hardly misdid.«

und swuor dô sô manigen eit,
and swore then so many oath,

daz diu küniginne streit
that the queen fought

selb' umbe ir unschulde.
herself for her innocence.

dô kam si ze hulde,
then came she to favor,

diu wol getâne Fillis
the well made Phyllis

was dô nâch ungewis
was then after uncertain

minne und vriuntschefte;
of-love and of-friendship;

des wart ir lîp an krefte
of-that was her body of strength

beroubet und an vröuden bar;
robbed and of joys bare;

wan man nam ir beider war
for one took of-them both heed

mit der vertânen huote,
with the cursed guard,

daz diu reine guote
that the pure good-one

niht mohte an ime gestillen
not might in him still

irs wunden herzen willen.
of-her wounded heart's will.

Dô wart leide[r] Alexander,
Then became sadde [r] Alexander,

sîn herze leit erkand'er,
his heart's sorrow recognized-he,

wan ime sin liep benomen was;
for to-him his love taken was;

harte zornig er dô saz
very wrathful he then sat

an der schuol' brummende als ein ber,
in the school growling as a bear,

er want sich hin, er want sich her,
he turned himself hence, he turned himself hither,

er was in sîme sinne
he was in his sense

erblendet von der minne.
blinded by the love.

Diu sende jâmerunge
The longing misery

vergieng ouch nicht die junge,
passed also not the young-one,

diu klâre unde schœne
the bright and fair

wart ûzer mâzen hœne,
became beyond measure scornful,

si was mit dem selben schaden
she was with the same harm

durch in, als er durch si, beladen,
for him, as he for her, laden,

diu gewaltige minne
the mighty love

diu was ouch in ir[me] sinne
it was also into her sense

ein teil ze stürmische komen
a part too stormy come

und het ir mit gewalt benomen
and had from-her with force taken

ein teil ir besten mâze;
a part of-her best measure;

si was an ir gelâzẹ
she was in her behavior

ir selben, noch der werlte mite
to-her self, nor to-the world with

nâeh irme gewönlichcm site;
after her customary custom;

swaz si sich vröuden an genam,
whatever she herself of-joys on took,

als ir dâ vor wol gezam,
as to-her there before well suited,

daz missetet si allez dô;
that misdid she all then;

ir leben was gerihtet sô,
her life was directed so,

si gedâhte in irem muote,
she thought in her spirit,

diu suezẹ reine guote,
the sweet pure good-one,

wie si ir liep gespræche,
how she her love should-speak-to,

ir herze leit geræche
her heart's sorrow should-avenge

an dem meister wîse,
on the master wise,

der was vor alter grîse.
who was from age gray.

Nû merket, wie ez hier umbe ergienk:
Now mark, how it here about went:

Fillis diu liehte sunne gienk
Phyllis the bright sun went

in eine kemenâte hin,
into a chamber hence,

und nam ein sîdîn swenzelîn
and took a silken little-gown

und leit' ez an ir zarten lîp,
and laid it on her tender body,

daz sueze minneklîche wîp
the sweet lovely woman

het einen pelz dar under,
had a fur there under,

der was ouch guot bi sunder,
it was also good by itself,

er gap ir sô blanken schîn
it gave to-her so white shine

und was gar lûter hermîn;
and was wholly pure ermine;

si was schœne, daz geloubet,
she was fair, that believe,

si sazte ûf ir houbet
she set on her head

einen zirkel von golde,
a circlet of gold,

der was smal, als er solde,
it was slender, as it should,

geworht mit hôhem sinne,
wrought with high sense,

dô lagen gimmen inne,
there lay gems in,

zwischen dem gesteine,
between the stones,

vil lieht und ie doch kleine,
very bright and ever yet small,

die besten von dem lande,
the best of the land,

smâragden und jâchande,
emeralds and jacinths,

saffire und kalzedône,
sapphires and chalcedonies,

und wâren die vil schône
and were they very fairly

dâ unde dar in geleit;
there and thither in laid;

des werk mannes wîsheit
the work man's wisdom

nâch rehter spæheite
after right cunning

nie steine baz geleite.
never stones better laid.

Diu schœne wol gezieret was;
The fair-one well adorned was;

si nam ein liehtez spiegel glas
she took a bright mirror glass

an lîbe unde ouch an varwe
in body and also in color

beschoute si sich vil garwe
viewed she herself very thoroughly

obe kein ding ir möhte missestân,
if any thing to-her might ill-become,

daz bezzerunge solte hân:
that bettering should have:

diu schœne was wol an geleit,
the fair-one was well on laid,

als uns diu âventiure seit.
as us the adventure tells.

Dâ der boum garte was,
Where the tree garden was,

dô gieng si vür den pâlas
there went she before the palace

bar vuoz, an den vuezen blôz:
bare foot, on the feet naked:

ir bein wâren wîzȩr dan ein slôz,
her legs were whiter than a hailstone,

und slehter dan ein kerze,
and smoother than a candle,

blank, ân' alle swerze.
white, without all blackness.

Diu wurden von dem touwe naz;
They became from the dew wet;

dâ bî ein kwek brunne was,
there by a living spring was,

dem gie diu minneklîche bî,
it went the lovely-one by,

vrô unde aller sorgen vrî;
glad and of-all cares free;

ir tritte wâren und ir gank
her steps were and her gait

gemezzȩn, niht ze kurz, noch ze lank,
measured, not too short, nor too long,

und doch in rehter mâzȩ;
and yet in right measure;

si was an ir gelâzȩ
she was in her behavior

ûf reht und offenbære,
up right and open,

gelîch dem sperwære,
like to-the sparrowhawk,

und gestreichet als ein pâpegân,
and preened as a parrot,

und liez ir ougen umbe gân
and let her eyes around go

als ein valke ûf dem aste;
as a falcon on the branch;

ze lîse, noch ze vaste
too softly, nor too fast

heten si beide ir weide,
had they both their pasture,

si weideten beide
they grazed both

vil eben und vil lîse
very evenly and very softly

in harte suezer wîse;
in very sweet manner;

daz minneklîche bilde
the lovely image

gebârete harte wilde,
behaved very wildly,

si seich her unde hin,
she slipped hither and hence,

ûf huop si ir swenzelîn
up raised she her little-gown

vil nâch unz über iriu knie,
very nearly until over her knees,

bluomen lesende si gie
flowers gathering she went

und warf die in iren swanz;
and threw them into her train;

Fillis diu liehte sunne glanz
Phyllis the bright sun's gleam

begunde sus gebâren,
began thus to-behave,

durch daz si möhte ervâren
so that she might find-out

und betriegen den alten man,
and deceive the old man,

der ir ir herze liep benan;
who from-her her heart's love took;

dar umbe lief der minnen trût
there for ran the love's darling

spilende als ein windes brût,
playing as a wind's bride,

durch daz gras ze dem brunnen.
through the grass to the spring.

waz wîbe liste kunnen,
what women's crafts can,

daz künde nie man gesagen;
that could never man tell;

ein wîp kan ûf der verte jagen,
a woman can upon the track hunt,

daz sich vor iren listen
that himself from her crafts

nie man kan gevristen;
never man can save;

ez wart nie man sô wîse,
it was never man so wise,

noch von alter sô grîse,
nor from age so gray,

wil er sîn den wîben bî,
(if)-will he be the women by,

er(n) werde gevangen an ein zwî
he-unless is caught on a twig

unde an der minnen lîm ruot',
and on the love's lime rod,

reht als der wilde vogel tuot,
right as the wild bird does,

der durch vrîheit die er hât
which through freedom that it has

ûf daz gelîmete zwî stât,
upon the limed twig stands,

als er des denne entsebet
when it of-it then perceives

und sich ûf ze berge hebet,
and itself up to height raises,

sus klebet er dô mitten dran,
thus sticks it then midst there-on,

und reget sich unde wil dan,
and stirs itself and will away,

dâ mite rueret er daz zwî
there with touches it the twig

an kleiner stat, swie kuene er sî,
in small place, however bold it be,

ez bindet in und macht in haft:
it binds it and makes it caught:

sus wirt der man (un)sigehaft
thus becomes the man (un)victorious

und gevangen in dem strikke
and caught in the snare

von wîbes ougen blikke;
from woman's eyes glance;

swie wîse er sî, swie lôs ein man,
however wise he be, however loose a man,

von wîbes listen nie man kan
from woman's crafts never man can

sîn gemuete enbinden,
his mind unbind,

wil er sich lâzen vinden
(if)-will he himself let find

in ir geselleschefte;
in her company;

sô stark sint minnen krefte.
so strong are love's strengths.

Swer des welle wesen vrî,
Whoever of-it will be free,

der sî den wîben selten bî;
he be the women seldom by;

wan anders niht gehelfen kan,
for otherwise nothing help can,

wen[ne] vliehen verre von in dan.
except flee far from them away.

Nû lâzen wir die rede stân,
Now let we the speech stand,

und vâhen daz mære wider an,
and take the tale again on,

daz ez niht blîb' in wâne:
that it not remain in doubt:

Fillis diu wol getâne
Phyllis the well made

gienk spilnde under der bluete,
went playing under the blossom,

vil stolz was ir gemuete,
very proud was her mind,

si sleich har unde hin.
she slipped hither and hence.

diz ersach durch ein vensterlîn
this saw through a little-window

der alte meister und blikt' dar
the old master and looked there

und nam irre gebærden war,
and took of-her bearings heed,

die dûhten im gar wunderlîch.
they seemed to-him wholly wondrous.

»hei.« dâht' er »wie minneklîch,
»hey.« thought he »how lovely,

wie schœne und wie gehiure,
how fair and how sweet,

wie zartiu crêatiure
how tender creature

ist daz minneklîche wîp!
is the lovely woman!

er sælig man, der sînen lîp
he blessed man, who his body

solte mit ir elten!«
should with her grow-old!«

in stiez an ein kelten
him struck on a cold

unde einiu hizze dar nâch;
and a heat there after;

diu minne tet im manigen schâch
the love did to-him many check

und machte in ze eime kinde.
and made him into a child.

under der gruenen linde
under the green linden

dô kam diu sueze reine
then came the sweet pure-one

gar alles wandels eine
wholly of-all blemish alone

vür des meisters vensterlîn
before the master's little-window

und warf ime bluomen dar in
and threw to-him flowers there in

mê dan eine hant vol,
more than a hand full,

si sprach: »meister, ich gan iu wol
she spoke: »master, I grant to-you well

gelükkes unde êren;
of-fortune and of-honors;

und möht' ich iu gemêren
and (if)-might I to-you increase

vröude unde kurze wîle,
joy and short while,

dar umbe ich eine mîle,
there for I a mile,

wolte gân, wie krank ich sî.«
would go, however weak I be.«

der meister sprach: »gramerzî,
the master spoke: »gramercy,

minneklîche sueze vruht;
lovely sweet fruit;

an iu lît alliu diu genuht,
in you lies all the abundance,

die man zer werlte haben sol.
which one in-the world have shall.

jung vröuwelîn, nû tuo sô wol
young little-lady, now do so well

und ruoche dich erbarmen
and deign thyself to-pity

über mich vil armen
over me very poor-one

und ruoche gân her in ze mir,
and deign to-go hither in to me,

hie ist nie man mê dan ir.«
here is no man more than you.«

Dô gie diu sueze reine,
Then went the sweet pure-one,

gar alles wandels eine
wholly of-all blemish alone

zuo dem meister hin in;
to the master hence in;

si kêrte dar ûf iren sin,
she turned there on her sense,

wie si in geschante,
how she him should-disgrace,

dar an si gar gemante;
there on she wholly reminded-herself;

si gie dar bî in sizzen.
she went there by him sit.

er sprach: »ich bin an wizzen
he spoke: »I am in wits

unde an sinnen gepfant;
and in senses despoiled;

ich hân ervarn manig lant,
I have traveled many land,

ich gesach nie kint sô wol getân,
I saw never child so well made,

lâ mich dîne hulde hân,
let me thy favor have,

ich gibe dir goldes zweinzik mark,
I give to-thee of-gold twenty marks,

und vuere dich in mînen ark
and lead thee into my chest

und nim dar ûz, wie vil dû wilt.«
and take there out, as much thou wilt.«

si sprach: »der rede mich bevilt,
she spoke: »of-the speech me wearies,

meister, wes muotet ir an mich?« —
master, what desire you of me?«—

»ich wolte, daz dû liezest mich
»I would, that thou let me

ein naht bî dir slâfen.«
a night by thee sleep.«

si sprach: »geschriren wâfen!
she spoke: »cried alarm!

Meister, wie solt' ich daz getuon?
Master, how should I that do?

ich wil mînen magetuon
I will my maidenhood

sô tœrlîche niht verliesen.«
so foolishly not lose.«

do begunde si wol kiesen,
then began she well to-perceive,

daz er an si vereffet was.
that he on her befooled was.

nû sach diu minneklîche, daz
now saw the lovely-one, that

ein satel bî der wende lak,
a saddle by the wall lay,

si sprach: »en triuwen, ich enmak
she spoke: »in faith, I may

diz ding niht tuon vergebene:
this thing not do for-nothing:

lât mich iu vil ebene
let me to-you very evenly

den satel ûf den rükke legen,
the saddle on the back lay,

des sult ir iuch gen mir bewegen,
of-that shall you yourselves toward me resolve,

und lât mich tuon an dirre stunt
and let me put at this hour

einen zoum in iuwern munt,
a bridle into your mouth,

daz ist mîn sîdîn gürtellîn;
that is my silken little-girdle;

tuot'z, wen es mag niht anders gesîn;
do-it, for it may not otherwise be;

ich enmag niht langer bîten,
I may not longer wait,

ir muezet mich lân rîten
you must me let ride

in dem boum garten,
in the tree garden,

dâ enmag uns gewarten
there may us watch

deweder wîp, noch man.«
neither woman, nor man.«

der alte sprach: »ich enkan
the old-one spoke: »I can

dich niht vil wol gereiten.«
thee not very well carry.«

si sprach: »ich wil iuch bereiten
she spoke: »I will you prepare

vil schône und eben, als ein pfert;
very finely and evenly, as a horse;

sô sît ir mir denne wert,
so are you to-me then worthy,

und wil tuon swaz iu liep ist.«
and will do whatever to-you dear is.«

nû hœret wunderlîchen list
now hear wondrous craft

von einem jungen wîbe;
of a young woman;

swie sô man ez trîbe,
however so one it drives,

ein schœne minneklîchez wîp,
a fair lovely woman,

diu beide, muot hât unde lîp,
who both, spirit has and body,

waz diu wunders begât
what she of-wonders accomplishes

und wie vil gewaltes si hât
and how much power she has

und wie si kan versêren,
and how she can wound,

herze und muot verkêren
heart and spirit turn

mit iren suezen worten,
with her sweet words,

swie si an allen orten
however they in all places

mit gallen sint gemischet,
with gall are mixed,

vor den gar verlischet
before them wholly is-extinguished

mannes kunst, swie wîse er ist;
man's art, however wise he is;

wunder wirket wîbes list,
wonder works woman's craft,

ir smeichen unde ir zarten,
her flattering and her caressing,

ir lâgen unde ir warten,
her lying-in-wait and her watching,

ir sprechen und ir singen,
her speaking and her singing,

ir tanzen und ir springen,
her dancing and her leaping,

ir weinen und ir lachen,
her weeping and her laughing,

die kunnen alle machen
they can all make

den strik und die gebende,
the snare and the bonds,

daz si mit irre hende
that she with her hand

vueret den man, swar si wil;
leads the man, wherever she will;

wîbes kunst ist âne zil,
woman's art is without limit,

daz si vil wol bewæret:
that she very well proves:

von wîben wart erværet
by women was deceived

Adam unde Samsôn,
Adam and Samson,

Davît unde Sâlomôn
David and Solomon

unde die besten alle.
and the best all.

doch, samir Sante Galle,
yet, so-help-me Saint Gall,

diu wîp sint alle niht alsô,
the women are all not so,

wîp machent manig herze vrô,
women make many heart glad,

daz in sorgen wære begraben:
that in cares were buried:

wil ir ein teil niht êre haben,
(if)-will of-them a part not honor have,

noch kiusche(n) sin, noch stæten muot,
nor chaste sense, nor steadfast spirit,

daz schat den niht, die sint behuot
that harms those not, who are guarded

und vrî vor aller missetât;
and free of all misdeed;

tûsent wîbe tügende hât
thousand women's virtues has

ein wîp: ob keiniu wære
a woman: if none were

bœse und wandelbære,
wicked and blameworthy,

wâ solte man erkennen bî,
where should one recognize by,

welhiu wære an missewende vrî.
which were of misdeed free.

Nu süln wir vâhen wider an
Now shall we take again on

daz mære, dâ ez wart verlân:
the tale, where it was left:

diu gewaltîge minne,
the mighty love,

der sinne ein rouberinne,
of-the senses a robber,

betwang den meister grîsen,
subdued the master gray,

der hôhen künste wîsen,
the of-high arts wise-one,

er sprach: »schœnez vröuwelîn,
he spoke: »fair little-lady,

ich wil dir undertænig sîn
I will to-thee subject be

unt tuon swaz dû mir gebiutest,
and do whatever thou to-me commandest,

daz dû mich niuwen triutest.«
that thou me only caressest.«

Der alte gouch sich nider lie
The old fool himself down let

ûf die hende und ûf diu knie,
on the hands and on the knees,

diu schœne minneklîche
the fair lovely-one

nam vil behendiklîche
took very nimbly

und leite den satel ûf in,
and laid the saddle on him,

und nam ir sîdîn gürtellîn
and took her silken little-girdle

und macht' im ein zoum in den munt;
and made to-him a bridle in the mouth;

dô hete si gewunnen an der stunt
then had she won at the hour

von rôsen ein bluejendez zwî,
of roses a blooming twig,

diu schœne, missewende vrî
the fair-one, of-misdeed free

nam den zoum in die hant
took the bridle into the hand

unde saz ûf den wîgant
and sat on the fighter

unde reit in vil schône,
and rode him very finely,

in eime suezen dône
in a sweet tune

sang si ein suezez minne liet.
sang she a sweet love song.

dô sûmte sich der alte niet,
then delayed himself the old-one not,

er krouch ûf allen vieren dô,
he crept on all fours then,

des wart ir gemuete vrô,
of-that became her mind glad,

unt krouch gegen dem boum garten
and crept toward the tree garden

unt truog ûf im den zarten
and bore on him the tender

suezen minneklîchen lîp.
sweet lovely body.

Daz ersach des küniges wîp
That saw the king's woman

und ander ir[re] junk vrouwen,
and other her young ladies,

an den zinnen schouwen
at the battlements to-behold

begunden si daz wunder,
began they the wonder,

daz Fillis dâ bi sunder
that Phyllis there by herself

alsô herlîche reit;
so lordly rode;

des wart diu künigîn gemeit
of-that became the queen joyful

und wunderte si harte vil.
and wondered she very much.

dô si gereit unz an daz zil,
when she rode until to the goal,

dâ saz si vrœlîchen abe,
there sat she gladly off,

si sprach: »dû alter gouch, nû habe
she spoke: »thou old fool, now have

diz laster ie mer mêre,
this shame ever more more,

daz dû mir mîn êre
that thou from-me my honor

unde mîn liep hâst benomen.
and my love hast taken.

dîne hundert jâr sint nû komen
thy hundred years are now come

ze siben jâren ûz erwegen;
to seven years out weighed;

daz dîn der tiuvel muezę pflegen!«
that thee the devil must tend!«

Fillis lief durch daz gras
Phyllis ran through the grass

vrœlîchen in den palas.
gladly into the palace.

Diz grôzę unbilde daz erschal
This great outrage it resounded

in den hof und in den sal
into the court and into the hall

vür den künig und [alle] die sîne.
before the king and [all] the his.

Fillis diu sueze fîne
Phyllis the sweet fine-one

hâte ir leit gerochen.
had her sorrow avenged.

Dâ nâch in einre wochen
There after in a week

nam der meister sâ ze hant
took the master at-once at hand

siniu buoch und sîn gewant,
his books and his clothing,

sîn golt, sîn silber und sîn habe,
his gold, his silver and his goods,

er schikket' ez bî naht abe
he sent it by night off

heinlîch in ein schiffelîn,
secretly in a little-ship,

er enmohte dâ niht langer gesîn
he might there not longer be

von dem spotte und von dem schimpf
from the mockery and from the jest

und von dem grôzen ungelimpf,
and from the great disgrace,

den si hâten ûf dem sal.
which they had in the hall.

er vuor daz wazzer hin ze tal,
he fared the water hence to valley,

daz dâ durch die gegene vlôz,
which there through the region flowed,

wan in des schimpfes dâ verdrôz,
for him of-the jest there irked,

daz man sîn dâ würde sat;
that one of-him there became sated;

er kam gevarn in eine stat
he came fared into a city

in ein insel, hiez Galiciâ,
in an island, was-called Galicia,

dâ beleip er und machte dâ
there remained he and made there

ein michel buoch und schreip dar an,
a great book and wrote there in,

waz wunderlîche liste kan
what wondrous crafts can

daz schœne ungetriuwe wîp,
the fair faithless woman,

und wie diu leben unde lîp
and how she life and body

manigem hât versêret,
to-many has wounded,

und swer sich an si kêret,
and whoever himself to her turns,

der wirt von ir gevangen,
he is by her caught,

als der visch an dem angen
as the fish on the hook

und als der vogel in dem strikke.
and as the bird in the snare.

ir lachen, ir ougen blikke
her laughing, her of-eyes glance

vâhent, sam der agestein.
catch, as the lodestone.

ich bin des komen über ein,
I am of-it come over one,

daz dâ vür niht gehelfen kan,
that there for nothing help can,

wan daz ein iegelîch wîse man,
except that an every wise man,

der gerne âne vreisen sî,
who gladly without perils be,

sî ir gesselleschefte vrî
be of-their company free

und vliehe verre von in dan;
and flee far from them away;

wan anders niht gehelfen kan.
for otherwise nothing help can.

Diu halbe bir

XII · THE HALF PEAR

A king offers his daughter to whoever takes the prize at his tournament. The knight Arnolt excels there, but at the king's table he cuts a pear unpeeled and gulps half, and on the field the princess mocks him for it. On his servant Heinrich's advice he returns as a mute, blackened fool and is brought to her fire; her old chamberwoman Irmengart lays him in the princess's bed and prods him on with a stick. Back at the tournament he answers her mockery with Irmengart's words. On Irmengart's counsel she marries him, but he never trusts her again, and Konrad von Würzburg warns that a small fault disgraces.

Hie vor ein rîcher künig was,
Here before a rich king was,

als ich von im geschriben las,
as I of him written read,

der hâte ein wunnenklîchez wîp
who had a delightful woman

und eine tohter, der (der) lîp
and a daughter, whose (whose) body

stuont ze wunsche garwe,
stood to wish wholly,

daz man sich in ir varwe
that one oneself in her color

völleklîche mohte besehen.
fully might behold.

die schœne an wîben kunden spehen,
those-who beauty in women could judge,

die jâhen ir des besten,
they avowed to-her the best,

daz man si möhte gesten
that one her might entertain

vür eine wunnenklîche maget;
as a delightful maiden;

swaz manne[n] an wîbe[n] wol behaget,
whatever to-men in women well pleases,

dâ was si volle komen an.
there was she full come to.

swie manigen bittel si gewan,
however many wooer she got,

den wart si verzigen allen.
to-them was she refused all.

nû was ez sô gevallen,
now was it so befallen,

daz der künig dar (nâch) ir bet'
that the king there (after) her request

den vürsten allen kunt tet,
to-the princes all known made,

swer si gewinnen wolte,
whoever her win would,

daz der si arnen solte
that he her earn should

ze eime turneije,
at a tournament,

sô der liehte meije
when the bright May

mit sînre wunne kæme,
with its delight came,

und swer den prîs dâ næme,
and whoever the prize there took,

der solte si ze wîbe hân.
he should her as woman have.

vür die burg ûf den plân
before the castle on the field

wart diu ritterschaft geleit,
was the knighthood laid,

si solte weren, sô man seit',
it should last, as one told,

durch al[le] die schœne sumer zît.
through all the fair summer time.

diu mære erschullen alse wît,
the tidings resounded so wide,

daz al[le] die liute kômen dar,
that all the people came thither,

die ritterschefte nâmen war.
who of-knighthood took heed.

Nû was gesezzen dâ bî
Now was settled there by

ein ritter an gebürte vrî,
a knight in birth free,

der was geheizen Arnolt,
who was called Arnolt,

der hât' umbe der minnen solt
who had for the love's wage

gevohten alsô mangen wîk;
fought so many battle;

er bluote als ein bernder zwîk
he bloomed as a bearing twig

an êren und an tugende;
in honors and in virtue;

er bluote in sînre jugende
he bloomed in his youth

und hâte lobes vil bejaget;
and had of-praise much hunted;

der kam ouch durch die selbe maget
he came also for the same maiden

zuo dem turneije:
to the tournament:

der ûz erwelte leije,
the out chosen layman,

als er ze velde komen was,
when he to field come was,

ein semît gruene alsam ein gras
a samite green as a grass

was sîn côvertiure,
was his caparison,

ouch vuorte der vil gehiure
also wore the very gracious-one

des selben einen wâfen rok;
of-the same a arms coat;

vil ritterlîch was sîn gezok,
very knightly was his gear,

den er ze velde vuorte;
which he to field bore;

swen er dâ beruorte,
whomever he there touched,

der muoste ime sicherheite jehen.
he must to-him surety avow.

daz kunde harte wol gesehen
that could very well see

diu junge küniginne,
the young princess,

und gedâhte in irme sinne
and thought in her mind

vil dikke, wer er möhte sîn;
very often, who he might be;

sîn ellen (wart) vil harte schîn
his valor (became) very clearly shown

an manigem stolzen ritter;
on many proud knight;

den vienden was er bitter,
to-the foes was he bitter,

wan er mit ellenthafter hant
for he with valiant hand

von dem orse ûf den sant
from the horse onto the sand

vil manigen gehürten kunde.
very many charge could.

der künig daz begunde
the king that began

merken alsô vaste,
to-mark so firmly,

daz er in ze eime gaste
that he him as a guest

eins tages über tisch luot
one day to table invited

durch sînen menlîchen muot.
for his manly spirit.

Des wart diu künigîn gemeit.
Of-that became the princess glad.

waz man von guoter spîse seit,
whatever one of good food tells,

die rîche herren süllen haben,
which rich lords shall have,

der wart ein wunder dar getragen
of-that was a wonder thither carried

dem ritter und der künigîn,
to-the knight and to-the princess,

diu was der mazgenôze sîn.
she was the table-companion his.

Ze jüngest kam in getragen vür
At last came to-them carried forth

diu beste bir, die man kür
the best pear, which one chose

ûf allem ert rîche,
in all earth realm,

die teilte man gelîche,
it divided one equally,

zwein unt zwein eine
to-two and two one

* * *
(lacuna)

Kæses dar zuo gehouwen;
Of-cheese there to cut;

des mag man noch wol schouwen,
that may one yet well see,

ûf rîcher herren tische.
on rich of-lords tables.

nû hœret, wie (tet) der vrische:
now hear, how (did) the bold-one:

diu bir dô geteilet wart
the pear then divided was

nâch gebiurschlîcher art,
after peasantly manner,

diu vür den ritter wart geleit
which before the knight was laid

und vür die junk vrouwen vil gemeit,
and before the young lady very glad,

die nam der unbedâhte helt
it took the thoughtless hero

und sneit die bir, ungeschelt
and cut the pear, unpeeled

en zwei mit sînem mezzer;
in two with his knife;

des wart ime vil gehezzer
of-that became to-him much more-hostile

des rîchen küniges tohter;
the rich king's daughter;

erbeiten niht en moht'er,
wait not — might-he,

biz daz er si schône besnite,
until that he it finely pared,

er sach ûf, nâch eins vrâzes site,
he looked up, after a glutton's custom,

und warf die halbe bir in sîn munt,
and threw the half pear into his mouth,

die ander halbe leit' er ze stunt
the other half laid he at once

hîe vür die junk vrouwen.
here before the young lady.

Nû mag man wunder schouwen:
Now may one wonder see:

als er kam wider ûf den plân,
when he came back onto the field,

dô rief diu maget wol getân:
then cried the maiden well made:

»ei, schevaliers, werder helt,
»ah, chevalier, worthy hero,

der die bir unbeschelt
who the pear unpeeled

halben in den munt warf,
half into the mouth threw,

waz er zühte noch bedarf!
how-much he breeding yet needs!

Ei, schevaliers Ungevuok,
Ah, chevalier Ill-bred,

der die halbe birn nuok!«
who the half pear gobbled!«

Als er sich aber dô gevleiz
When he himself however then exerted

ûf einen langen puneiz,
on a long charge,

dô rief diu wol getâne aber:
then cried the well made-one again:

»hiute und iemer laster hab'er,
»today and ever disgrace have-he,

der die halbe bir az̧!
who the half pear ate!

er ist an hove zühten laz̧.«
he is in court breeding slack.«

Vil schiere er dô bekande
Very quickly he then recognized

daz̧ laster und ouch die schande,
the disgrace and also the shame,

die ime diu küniginne bôt;
which to-him the princess offered;

dar umbe wart er schame rôt
there about became he of-shame red

vor allen [den], die dâ wâren;
before all [those], who there were;

er enwiste, wie [er solte] gebâren.
he not-knew, how [he should] behave.

Von zorne er wider heim vuor,
From anger he back home went,

harte tobelîch er swuor
very madly he swore

bî allen Gotes bilden,
by all God's images,

er wolte sich verwilden
he would himself make-wild

an êren und an guote,
in honors and in goods,

biz̧ er die gemuote,
until he her troubled,

die er geschendet hæte.
who he disgraced had.

Nû hâte der vil stæte
Now had the very steadfast-one

ein[en] kneht der ganze triuwe hielt
a servant who whole faithfulness held

und ouch guotes râtes wielt,
and also good counsel wielded,

der was geheiʒen Heinrich,
who was called Heinrich,

den nam der herre vür sich
him took the lord before himself

an eine heimelîche stat,
to a secret place,

dâ er in sînes râtes bat,
where he him for-his counsel asked,

swie er daʒ vergülte,
how he that should-repay,

daʒ in diu vrouwe schülte
that him the lady scolded

durch sô kleine missetât.
for so small misdeed.

»vernement, herre, mînen rât,«
»hear, lord, my counsel,«

sprach der knappe Heinrich
spoke the squire Heinrich

»eʒ ist iu guot, des versihe ich mich:
»it is to-you good, of-that assure I myself:

werfent von iu dise wât
throw from you this clothing

und verandernt iuch, daʒ ist min rât,
and change yourself, that is my counsel,

und werdent ze eime tôren,
and become into a fool,

lânt iu obe den ôren
let to-you above the ears

daz hâr [alles] garwe abe nemen;
the hair [all] wholly off take;

diu kleit diu tœrlîch(e) gezemen,
the clothes which foolishly befit,

diu heizent iu gewinnen
them bid to-you to-get

nâch töbelîchen sinnen
after mad senses

und lânt iuch bemüseln
and let yourself smear

mit râme und ouch mit üseln
with soot and also with ashes

antliz unde varwe,
face and color,

daz iu der lîp vil garwe
that to-you the body very wholly

swarz alsam ein erde sî,
black as an earth be,

ein[en] kolben swær' alsam ein blî
a club heavy as a lead

den nement ze eime leite stabe;
it take as a leading staff;

als ein tôrehter knabe
as a foolish boy

loufent vür des küniges tisch,
run before the king's table,

ez sî reiger oder visch,
it be heron or fish,

daz slâhent allez der nider;
that strike all there down;

redet ieman der wider
(if)-speaks anyone there against

dem slâhent ein gebiusche,
to-him strike a blow,

und machent ein geriusche
and make a din

vor der küniginne,
before the princess,

als ir niht habent sinne;
as-if you not have senses;

vrâget iuch ieman iht,
(if)-asks you anyone anything,

dem antwürtet niht,
to-him answer nothing,

reht als ir sint ein stumme,
right as-if you are a mute,

varent umb und umme,
go around and around,

swâ diu küniginne sî,
wherever the princess be,

dâ wonent stætelîche bî;
there dwell steadfastly by;

swaz antwürte geschiht,
whatever answer happens,

des verswîgent mir niht,
of-that keep-silent to-me not,

swen ir her wider kumet,
when you hither back come,

wan iuch mîn rât wol vrumet.«
for you my counsel well profits.«

Dô volget' er gedrâte
Then followed he quickly

sîme wîsen râte:
his wise counsel:

daz hâr wart im abe gesniten,
the hair was to-him off cut,

gar nâch tœrlîchen siten,
wholly after foolish customs,

er wart gekleit als ein tôre,
he was clad as a fool,

geswerzet als ein môre,
blackened as a Moor,

daz kleit im an dem kniu erwant;
the clothing to-him at the knee ended;

ein[en] kolben nam er an die hant,
a club took he in the hand,

dâ mite huop er sich von dan.
there with raised he himself from thence.

beide, wîp unde man
both, woman and man

sâhen in vür einen gief;
saw him as a lout;

dô er in der bürge lief,
when he in the castle ran,

dô wart ein grôz gebiuze:
then became a great din:

»daz vil heilige kriuze
»the very holy cross

beschirme uns noch hiute!«
protect us yet today!«

riefen alle die liute.
cried all the people.

»Wer brâht' [uns] disen tôren in diz hûs?«
»Who brought [to-us] this fool into this house?«

si machten alle ûz im irn grûs
they made all out-of him their mockery

unt triben mit ime irn schimpf.
and drove with him their sport.

dâ wider kund' er den gelimpf,
there against knew he the conduct,

der tôren was gemæzę; 195
which to-fools was fitting;

allez sîn gelæzę
all his behavior

was unmâzen töbelich,
was beyond-measure mad,

vaste sluog er umbe sich,
fast struck he around himself,

mit sînre herten kiulen
with his hard club

maht' er starke biulen 200
made he strong bumps

den knehten die dâ liefen
to-the servants who there ran

und ime »tôre!« riefen;
and to-him »fool!« cried;

doch muosten si'z ver guot hân
yet must they-it for good have

von dem tôrehten man;
from the foolish man;

wan der mit tôren schimpfen wil, 205
for who with fools sport will,

der muoz verdulden narren spil.
he must endure of-fools play.

Nû hœrent, wes er vlîzig was:
Now hear, of-what he diligent was:

ein wunnenklîchez palas,
a delightful palace,

dâ diu vrouwe inne slief,
where the lady inside slept,

dâ vür leite sich der gief, 210
there before laid himself the lout,

swen ez begunde nahten,
whenever it began to-grow-night,

durch daz er begunde gahten,
so that he began to-watch,

obe diu wunnenklîche
if the delightful-one

in ir heimelîche
in her privacy

begienge keinre slahte dingen,
committed of-any kind things,

unt ze laster möhte bringen,
and to disgrace might bring,

lag er ze allen zîten dâ
lay he at all times there

gerner vil, dan anders wâ.
rather much, than other where.

Diz treip er unz ûf eine naht,
This drove he until upon a night,

daz diu maget vil geslaht
that the maiden very well-born

bî iren junk vrouwen saz,
by her young ladies sat,

und irre swære gar vergaz
and her heaviness wholly forgot

bî eime schœnen viure
by a fair fire

mit maniger âventiure.
with many adventure.

Dô kam der vrouwen eine
Then came of-the ladies one

gegangen alters eine
walking all alone

vür der kemenâten tür,
before the chamber's door,

und wolte gerne dâ vür
and would gladly there before

sich des wazzers erlâzen,
herself of-the water relieve,

dâ vant si disen blâzen,
there found she this blower,

der ein tôre solte sîn;
who a fool should be;

balde lief si wider în,
quickly ran she back in,

und seite ir vrouwen mære,
and told to-her lady tidings,

daz der tôre wære
that the fool were

vor der kemenâten.
before the chamber.

»sô werden wir berâten
»so are we provided

mit schœnre gemellîche.«
with fair merriment.«

sô sprach diu minnenklîche
so spoke the lovely-one

»bringent uns har den narren;
»bring to-us hither the fool;

er muoz hie tâlang scharren
he must here all-day scrape

vor mir in der eschen.«
before me in the ashes.«

»vrouwe, er ist ungeweschen,«
»lady, he is unwashed,«

sprach ein kamerrûze
spoke a chamber-maid

»lâzent in dâ ûze.«
»let him there outside.«

»Waz dar umbe?« sprach diu maget
»What there about?« spoke the maiden

»mir ist sô vil von ime gesaget,
»to-me is so much of him told,

und ist sô rehte spæhe,
and is so right clever,

daz ich in gerne sæhe.«
that I him gladly would-see.«

Dô wart langer niht gebiten,
Then was longer not waited,

zwei vröuwelîn hin weg riten,
two little-ladies hence away rode,

in die kemenâten
into the chamber

sizzen si in bâten
to-sit they him bade

nider zuo dem viure.
down to the fire.

dô waren ime tiure
then were to-him scarce

schuohe unde lînîn wât,
shoes and linen clothing,

oder waz geruechlîche stât,
or what seemly stands,

des gieng er alles irre;
of-that went he all astray;

sîn vil lang geschirre
his very long gear

daz hieng im in die eschen;
that hung to-him into the ashes;

sus saz er ungeweschen
thus sat he unwashed

vor der küniginne,
before the princess,

an tœrlîchem sinne
on foolish sense

leit' er allen sînen gerink;
laid he all his striving;

als ein tumber snürrink
as a foolish jester

zart' er ûf sînen giel.
tore he up his maw.

den vrouwen allen wol geviel,
to-the ladies all well pleased,

swaz er des nahtes ane vienk;
whatever he of-the night on caught;

vil gemelîche er daz begienk,
very merrily he that performed,

biz an deme gebûren
until in the peasant

die starken natûren
the strong natures

ir kraft begunden öugen;
their power began to-show;

daz begund' er erzöugen
that began he to-display

an sîme eben alten,
on his even old-one,

der vor lag gevalten
who before lay folded

und sich krampf als ein wurm,
and himself cramped as a worm,

der hâte sich ûf einen sturm
he had himself for a storm

bereit mit aller sîner ger,
prepared with all his desire,

er stuont mit ûf gerihtem sper.
he stood with up raised spear.

Daz wart der küniginne sûr,
That became to-the princess sour,
vrou[we] Venus und ir sun Amûr
lady Venus and her son Amor
begiengen an ir wunder,
worked on her wonder,
si enbran als ein zunder
she burned as a tinder
von der angesihte,
from the sight,
daz dem tumben wihte
that to-the foolish wight
der eilfte vinger was ersworn;
the eleventh finger was swollen;
si sach den selben minne dorn
she saw the same love thorn
und leit vil seneklîche nôt;
and suffered very longing distress;
den vrouwen allen si gebôt,
to-the ladies all she commanded,
daz si sich leiten nidere.
that they themselves laid down.
dâ wâren si niht widere,
there were they not against,
sunder einiu diu dâ saz,
except one who there sat,
diu bekante ir vrouwen baz,
she knew her lady better,
daz was ein altez kamer wîp,
that was an old chamber woman,
durchriben was der selben lîp,
rubbed-through was the same's body,
Irmengart was si genant.
Irmengart was she named.

ir vrouwe sprach zuo (z')ir ze hant:
her lady spoke to (to)-her at once:

»nû lâ mich dînes râtes pflegen,
»now let me of-thy counsel take-care,

sît dû mir dikke rât hâst gegeben
since thou to-me often counsel hast given

von heimelîchen sachen,
of secret matters,

sô hilf mir, daz ich gevachen
so help me, that I catch

den kumber, den ich dulde:
the trouble, which I endure:

von dis tôren schulde
by this fool's fault

brinne ich alsô sêre,
burn I so sorely,

daz beide, lîp und êre
that both, body and honor

noch hînaht an der wâge stât,
yet tonight in the balance stands,

obe mîn wille niht vür sich gât.«
if my will not forward itself goes.«

Dô sprach diu kamer belle:
Then spoke the chamber bitch:

»nû varent al gevelle,
»now fare all fittingly,

mîn rât der wirt iu nüzze,
my counsel it becomes to-you useful,

ir werdent urdrüzze
you become weary

der minnen gelustes;
of-the love's lust;

sît iuch âkustes
since you from-fault

nie man kan erretten,
never one can rescue,

lânt iuch schône betten,
let yourself finely bed,

waz obe ich disen giegen
what if I this lout

mit listen kan betriegen,
with crafts can deceive,

daz er sich zuo (z')iu smükket
that he himself to (to)-you nestles

und iu die nôt enzükket,
and from-you the distress snatches,

diu von der minne kumet.
which from the love comes.

swaz iuwer lîp mit ime gevrumet,
whatever your body with him does,

des sint ir unvermeldet ouch;
of-that are you unbetrayed also;

er ist der alre beste gouch,
he is the of-all best cuckoo,

der ie wart getœret,
who ever was befooled,

er ensprichet, noch enhœret,
he not-speaks, nor hears,

er ist ein rehter stumme.«
he is a true mute.«

diz hôrte wol der tumme,
this heard well the fool,

dekeines wortes er verjach,
not-any word he spoke,

swaz diu dirne zuo (z')ime sprach,
whatever the girl to (to)-him spoke,

wan daz er si an kaffete.
except that he her at gaped.

und dô si daz geschaffete,
and when she that arranged,

daz ir vrouwe nider kam,
that her lady down came,

den tôren si bî der hende nam
the fool she by the hand took

und vuorte in an ir bette,
and led him to her bed,

vil schiere si in hette
very quickly she him had

zuo der vrouwen geleit,
to the lady laid,

als uns diu âventiure seit,
as to-us the adventure tells,

dô lag der ungevuege stampf,
then lay the uncouth stump,

daz er sich als ein igel krampf,
that he himself as a hedgehog cramped,

und smuhten sich z'ein ander;
and nestled themselves to each-other;

vil gerne bekand'er
very gladly recognized-he

der küniginne lekkerheit,
the princess's lechery,

als ich dâ vor hân geseit,
as I there before have said,

durch daz er si geschante;
so that he her disgraced;

dar umbe er nie genante,
there about he never ventured,

wan er si wolte grîfen an.
that he her would seize on.

dô lag von minnen (siech) und bran
then lay from love (sick) and burned

diu minnenklîche künigîn
the lovely princess

und leit vil seneklîche pîn,
and suffered very longing pain,

daz der tumbe gouch (dâ) lak
that the foolish cuckoo (there) lay

und der minnen niht enpflak,
and of-the love not took-care,

diu guoten wîben sanfte tuont.
which to-good women gently does.

dô sich diu junk vrou[we] des entstuont,
when herself the young lady of-that perceived,

dô sprach des rîchen küniges vruht:
then spoke the rich king's offspring:

»Irmengart, durch dîne zuht,
»Irmengart, by thy breeding,

obe dû mir keins guotes ganst,
if thou to-me any good grantest,

sô lâ die liste, die dû kanst,
so let the crafts, which thou knowest,

noch hînaht an mir werden schîn;
yet tonight on me become shown;

daz muoz dir iemer guot sîn.« —
that must to-thee ever good be.«—

»Gerne, vrouwe,« sprach diu maget
»Gladly, lady,« spoke the maid

mîn dienest ist iu unversaget.«
my service is to-you unrefused.«

Si nam den vil tumben slûch
She took the very foolish guzzler

und leit' in ûf ir linden bûch
and laid him on her soft belly

und druhte in zwischen ir bein:
and pressed him between her legs:

noch dâ lag er unde grein,
still there lay he and whined,

als ein alter hove wart,
as an old court watchman,

biz diu vrouwe Irmengart
until the lady Irmengart

einen stap erkripfete
a staff grabbed

und mit der gerte stipfete,
and with the switch pricked,

der kom ir dâ ze heile,
it came to-her there to salvation,

des tôren hinder teile
of-the fool's hinder parts

gap si stich über stich,
gave she stab over stab,

biz er begunde regen sich,
until he began to-stir himself,

des wart ir vröude manikvalt.
of-that became her joy manifold.

doch was der arge ribalt
yet was the wicked ribald

des küniges tohter alsô gram,
to-the king's daughter so hostile,

dô er in die wîse kam,
when he into the manner came,

daz die vröuden zuo sigen,
that the joys to sank,

dô liez er die schœnen ligen
then let he the fair-one lie

alles liebes âne.
of-all pleasure without.

dô rief diu wol getâne:
then cried the well made-one:

»stipfe, maget Irmengart,
»prick, maid Irmengart,

durch dîne wîplîche art,
by thy womanly nature,

diu von geburt an erbet dich,
which from birth on inherits thee,

sô reget aber der tôre sich.«
so stirs again the fool himself.«

Diu maget dô gewerte
The maid then granted

die junk vrouwen des si gerte,
the young lady what she desired,

si menete und kipfete,
she drove and kicked,

si stipfet' unde stipfete,
she pricked and pricked,

biz in der vrouwen minnen art
until to-them the of-ladies love's nature

beiden alsô tûre wart,
both so dear became,

daz in diu suezikeit zerran. —
that from-them the sweetness ran-out.—

dô wart der tôrehte man
then was the foolish man

gestozen vür den palas.
pushed before the palace.

Des morgens dô der tag ûf was,
In-the morning when the day up was,

dô huop er sich von dannen
then raised he himself from thence

und lief ze sînen mannen
and ran to his men

und seite sîme knehte
and told to-his servant

allez daz vil rehte,
all that very rightly,

daz ime des nahtes wider vuor.
what to-him of-the night back befell.

der kneht dô vil tûre swuor,
the servant then very dearly swore,

ez wær' einiu sælige vart.
it were a blessed journey.

niht langer dô gebiten wart,
not longer then waited was,

ein schœnez bat daz wart getragen,
a fair bath that was carried,

er wart geweschen und getwagen
he was washed and bathed

von râme und ouch von schimele.
of soot and also of mold.

er lobete Got von himele,
he praised God of heaven,

daz im sô rehte wol gelank;
that to-him so right well succeeded;

er seite ouch sînem knehte dank
he said also to-his servant thanks

des râtes und der helfe.
for-the counsel and for-the help.

mit grôzem gegelfe
with great boasting

sprach der knappe Heinrich:
spoke the squire Heinrich:

»herre, nû vernement mich,
»lord, now hear me,

varent wider ûf den plân
ride back onto the field

vür die jung vrouwen wol getân
before the young lady well made

mit schilte und ouch mit helme,
with shield and also with helmet,

rîtent in solichem melme
ride in such dust

als ein guot ritter sol,
as a good knight shall,

sô ruefet si, daz weiz ich wol:
so cries she, that know I well:

»ritter mit der halben bir!«
»knight with the half pear!«

dâ wider ruofent ir wol zwir:
there against cry you well twice:

»stipfe, vrouwe Irmengart,
»prick, lady Irmengart,

durch dîne wîplîche art,
by thy womanly nature,

diu von geburt an erbet dich!«
which from birth on inherits thee!«

ze hant sô verstât si sich
at once so understands she herself

der lekkerlîchen missetât,
of-the lecherous misdeed,

die si mit iu begangen hât
which she with you committed has

dâ heime an irm bette;
there at-home in her bed;

ich sezze iu ze wette
I set to-you as pledge

beide, mîn guot unde lîp,
both, my goods and body,

ob iuch daz minnenklîche wîp
if you the lovely woman

ie mer mê an geschrîe.«
ever more more at cries.«

Von dannan reit der vrîe
From thence rode the free-one

wider ûf den turnei.
back onto the tourney.

diu vrouwe in aber an schrei:
the lady him again at cried:

»ei, schevaliers, werder helt,
»ah, chevalier, worthy hero,

der die bir ungeschelt
who the pear unpeeled

halben in den munt warf,
half into the mouth threw,

waz er zühte noch bedarf!«
how-much he breeding yet needs!«

Dâ wider rief der ritter guot:
There against cried the knight good:

»ei, schevaliers, hôher muot!
»ah, chevalier, high spirit!

Stipf', ein vrouwe Irmengart,
Prick, a lady Irmengart,

durch dîne wîplîche art,
by thy womanly nature,

diu von geburt an erbet dich!
which from birth on inherits thee!

sô reget aber der tôre sich.«
so stirs again the fool himself.«

Dô diu vrouwe daz vernam,
When the lady that perceived,

ein schrekke ir an daz herze kam,
a fright to-her into the heart came,

daz ir vil nâch geswunden was;
that to-her very nearly swooned was;

si wart noch gruener dan ein gras,
she became yet greener than a grass,

und dar nâch als ein kirse.
and there after as a cherry.

dô sprach diu kamer birse:
then spoke the chamber scullion:

»vrouwe, ich hân ez wol vernomen,
»lady, I have it well perceived,

wir sîn ze laster beide komen;
we are to disgrace both come;

der tôre, der uns hât betrogen,
the fool, who us has deceived,

daz was der ritter wol gezogen,
that was the knight well bred,

den ir dâ hânt gescholten:
whom you there have scolded:

nû hât er iu vergolten
now has he to-you repaid

den unverdienten itewîz;
the undeserved reproach;

ez was ouch ie der welte vlîz,
it was also ever the world's usage,

daz er ze spotte dikke wirt,
that he to mockery often becomes,

swer bœses schimpfes niht verbirt.
whoever of-wicked mockery not forbears.

Nû volgent mir, daz ist mîn rât:
Now follow me, that is my counsel:

der helt, der iuch beswichen hât,
the hero, who you betrayed has,

den muezent ir besenden;
him must you send-for;

bevelhent sînen henden
commit to-his hands

beide, lîp unde guot,
both, body and goods,

und nement den ritter hôch gemuot
and take the knight high spirited

ze eime êlîchen man;
as a married man;

mit liebe bringent in dar an,
with love bring him there to,

daz er ze wîbe iuch behabe;
that he as woman you keep;

sô koment ir der schanden abe,
so come you of-the disgraces off,

dâ mite ir sint gebunden.«
there with you are bound.«

An den selben stunden
In the same hours

wart der ritter dô besant;
was the knight then sent-for;

beide, liute unde lant
both, people and land

wart ime undertænik.
became to-him subject.

doch hât' er arg wænik
yet had he ill suspicion

der vrouwen bœse tükke,
of-the lady's wicked tricks,

durch daz ungelükke,
for the misfortune,

daz ime des nahtes dâ geschach,
which to-him of-the night there happened,

dô man in stipfete und stach
when one him pricked and stabbed

in der kemenâten.
in the chamber.

Dar umbe wil ich râten
There about will I counsel

allen guoten wîben,
all good women,

daz si die zühte trîben,
that they the breeding practice,

die reinen wîben wol gezemen,
which to-pure women well befits,

und ein sælig bilde nemen
and a blessed example take

an der küniginne,
by the princess,

wie si betroug diu minne,
how her deceived the love,

dô si den list eröugete,
when she the craft showed,

dâ mite si erzöugete
there with she displayed

ir manne die grôze lekkerheit;
to-her man the great lechery;

des wart ir ungemuete breit,
of-that became her ill-spirit broad,

er was ir iemer mê gehaz̧.
he was to-her ever more hostile.

ein sælig man der merke daz̧,
a blessed man he mark that,

wie der ritter Arnolt
how the knight Arnolt

aller sînre tugende solt
of-all his virtues wage

alse garwe gar verlôr,
so wholly wholly lost,

[daz̧] (ob) er niht worden wær' ein tôr',
[*that*] *(if) he not become were a fool,*

daz̧ er geschendet wære.
that he disgraced would-be.

ein hübescher heinnære
a courtly suitor

der vlîz̧e sich der dinge,
he exert himself of-the things,

daz̧ ime niht misselinge;
that to-him not miscarry;

daz̧ ist mîniu bet' und ouch mîn rât.
that is my request and also my counsel.

[wan] von einre kleinen missetât
[*for*] *from a small misdeed*

wirt ein man geschendet,
is a man disgraced,

unde ein wîp gewendet
and a woman turned

guotes willen den si hât.
from-good will which she has.

von Wirzeburg ich Kuonrât
of Würzburg I Konrad

kan iu anders niht verjehen:
can to-you otherwise not avow:

Got lâze uns allen wol beschehen!
God let to-us all well befall!

Vrouwen triuwe

XIII · A WOMAN'S FAITHFULNESS

A knight devoted to ladies' service picks at a church door the fairest woman of a city, the wife of the burgher showing him, and for her sake jousts unarmed in a silk shirt; a spear's iron is left in his side. Only she can heal him, he says, and at her husband's urging she draws it out. Healed, he climbs into her bedroom; as they embrace the wound bursts and he dies. She carries him secretly back to his bed. At his requiem she offers her mantle and gown, then all but her shift, until her heart breaks; her husband praises her faithfulness, and both are buried in one grave.

Ich wolde wünschen, möht ez wesen,
I would wish, might it be,

swaz ich von liebe hân gelesen
whatever I of love have read

und von ganzer minne,
and of whole love,

daz noch der werlde sinne
that yet the world's senses

dâ mit gestrikket wære,
there with entangled were,

als ich iu an disem mære
as I to-you in this tale

bescheiden wil mit worten,
explain will with words,

wie stæt' an allen orten
how steadfast in all places

der werden vrouwen herze was,
the worthy lady's heart was,

von der ich diz mære las,
of whom I this tale read,

alsô daz si im mit triuwen galt,
so that she him with faithfulness repaid,

der ir ze dienst(e) het gezalt
who her to service had counted

lîp, herze, sinne unde muot;
body, heart, senses and spirit;

enzun[de]t was von ir minne gluot
kindled was from her love's glow

sîn herze, nie gescheiden wart
his heart, never parted was-it

von ir, biz ez der tôt verkârt'.
from her, until it the death turned-aside.

Des lônte im diu guote,
For-that rewarded him the good-one,

diu reine, wol gemuote,
the pure, well spirited-one,

alsô daz si daz leben verlôs
so that she the life lost

[und] den tôt durch sînen willen kôs.
[and] the death for his sake chose.

Die vor rede wil ich lân:
The fore speech will I leave:

hie hebet sich daz mære an.
here raises itself the tale on.

Ein ritter und ein werder degen,
A knight and a worthy thane,

lîbes und muotes gar erwegen,
of-body and of-spirit wholly resolute,

der het gewendet sînen muot,
he had turned his spirit,

als noch manik vrumer ritter tuot,
as yet many valiant knight does,

daz er warp nâch vrouwen gunst;
that he strove after of-ladies favor;

dâ von er manik bluot runst
there from he many blood flow

enpfienk mit grimmer bitterkeit:
received with grim bitterness:

dar umb er doch nie vermeit,
there for he yet never avoided,

er wære in vrouwen dienste balt
he were in of-ladies service bold

mit ritterschefte manikvalt,
with knighthood manifold,

mit sper und mit dem schilde,
with spear and with the shield,

mit tugenden und mit milde.
with virtues and with generosity.

Dâ von er wîten wart bekant.
There from he widely became known.

swâ der werde des enpfant
wherever the worthy-one of-it perceived

und swâ er dienen weste
and wherever he to-serve knew

den vrouwen, [dâ] tet er daz beste,
the ladies, [there] did he the best,

der ritter unverdrozzen.
the knight untiring.

des hât' er ofte genozzen:
of-that had he often profited:

ze jungest er sîn doch engalt,
at last he of-it yet paid,

wan ez in verleitet' unt valt'.
for it him misled and felled.

Der selbe ritter kwam geriten
The same knight came ridden

ûf âventiur[e], nâch sînem siten,
upon adventure, after his custom,

durch ritterschaft, in eine stat,
for knighthood, into a city,

dar ûz er nie mêr vuoz getrat.
there out-of he never more foot stepped.

Diu liute im wâren unbekant,
The people to-him were unknown,

sunder einen burger, den er vant,
except a burgher, whom he found,

den het er vor gesehen,
him had he before seen,

dem begund' er sich næhen,
to-him began he himself to-near,

er redet' mit im ze künde,
he spoke with him as acquaintance,

er vrâgt' in, wâ er vünde
he asked him, where he found

die aller schœnsten vrouwen.
the of-all fairest ladies.

er sprach: »helt, welt ir schouwen
he spoke: »hero, (if)-will you behold

die schœnste(n), diu hie irgent ist,
the fairest, who here anywhere is,

die zeige ich iu in kurzer vrist:
her show I to-you in short time:

morgen ist hie kirch tak,
tomorrow is here church day,

vil wol daz geschehen mak,
very well that happen may,

daz ir si sehet alle;
that you them see all;

swelch iu dô baz gevalle,
whichever to-you then better pleases,

die zeiget mir mit winken
her show me with beckoning

oder mit ougen pinken.«
or with of-eyes winking.«

Der ritter wart der rede vrô;
The knight became of-the speech glad;

si trâten vür die kirch tür dô,
they stepped before the church door then,

die wîle dâ pfaffen sungen,
the while there priests sang,

die vrouwen vür si drungen.
the ladies before them pressed.

Der ritter eine dâ ersach,
The knight one there saw,

in sînem herzen er dô jach,
in his heart he then avowed,

ern' sæhe nie bilde mêr sô klâr,
he saw never image more so bright,

er begunde der vrouwen nemen war,
he began of-the lady to-take heed,

si kam im zuo der selben stunt
she came to-him at the same hour

mitten in sînes herzen grunt,
midst into his heart's ground,

dar ûz si nimmer mêr geschiet,
there out-of she never more parted,

unz biz ez der tôt verschriet;
until until it the death cut-off;

si het in gar der sinne beroub[e]t:
she had him wholly of-the senses robbed:

diu vrouwe truog ûf irem houb[e]t
the lady bore on her head

hâr, gespunnen golt gelîch,
hair, spun gold like,

dar ob gebende zwinzerlîch,
there above headdress shimmering,

ir wimprân brûn, ir antlüz fîn,
her eyebrows brown, her countenance fine,

ir ougen sam der sterne schîn,
her eyes as the star's shine,

ir mündel daz stuont rôsen var,
her little-mouth it stood rose colored,

ob rôsen bleter wæren dar
as-if rose petals were there

geströut und brünnen vor rœte,
strewn and burned for redness,

daz brâht' den helt in nœte;
that brought the hero into distresses;

ir hals wîz und ir kinne
her neck white and her chin

gestellet wol ze der minne,
set well for the love,

ze den sîten smal, ze mâzen lank,
at the sides slender, in measure long,

si het vrouw(e)lîchen gank,
she had ladylike gait,

daz si nimmer ir ougen
that she never her eyes

erhuop, daz ist âne luogen,
raised, that is without lie,

ze wildiklîchem blikke;
to wanton glance;

der ritter [er]sufzte dikke,
the knight [sighed] often,

und sach si an unverdrozzen;
and looked her on untiring;

alsam ein bilde ergozzen
just-as an image cast

nâch wunsche, was ir zarter lîp;
after wish, was her tender body;

jâ, wer gesach ie schœner wîp!
yea, who saw ever fairer woman!

Ze prîse stuont [wol] ir gewæte
To praise stood [well] her raiment

ze der schœne, die si hæte;
to the beauty, which she had;

si was mit guete und mit tugent
she was with goodness and with virtue

gezieret wol, ir suezze jugent,
adorned well, her sweet youth,

ich enkünd'ez halbez niht vol sagen:
I could-it half not fully tell:

si solde des rîches krône tragen.
she should the realm's crown bear.

Der burger sprach dem ritter zuo:
The burgher spoke the knight to:

»welhiu,« sprach er »dünket iuh nû
»which,« spoke he »seems to-you now

diu schœnste? des sult ir mir verjehen;
the fairest? of-that shall you to-me avow;

ich weiz wol, daz ir habt gesehen
I know well, that you have seen

mangen schœnen stolzen lîp.«
many fair proud body.«

er zeiget' im sîn selbes wîp.
he showed him his self's woman.

Der burger lachen des began;
The burgher to-laugh of-that began;

er het dar ûf keinen wân.
he had there upon no suspicion.

Er bat den ritter mære,
He begged the knight renowned,

daz er sîn gast wære.
that he his guest were.

Daz versagt' im der helt;
That refused him the hero;

sîn herze daz was gar verselt
his heart it was wholly given

an die vrouwen tag und naht,
to the lady day and night,

er trünke, er æze, er slief', er waht',
he drank, he ate, he slept, he waked,

er stuende, er gienge, er læg', er saz,
he stood, he went, he lay, he sat,

der vrouwen nimmer er vergaz,
the lady never he forgot,

unt kêrte dar (an) sînen sin,
and turned there (on) his sense,

swâ diu vrouwe gienge hin,
wherever the lady went hence,

daz er ir an den wek trat,
that he to-her into the way stepped,

beide, vruo unde spât,
both, early and late,

durch daz, daz si in gruezte
for that, that she him greeted

und dâmit swære (im) buezte.
and therewith heaviness (to-him) atoned.

Ân' ark wân, durch ir selbes zuht,
Without evil thought, for her self's breeding,

gruozt' si den ritter; der helt enruocht'
greeted she the knight; the hero cared

aller vröuden niht umb ein hâr,
of-all joys not by a hair,

swenne er solde shen die vrouwen klâr.
whenever he should see the lady bright.

Der unverzagte weerde man
The undaunted worthy man

her berge sâ gewan
host shelter at-once won

ze næhest bî der vrouwen,
at nearest by the lady,

durch daz er si geschouwen
for that he her behold

deste dikker mehte,
the-more often might,

daz in von sorgen bræhte.
which him from cares brought.

Des wart inne diu vrouwe guot,
Of-that became aware the lady good,

daz er ir trueg(e) holden muot,
that he to-her bore loyal spirit,

er wolt' [sich] nâch ir erwueten:
he would [himself] for her rage:

diu vrouwe [diu] begunde sich hueten,
the lady [she] began herself to-guard,

und was irem herzen leit genuok.
and was to-her heart sorrowful enough.

wan si ze nie man liebe truok,
for she to no man love bore,

wan ze irem êlîchen man.
except to her wedded man.

der ritter in der minne bran.
the knight in the love burned.

Daz enstuont dar nâch niht lank,
That stood there after not long,

ir sueze minne in dar zuo twank,
her sweet love him there to compelled,

daz er liez ruofen über al,
that he let cry over all,

daz ez in der stat erschal,
that it in the city resounded,

ob ie man in wolde bestân,
if ever man him would attack,

mit der tschôst, gewæfen ân',
with the joust, weapons without,

gegen dem wold' er ze velde komen,
against him would he to field come,

in einem [sîdîm] hemde, hân ich vernomen.
in a [silken] shirt, have I heard.

Die rede erhôrt' ein tumber,
The speech heard a fool,

der brâht' den helt in kumber,
he brought the hero into affliction,

alsô daz er den ritter stach,
so that he the knight pierced,

daz daz sper in im zebrach,
that the spear in him broke,

wan er mit grimme ûf in treip,
for he with fury upon him drove,

daz daz îsen in im beleip.
that the iron in him remained.

Man sach in bleich, der ê was rôt,
One saw him pale, who before was red,

man huob den werden ûf ver tôt,
one lifted the worthy-one up as dead,

man brâht' in in sîn her berge sân,
one brought him into his host shelter at-once,

einen arzt man im gewan,
a physician one for-him won,

als man ze wunden liuten pfliget.
as one for wounded people does.

der tôt im nâhen an gesiget
the death him nearly on conquered

het mit smerzen bitter.
had with pain bitter.

mit grimme sprach der ritter:
with fury spoke the knight:

»mich sol nieman tuon gesunt,
»me shall no-one make sound,

wan durch der wille(n) ich wart wunt,
except for whose sake I was wounded,

læȥt mich diu sust verderben,
(if)-lets me she thus perish,

sô wil ich gerne sterben.«
so will I gladly die.«

Mank werde vrouwe kom gegân
Many worthy lady came going

al dar ze trôst dem wunden man,
all thither to comfort the wounded man,

und manger werder man alsam:
and many worthy man likewise:

sîn[e]s herzen trût daȥ niht enkwam;
his heart's beloved that not came;

dâ von sîn herze in jâmer kwal,
there from his heart in misery suffered,

sîn bluende jugent diu wart val.
his blooming youth it became pale.

Dô tet der selben vrouwen wirt
Then did the same lady's host

ein dink, dar an er was verirt,
a thing, there on he was misled,

er begunde biten unde vlên
he began to-beg and implore

die vrouwen, daz si wolde gên
the lady, that she would go

zuo dem selben ritter wunt.
to the same knight wounded.

si sprach: »er ist mir unkunt,
she spoke: »he is to-me unknown,

ichn' weiz, waz ich dâ tuon sol,
I-not know, what I there do shall,

er geniset ân' mîn hülfe wol.«
he recovers without my help well.«

Wol west' si, daz er durch si dolt'
Well knew she, that he for her suffered

den smerzen und ir wære holt.
the pain and to-her were devoted.

Der wirt sprach aber der vrouwen zuo:
The host spoke again the lady to:

»durch mînen willen, vrou, daz tuo
»for my sake, lady, that do

und gê zuo dem manne dar,
and go to the man there,

wan ich weiz daz wol ver wâr,
for I know that well for true,

daz er mir'z ver übel hât,
that he me-it for ill has,

sint nie man ist in dirre stat,
since no man is in this city,

ân' mich, den er bekenne mêr;
except me, whom he knows more;

er wænet lîht, daz ich dir'z wer.
he weens perhaps, that I thee-it forbid.

Ich wil sîn halt mit niht enbern,
I will of-it rather in nothing do-without,

du enmuezest mich der bet' gewern.«
thou unless-must me the request grant.«

Durch ir zuht si daz tet,
For her breeding she that did,

und ouch durch ires mannes bet',
and also for her husband's request,

daz si sich nimmer werte,
that she herself never defended,

si huop sich ûf die verte.
she raised herself upon the journey.

Het' er gewest des ritters muot,
Had he known the knight's spirit,

er het' die vrouwen baz behuot.
he would-have the lady better guarded.

Dar kom diu vrouwe gegangen dô;
Thither came the lady going then;

des wart der helt unmâzen vrô,
of-that became the hero beyond-measure glad,

ob er ân' alle swære
as-if he without all heaviness

in dem paradîse wære;
in the paradise were;

die vrouwe(n) lieplîch er enpfienk,
the lady lovingly he received,

und ir dirne, diu mit ir gienk,
and her maid, who with her went,

er bat si bî sich sizzen.
he begged them by him sit.

si begund' von scham erhizzen;
she began from shame to-glow;

sam in einer gluete,
as in a glow,

si saz, unt kund' vor guete
she sat, and could for goodness

dem manne koum zuo sprechen;
to-the man scarcely to speak;

si entet niht, sam die vrechen,
she did not, as the bold-ones,

blœdiklîchen si daz sprach:
timidly she that spoke:

»mir ist leit iuwer ungemach;
»to-me is sorrowful your hardship;

wie gehabt ir iuh?« er antwort' ir:
how have you yourselves?« he answered to-her:

»vrouwe, waz geschehen ist an mir,
»lady, what happened is to me,

daz geschach durch iuch,« sprach der helt.
that happened for you,« spoke the hero.

»ich gehab' mich, vrouwe, wie ir welt;
»I have myself, lady, as you will;

welt ir, ir helft mir von der nôt:
(if)-will you, you help me from the distress:

tuot ir des niht, sô bin ich tôt.«
(if)-do you of-it not, so am I dead.«

Si sprach: »daz ir wert wol gesunt,
She spoke: »that you become well sound,

daz mir wær' liep; daz ir sît wunt,
that to-me were dear; that you are wounded,

dar zuo mag iu ein arz(â)t baz,
there to may to-you a physician better,

wan ich, gerâten, wizzet daz.
than I, counsel, know that.

Ouch bin ich'z niht Gotes sun,
Also am I-it not God's son,

daz ich die tôten muge getuon
that I the dead may make

lebendik: Got der reine
living: God the pure

hât den gewalt al eine,
has the power all alone,

der mag über iuch erbarmen sich.«
he may over you have-mercy himself.«

er sprach: »vrouwe, welt ir mich
he spoke: »lady, (if)-will you me

vor dem tôde vrîen
from the death free

unt vor des jâmers schrîen,
and from the misery's cries,

so erlœst mich von der marter bant,
so release me from the torment's bond,

unt ziehet mit iuwer wîzen hant
and draw with your white hand

daz îsen ûz der sîten mîn:
the iron out-of the side my:

oder ich muoz des tôdes sîn.«
or I must of-the death be.«

Diu vrou[we] sich schamte harte,
The lady herself was-ashamed hard,

diu sueze und diu vil zarte
the sweet and the very tender

von scham wart [si] rôt, von sweize naz,
from shame became [she] red, from sweat wet,

diu dirn(e) sprach: »waz schat iu daz?«
the maid spoke: »what harms to-you that?«

und brâht' si an mit aller nôt,
and brought her on with all distress,

daz si ir hant zer wunden bôt
that she her hand to-the wound offered

unt zôch ûz daz îsen;
and drew out the iron;

des wil ich sie immer prîsen
for-that will I her ever praise

baz, den ein', diu ze hant gereit
better, than one, who at once ready

gewesen wær' durch [ir] vür wizzikeit.
been were through [her] fore cleverness.

Diu vrou[we] nam urloup und gienk dan.
The lady took leave and went thence.

der ritter einen arzt gewan.
the knight a physician won.

Der machet' in in kurzer stunt
He made him in short time

mit tranke heil und wol gesunt.
with drink whole and well sound.

Nâhen im ze dem herzen lak
Near to-him at the heart lay

diu vrouwe, er trâhte naht unt tak
the lady, he pondered night and day

w(ie) er des begünne,
how he it should-begin,

daz er die vrouwe(n) gewünne.
that he the lady won.

Wilder gedank(e) het er genuok,
Wild thoughts had he enough,

des lebens gar er sich verwuok:
of-the life wholly he himself despaired:

ze einem venster in gestigen
at a window in climbed

kom er, dâ er die vrouwen ligen
came he, where he the lady lying

vant mit irem lieben man
found with her dear man

ze dem bette huob er sich sân,
to the bed raised he himself at-once,

er ruorte die vrouwen linde.
he touched the lady gently.

der wirt und daz gesinde
the host and the household

wâren entslafen vaste;
were asleep fast;

daz was vil liep dem gaste.
that was very dear to-the guest.

Diu reine sueze [vil] sêr erschrak,
The pure sweet-one [very] sorely was-frightened,

als ob ein grôzer doner slak
as if a great thunder clap

si het' mit kraft betoubet.
her had with force stunned.

etlîch(iu) des niht geloubet,
many-a-one of-it not believes,

diu gar âne scheme
who wholly without shame

ein[e]s grôzern niht erkwæme.
of-a greater not would-be-frightened.

Erkalt vor vorhten was ir lîp;
Cold from fears was her body;

dô sich daz minnenklîche wîp
when herself the lovely woman

versan, dô sprach si: »waz bist dû?«
collected, then spoke she: »what art thou?«

der ritter sprach der vrouwen zuo;
the knight spoke the lady to;

»daz bin ich,« sprach er »vrouwe zart,
»that am I,« spoke he »lady tender,

der wunt durch iuwern willen wart.« —
who wounded for your sake was.«—

»Wê,« sprach si »daz ich bin geborn!
»Woe,« spoke she »that I am born!

wir haben beide daz leben verlorn.«
we have both the life lost.«

Er sprach: »vrouw', waz touk mîn leben!
He spoke: »lady, what avails my life!

sol ich sust in jâmer streben
shall I thus in misery strive

nâch iu, in seniklîcher nôt,
after you, in longing distress,

vil lieber wil ich ligen tôt.«
much rather will I lie dead.«

Vor leide diu vrou[we] daz hâr uz rouft';
For sorrow the lady the hair out tore;

ein sîdîn hemd(e) si an slouft',
a silken shift she on slipped,

mit im von dem bette
with him from the bed

si gienk, daz si in hette
she went, that she him had

mit listen gern(e) brâht von dan.
with cunning gladly brought from thence.

die vrouwen [die] umbe vienk der man
the lady [her] around seized the man

und drukte si nâhen zuo (z')im hin
and pressed her close to (to)-him hither

vor liebe: daz was sîn ungewin,
for love: that was his loss,

diu strenge minne tet im sô heiz,
the stern love made to-him so hot,

diu wunde von ein ander reiz,
the wound from each other tore,

dô er die vrouwe(n) zuo (z')im slôz,
when he the lady to (to)-him clasped,

daz bluot mit düzzen von im schôz,
the blood with roaring from him shot,

daz er vor unmeht' nider viel,
that he for weakness down fell,

daz bluot im ûz der wunden wiel,
the blood to-him out-of the wound welled,

daz er der sele wart ein gast,
that he to-the soul became a guest,

daz herze im in dem lîbe brast.
the heart to-him in the body burst.

Der vrouwen der wart leide,
To-the lady to-her became sorrowful,

daz sprich' ich bî dem eide,
that say I by the oath,

ir wart sô wê von jâmers nôt,
to-her became so woe from misery's distress,

si wær(e) gern(e) mit im tôt,
she were gladly with him dead,

ir herz[e] vor jâmer leid getwank.
her heart for misery sorrow pressed.

si het manger hande gedank,
she had of-many kind thought,

wie si in von danne möht' getragen;
how she him from thence might carry;

si entorst' dem manne niht gesagen;
she dared to-the man not tell;

wan als uns sagent die wîsen,
for as us tell the wise,

daz noch nôt bricht daz îsen:
that yet need breaks the iron:

ein bret si zuo dem venster stalt',
a board she to the window set,

den ritter nam si mit gewalt
the knight took she with force

unt truog in an sin bette wider.
and carried him onto his bed back.

ze irem manne gienk si sider,
to her man went she afterward,

und leit(e) sich mit sinne,
and laid herself with sense,

daz er sîn nie wart inne.
that he of-it never became aware.

Alrest diu vrouwe gedâhte
First the lady thought

der grôzen liebe ahte,
of-the great love's measure,

die der ritter zuo ir hæt(e):
which the knight to her had:

dô was ez leider [nû] ze spæt(e).
then was it alas [now] too late.

Des ritters kneht' des morgens vruo
The knight's servants in-the morning early

sprâchen irem herren zuo,
spoke their lord to,

der kamerær' im vaste rief:
the chamberlain to-him fast called:

den langen slâf er leider slief.
the long sleep he alas slept.

Irn her[re]n si tôten ligen sâ[he]n,
Their lord they dead lying saw,

si weinten mangen heizen trahen,
they wept many hot tear,

si wâren vröuden lære;
they were of-joys empty;

si enwesten, wie im wære
they not-knew, how to-him were

geschehen, daz was in leit genuok.
happened, that was to-them sorrow enough.

einen purper man dar truok,
a purple one thither bore,

den tôten ritter man da[r] nam
the dead knight one there took

und bârt' in ûf, als im wol zam.
and biered him up, as to-him well suited.

Er wart an allen dingen,
He was in all things,

mit lesen und mit singen
with reading and with singing

bewart nâch sînem rehte;
tended after his right;

sîn getriuwen knehte
his faithful servants

truogen in ze der kirchen vruo.
bore him to the church early.

Merket, wie diu vrouwe nû
Mark, how the lady now

im sîner triuwen lône:
him of-his faithfulness rewards:

die himelische(n) krône
the heavenly crown

Got durch ir triuwe muoste geben,
God for her faithfulness had-to give,

und êwiklîchen mit im leben.
and eternally with him live.

Ze dem wirte diu vrouwe gienk,
To the host the lady went,

lieplîch si in umbe vienk,
lovingly she him around seized,

ir herze was verschrôten,
her heart was cut-to-pieces,

si bat, daz si dem tôten
she begged, that she to-the dead

opfern, nâch irs herzen gir,
offer, after her heart's desire,

muest'; der wirt erloupt' ez ir,
might; the host allowed it to-her,

daz si tæt(e) nâch ir ger,
that she did after her desire,

waz nâch irem willen wær'.
what after her will were.

Diu vrouw' des ritters niht vergaz;
The lady of-the knight not forgot;

der wirt, noch nie man weste, waz
the host, nor no man knew, what

dâ mit meinte diu reine,
there with meant the pure-one,

sunder ir dirn' al eine,
except her maid all alone,

diu vor bî im mit ir was
who before by him with her was

gewesen, als ich ê las,
been, as I before read,

der het diu vrouw' verjehen,
to-her had the lady confessed,

wie ir was geschehen.
how to-her was happened.

Ir reinez herze in jâmer rank,
Her pure heart in misery struggled,

diu suezę zuo dem opfer drank,
the sweet-one to the offering pressed,

mantel und[e] sukkenîe
mantle and gown

opfert' diu valsches vrîe.
offered the of-falsehood free-one.

Ir herze in jâmers riuwe kwal,
Her heart in misery's rue suffered,

si opfert' zuo dem andern mâl
she offered to the second time

ir gewant, daz si in dem rokke bestuont;
her clothing, that she in the skirt stood;

bleich wart ir rôsen varwer munt.
pale became her rose colored mouth.

Zem dritten mâl tet si alsam,
At-the third time did she likewise,

si vergaz vor leide gar der scham,
she forgot for sorrow wholly the shame,

si gie, dâ der ritter lak,
she went, where the knight lay,

si blikt' in an, ir herze erschrak,
she looked him on, her heart was-frightened,

ir varwe si verkârte,
her color she changed,

jæmerlîchen si gebârte,
miserably she behaved,

mit jâmer si ir hende vielt,
with misery she her hands folded,

ir herze sich in dem lîbe spielt,
her heart itself in the body split,

diu vrouwe zuo der erden sank;
the lady to the earth sank;

umb si wart ein vil grôz gedrank;
about her was a very great crowd;

daz was ein ungevuege nôt:
that was an immense distress:

diu vrouwe was vor leide tôt.
the lady was for sorrow dead.

Der rette sust, der rette sô.
This-one spoke thus, that-one spoke so.

der vrouwen wirt der kwam unvrô,
the lady's host he came unglad,

vor leide zart' er ûz sîn hâr,
for sorrow tore he out his hair,

er sprach: »ich weiz daz wol ver wâr,
he spoke: »I know that well for true,

und dunket mich, gar sunder wân,
and seems to-me, wholly without doubt,

daz nie kein man zer werlde gewan
that never any man in-the world won

ein wîp sô gar ân' valschen list,
a woman so wholly without false cunning,

swie ez dar zuo komen ist.«
however it there to come is.«

Dâ legte man sie beide
There laid one them both

mit jâmer und mit leide
with misery and with sorrow

in ein grap, die holden.
in a grave, the loyal-ones.

sust het si im vergolden,
thus had she him repaid,

unt tet im ganze triuwe schîn.
and made to-him whole faithfulness apparent.

hie endet sich daz buechelîn,
here ends itself the little-book,

daz heizet vrouwen triuwe. —
which is-called of-ladies faithfulness.—

si lebe in jâmers riuwe
she live in misery's rue

und muez' in leide ersterben,
and must in sorrow die,

diu den lâz' verderben,
who him lets perish,

der ir trage holden muot;
who to-her bears loyal spirit;

nimmer muez' ir liep, noch guot
never must to-her joy, nor good

geschehen, und muez' vervluochet sîn!
happen, and must cursed be!

des wünschet ir daz herze mîn
that wishes her the heart my

und lîp unde sinne,
and body and senses,

daz ir nimmer minne
that to-her never love's

guete geschehen mueze(n)
goodness happen must

von reiner manne grueze(n)
from pure men's greetings

hie ûf dirre erde
here on this earth

ir nimmer buoz werde
to-her never remedy become

jæmerlîches smerzen
of-miserable pain

an lîbe und irs herzen
in body and her heart

in siuchen mueze[n] swinden,
in sicknesses must waste,

als man die kelde linden
as one the cold soften

siht, in grôzer hizze,
sees, in great heat,

alsam muez' si in jâmer swizze(n):
likewise must she in misery sweat:

uzer diu vrouwe, diu dâ lôn
except the lady, who there reward

gibt irem diener schôn,
gives to-her servant finely,

die muez' in sînem rîche
her must in his realm

Got krœnen êwiklîche,
God crown eternally,

und dâ mit grôzer wirdikeit
and there with great worthiness

beschouwen die [werde] drîvaltikeit.
behold the [worthy] Trinity.

Liep von reht erwerben sol,
Love by right win shall,

der liep mit liebe kan gelten wol.
who love with love can repay well.

Der liebe muez' teilhaftik wesen,
Of-the love must partaking be,

der iu daz buechel hât gelesen.
who to-you the little-book has read.

Diz ist der ritter underm zuber

XIV · THE KNIGHT UNDER THE TUB

A wife's love for a knight is betrayed to her husband by his three brothers; he feigns a journey, returns with them at night, and overhears the lovers. The knight hides under the neighboring baker-woman's tub, and the wife persuades her husband she was only dreaming of him, then tells him truly where the knight lies, which he takes for mockery. The baker-woman sends for her tub; told the wife needs it for a woman's need, she understands and sets a nearby barn on fire. While everyone runs to the blaze, the wife frees the knight. Jakob Appet closes on women's cunning.

Ez ist uns dikke wol geseit,
It is to-us often well told,

waz liste und grôz' kündikeit
what crafts and great cleverness

künnent sümelîchiu wîp,
can some women,

dâ mite siu vil dikke iren lîp
there with they very often their body

vor irn mannen vristent,
before their men save,

die siu vil dikke überlistent
whom they very often outwit

und machent si ze tôren gar.
and make them into fools wholly.

hie bî nemet einre mære war,
here by take of-a tale heed,

wie einiu âventiur' beschach
how an adventure befell

eime ritter, den ich sach,
to-a knight, whom I saw,

der mir'ẓ mit sînem munde
who to-me-it with his mouth

seite ze einre stunde:
told at one time:

er minnete eine wirtin,
he loved a hostess,

diu selbe ouch sêre minnet'in,
she same also sorely loved-him,

si heten bêde an ander liep;
they had both in each-other love;

ir zweiger vriuntschaft möht' ein diep
of-them two friendship might a thief

unsanfte in beiden hân verstoln.
hardly from-them both have stolen.

wenne ez mohte sîn verholn,
whenever it might be hidden,

sô kômen si ze ein ander,
so came they to each other,

so enwart nie sâlamander
so was never salamander

in dem heiẓen viure baz,
in the hot fire better,

denne in zwein bînander was.
than to-them two by-each-other was.

Diu vriuntschaft werte langen tak;
The friendship lasted long day;

ze jüngest, als melde nie gelak,
at last, as tale-bearing never lay-still,

der wirt hete starker brueder drî,
the host had strong brothers three,

nâch langer rede, wie dem sî,
after long talk, how it be,

diu mære si bevunden,
the tidings they discovered,

si begunden an den stunden
they began at the hours

den bruoder strâfen sêre:
the brother to-rebuke sorely:

»daz dir Got alle dîn êre
»that from-thee God all thy honor

neme, dû rehte bœse wiht!«
take, thou right wicked wretch!«

sprâchen si »weist dû niht,
spoke they »knowest thou not,

wie man von dînem wibe seit
how one of thy woman tells

sô rehte grôz' unstætikeit?
so right great inconstancy?

Siu minnet einen ritter,
She loves a knight,

der lebet alsô mitir,
he lives so with-her,

daz wir sîn haben schande
that we of-it have disgrace

in allem disem lande.«
in all this land.«

Der wirt sprach: »dâ ist niht an,
The host spoke: »there is nothing in-it,

mîn wîp enminnet keinen man
my woman loves no man

anders, wærlîch, danne mich,
other, truly, than me,

des wolt' ich swern sicherlîch;
of-that would I swear surely;

siu ist sô stæte und ist sô guot,
she is so steadfast and is so good,

ich weiz wol, daz siu niht entuot.«
I know well, that she not does.«

Si sprâchen: »ez ist sicher wâr,
They spoke: »it is surely true,

siu trîbet ez ieze wol ein jâr,
she drives it now well a year,

daz siu in offenlîche hât,
that she him openly has,

ez weiz gemeinlîche al diu stat,
it knows commonly all the city,

kint, wîp und alle die man;
child, woman and all the men;

des lasters maniger dir verban.«
of-the shame many thee begrudged.«

dô sprach der wirt: »daz ist mir leit,
then spoke the host: »that is to-me sorrowful,

wie bevinde ich nû die wârheit?«
how find I now the truth?«

sprach er aber zuo (z')in. —
spoke he again to (to)-them.—

»wiltû nû hœren unsern sin
»(if)-wilt-thou now hear our sense

und wilt der wârheit kumen zuo,
and wilt the truth come to,

sô soltu sprechen morne vruo,
so shalt-thou say tomorrow early,

dû wellest rîten etewar:
thou wilt ride somewhere:

des nahtes sô kum wider har,
of-the night so come back hither,

und lâz uns alle mit dir gân
and let us all with thee go

und vür alle ire türen stân,
and before all her doors stand,

und gang dû selber an die want,
and go thou self to the wall,

sô hœrest in dinne al ze hant.«
so hearest him inside all at once.«

Der wirt des râtes schiere pflak,
The host of-the counsel quickly took-care,

morne vruo dô ez wart tak,
tomorrow early when it became day,

und er sich schône an geleit
and he himself finely on laid

und sich diu vrouwe ouch hât' bereit,
and herself the lady also had prepared,

dô sprach er: »liebe vrouwe mîn,
then spoke he: »dear lady my,

lâ dir mîn hûs bevolhen sîn;
let to-thee my house entrusted be;

wan ich in disen zîten
for I in these times

muoz verre von dir rîten;
must far from thee ride;

mir ist solichiu botschaft getân,
to-me is such message done,

daz ich ez nicht mag abe lân;
that I it not may off leave;

und enkume niht in kurzer vrist:
and come not in short time:

huete wol, also liep dû mir bist.«
guard well, as dear thou to-me art.«

Dô sprach diu vrouwe: »waz seist dû?
Then spoke the lady: »what sayest thou?

wiltu aber von mir nû?
wilt-thou again from me now?

Waz wiltu dâ mite meinen?«
What wilt-thou there with mean?«

siu begunde weinen
she began to-weep

und sprach: »grôz' sünde dû begâst,
and spoke: »great sin thou committest,

daz dû mich alters eine lâst.
that thou me all alone leavest.

Lieber wirt, belîb bî mir;
Dear host, remain by me;

wan ich dîn alsô kûme enbir.«
for I thee so scarcely do-without.«

Von triuwen rette siu niht daz:
From faithfulness spoke she not that:

ir tet daz hinscheiden baz;
to-her did the departing better;

wan siu des was von herzen vrô.
for she of-it was from heart glad.

mit armen umbe vieng siu in dô
with arms around seized she him then

unt kuste in mit irem munde:
and kissed him with her mouth:

der kus gienk niht von grunde.
the kiss went not from ground.

Siu sprach: »mîn lieber trûter wirt,
She spoke: »my dear beloved host,

wie kûme dîn mîn lîp enbirt!«
how scarcely thee my body does-without!«

Doch dâht' siu heimlîch: »daz ist wâr,
Yet thought she secretly: »that is true,

ach Got, wen wærest du ein jâr,
ah God, if were thou a year,

daz wolt' ich harte ringe wegen,
that would I very lightly weigh,

und liezе dîn dort den tiuvel pflegen,
and let thee there the devil tend,

und het' ich hie minne und gemach
and had I here love and ease

mit dem, den ich ie gerne sach.«
with him, whom I ever gladly saw.«

Vor ime siu grôze trehen(en) lie,
Before him she great tears let,

daz wênig ir ze herzen gie
that little to-her to heart went

daz grôze weinen daz siu tet.
the great weeping that she did.

der wirt vil nâch verzaget het,
the host very nearly despaired had,

daz er beliben wolte sîn;
that he remained would be;

er dâht[e]: »dâst wâr, die brueder dîn
he thought: »that-is true, the brothers thy

die hânt dich sicherlich betrogen;
they have thee surely deceived;

wan si hânt ûf dîn wîp gelogen.«
for they have upon thy woman lied.«

und sprach ze ir: »gehabe dich wol.«
and spoke to her: »fare thee well.«

siu sprach: »ich tuon baz, dan ich sol,
she spoke: »I do better, than I shall,

wan mîr dîn hine vart swære lît.«
for on-me thy hence journey heavily lies.«

er sprach: »tuo wol, ez ist rîtens zît.«
he spoke: »do well, it is of-riding time.«

Alsus der wirt von hûse reit.
Thus the host from house rode.

dem ritter wart dô balde geseit,
to-the knight was then quickly told,

daz er des nahtes kæme ze hûs,
that he of-the night came to house,

der wirt wære geriten ûz;
the host were ridden out;

er solte hân minne und gemach.
he should have love and ease.

»der rîche Got mich ie gesach.«
»the rich God me ever saw.«

sprach der ritter, und was vrô.
spoke the knight, and was glad.

ûf huop er sich balde dô
up raised he himself quickly then

des nahtes unde kam al dar.
of-the night and came all thither.

diu vrouwe nam sîn schône war,
the lady took of-him finely heed,

und hiez in Gote wilkome sîn:
and bade him to-God welcome be:

»vriunt und lieber herre mîn,
»friend and dear lord my,

nû süln wir wunneklîchen leben,
now shall we delightfully live,

sît uns Got den tag hât gegeben,
since to-us God the day has given,

daz uns gerûmet hât mîn man.
that for-us vacated has my man.

ir sült gar kleine sorge hân,
you shall wholly little care have,

daz er iht kume in kurzer stunt,
that he at-all come in short hour,

daz hât verjehen mir sîn munt.«
that has avowed to-me his mouth.«

Siu truog dar ir amîse
She bore thither to-her lover

vil reinre guoter spîse,
very pure good food,

dar zuo den aller besten wîn;
there to the of-all best wine;

siu sprach: »vil lieber herre mîn,
she spoke: »very dear lord my,

»nû sült ir leben ime sûse,
»now shall you live in sweetness,

ir sît hie wirt ze hûse,
you are here host at house,

waz ir welt, daz ist geschehen,
what you will, that is done,

dâ wider getar nie man jehen.
there against dares no man avow.

Doch wil ich iu sagen den murz:
Yet will I to-you say the gist:

wol ûf, ez ist zît, diu naht ist kurz.
well up, it is time, the night is short.

Wir süln ze samen slâfen gân.«
We shall to together to-sleep go.«

der ritter sprach: »daz sî getân,
the knight spoke: »that be done,

des ir gert, des bin ich vrô.«
of-what you desire, of-that am I glad.«

si giengen mit ein ander dô
they went with each other then

ze bette dô ze stunden,
to bed then at hours,

eins spiles si dâ begunden,
a game they there began,

alsô man jensît Rînes tuot:
as one beyond Rhine does:

daz spil den wirt niht dûhte guot.
the game the host not seemed good.

Dô daz spil ein ende nam,
When the game an end took,

diu vrouwe sagen dô began,
the lady to-tell then began,

wie von ir gescheiden was
how from her parted was

ir man vil gar âne allen haz,
her man very wholly without all hatred,

und wie siu drumbe weinte,
and how she there-for wept,

und daz niht anders meinte,
and that nothing else meant,

wan daz siu was des scheidens vrô.
except that she was of-the parting glad.

alsus seite siu [dem ritter] dô
thus told she [to-the knight] then

diu[selben] mære dem ritter;
the [same] tidings to-the knight;

daz dûht[e] den wirt gar bitter.
that seemed to-the host wholly bitter.

Der [wirt] was des abendes wider komen,
The [host] was in-the evening back come,

und hete werk und rede vernomen;
and had work and speech heard;

und dar zuo sîner brueder drî,
and there to his brothers three,

die im dâ stuonden nâhe bî.
who to-him there stood near by.

Si sprâchen: »bruoder, hœrstu in dâ?«
They spoke: »brother, hearest-thou him there?«

»en triuwen,« sprach er »bruoder, jâ.
»in faith,« spoke he »brother, yea.

Ich hœre in leider dinne,
I hear him alas inside,

mich triegen den[ne] mîn[e] sinne,
me deceive unless my senses,

beide, man und ouch mîn wîp;
both, man and also my woman;

dâst wâr, es gilt[et] ir beider lîp.«
that-is true, it costs of-them both body.«

Die brueder sprâchen: »so ist es zît.«
The brothers spoke: »so is it time.«

si begunden widerstrît
they began in-competition

klopfen harte sêre.
to-knock very sorely.

»o wê, iemer mêre!«
»o woe, ever more!«

sprach der ritter »war sol ich,
spoke the knight »whither shall I,

dâ ich wol verberge mich?«
where I well hide myself?«

Dô sprach diu vil gehiure:
Then spoke the very gentle-one:

»dâ ûzẹ bî dem viure
»there outside by the fire

ein vil grôzẹr zuber stât,
a very great tub stands,

dâ sliefet under, dazẹ ist mîn rât.«
there slip under, that is my counsel.«

Der ritter niht zẹ træge was,
The knight not too slow was,

under den zuber er dô sazẹ,
under the tub he then sat,

ze mâle bark er sich dar in.
at once bid he himself there in.

sîn hûbe wær' ich lieber gesîn
his hood would-have I rather been

des mâles, den[ne] sîn niderkleit,
of-the time, than his underclothes,

als er mir selber sider seit'.
as he to-me self since told.

Die wîle verbarg siu sîn gewant
The while hid she his clothing

alsô daz ez nie man vant.
so that it no man found.

Dô daz verbergen geschach,
When that hiding happened,

dort ûze der wirt mit zorne sprach:
there outside the host with anger spoke:

»wiltu mich niht lâzen in«?
»wilt-thou me not let in«?

»jâ, vil lieber meister mîn.«
»yea, very dear master my.«

Siu zuhte die tür ûf schiere;
She drew the door open quickly;

dô drungen si alle viere
then pressed they all four

in daz (hûs) in wette,
into the (house) in competition,

si suohten an dem bette,
they searched on the bed,

ob ie man dar an wære:
if any man there on were:

dô vunden si ez lære,
then found they it empty,

die vogel' wâren ûz gevlogen.
the birds were out flown.

der wirt wart gar ungezogen,
the host became wholly ill-bred,

dô er nie man dinne ervant:
when he no man inside found:

»zünd' ûf ein lieht!« sprach er ze hant
»kindle up a light!« spoke he at once

»lâ mich ersuochen alle gaden
»let me search all chambers

nâch dem, der mir tuot grôzen schaden
for him, who to-me does great harm

an guote und an êren.«
in goods and in honors.«

er begunde daz hûs umb kêren.
he began the house around to-turn.

Diu vrouwe sprach: »wie verstu sus«?
The lady spoke: »why farest-thou thus«?

er sprach: »dâ muostu bœser nuz«
he spoke: »there must-thou wicked nut«

von mir noch hiute erbîzen,
from me yet today bite,

wiltu mich sô beschîzen,
(if)-wilt-thou me so befoul,

dû bœse lotter valle!
thou wicked lewd trollop!

joch hôrt' ich iuwer kalle,
indeed heard I your chatter,

die ir tribet bêde sant,
which you drove both together,

dô ich stuont bî iu an der want
when I stood by you at the wall

und ir mîn nâmet kleine war,
and you of-me took little heed,

dô hôrt' ich iuwer kallen gar.«
then heard I your chatter wholly.«

Siu sprach: »daz lâ mich dir sagen,
She spoke: »that let me to-thee tell,

ich wil ez Gote von himel klagen,
I will it to-God from heaven lament,

daz ir mich hât erschrekket
that you me have frightened

und alse unsanfte erwekket,
and so roughly awakened,

in eime troume dô ich lak
in a dream when I lay

und ich vil grôzer vröuden pflak;
and I very great joys practiced;

ich wânde, daz ich dich hette
I weened, that I thee had

bî mir an dem bette,
by me on the bed,

sô rette ich vil lîhte etewaz;
so spoke I very likely something;

wan ich dîn selten ie vergaz;
for I thee seldom ever forgot;

wan wer dem andern guotes gan,
for whoever to-the other good grants,

kûme er des vergezzen kan,
scarcely he of-it forget can,

er slâfe oder wache.
he sleep or wake.

kumet mir daz z'ungemache,
(if)-comes to-me that to-hardship,

daz ich hân gegen dir triuwe grôz,
that I have toward thee faithfulness great,

so engilte ich des ich nie genôz,
so pay I for-what I never enjoyed,

und mag mir ie mêr werden leit
and may to-me ever more become sorrow

mîn triuwe und ouch mîn stætikeit;
my faithfulness and also my constancy;

wan dû zuo keinen stunden
for thou at no hours
hâst untriuwe an mir bevunden;
hast faithlessness in me found;
wes zîhest dû mich armez wîp?
of-what accusest thou me poor woman?
ze pfande sez ich mînen lîp,
as pledge set I my body,
daz nie kein wîp hâte einen man
that never any woman had a man
sô rehte liep, als ich dich hân.«
so rightly dear, as I thee have.«
Dô der wirt die rede bevant,
When the host the speech perceived,
do begund' er milten dâ ze hant
then began he to-soften there at once
und liez ein teil sîn wueten.
and let a part his raging.
»Got muezе dich behueten
»God must thee guard
vor allem leide!« sprach siu dô
from all sorrow!« spoke she then
»lieber wirt, wie tuostu sô
»dear host, why dost-thou so
gegen dîme reinen wîbe?
toward thy pure woman?
Got rech' ez an irem lîbe!
God avenge it on their body!
Die dich dar zuo bringen,
Who thee there to bring,
mir zuo ungelingen,
to-me to misfortune,
daz dû mich bringest ze ruofe hie.«
that thou me bringest to outcry here.«

mit armen siu in umbe vie,
with arms she him around seized,

siu sprach: »dû solt dîn zürnen lân.«
she spoke: »thou shalt thy anger leave.«

dô sprach der wirt: »daz sî getân.«
then spoke the host: »that be done.«

Er lie sîn zürnen dô ze hant;
He let his anger then at once;

siu half ouch, daz er nie man vant,
she helped also, that he no man found,

beide, hôrte, noch ensach.
both, heard, nor saw.

zuo den bruedern er dô sprach:
to the brothers he then spoke:

»der tiuvel mit uns umbe gât,
»the devil with us around goes,

der dikke mort geschaffen hât,
who often murder caused has,

der wolte lîhte, daz ich mîn wîp
he would perhaps, that I my woman

ermordet' unde daz mîn lîp
murdered and that my body

dâ von würde ze spotte.
there from became to mockery.

ich dank' es ie mêr Gote,
I thank it ever more to-God,

daz des tiuvels bœsiu kraft
that the devil's wicked power

hie niht ist worden sigehaft.«
here not is become victorious.«

Sus nam der zorn ein ende gar.
Thus took the anger an end wholly.

der wirt hiez balde tragen dar
the host bade quickly bear thither

spîse und dar zuo guoten wîn;
food and there to good wine;

er und ouch die brueder sîn
he and also the brothers his

zuo dem viure sâzen
by the fire sat

unt trunken unde âzen,
and drank and ate,

ir schallen daz was harte grôz.
their din that was very great.

daz doch den ritter sêre verdrôz,
that yet the knight sorely irked,

der dâ under dem zuber lak
who there under the tub lay

und dâ vil kleinre vröuden pflak.
and there very small joys practiced.

Einer ûf den zuber saz,
One upon the tub sat,

dâ der ritter under was,
where the knight under was,

er sprach: »nû hân ich alles gar
he spoke: »now have I all wholly

daz hûs ersuochet har und dar,
the house searched hither and thither,

wan, under disem zuber hie,
except, under this tub here,

dar under gesuochete ich nie.«
there under searched I never.«

Mit der viuste er den sluok.
With the fist he it struck.

diu vrouwe sprach: »dâst ungevuok,
the lady spoke: »that-is unseemly,

daz dû des niht enruochest,
that thou of-it not carest,

under dem zuber suochest,
under the tub searchest,

wan er ist drunder, wizzest daz,
for he is there-under, know that,

der bî mir an dem bette was.
who by me on the bed was.

Was er eht an dem bette dâ,
(If)-Was he indeed on the bed there,

sô vindestu in dâ, niht anders wâ,
so findest-thou him there, not other where,

wan ich in drunder sliefen hiez,
for I him there-under slip bade,

dô mîn man an die türe stiez,
when my man at the door pushed,

die rehte wârheit ich dir sage;
the right truth I to-thee tell;

suochestu in niht, sô bist ein zage.«
(if)-searchest-thou him not, so art-thou a coward.«

Des begunde er lachen:
Of-that began he to-laugh:

»wiltn mich« sprach er »machen
»wilt-thou me« spoke he »make

zuo eime tôren? sage mir;
into a fool? tell to-me;

des râtes ich niht volge dir.
of-the counsel I not follow thee.

jâ sîn wir genuok vertœret.«
yea are we enough befooled.«

siu sprach: »dâst wâr, er hœret,
she spoke: »that-is true, he hears,

waz wir alle hân geseit;
what we all have said;

ime ist daz lange sizzen leit,
to-him is the long sitting sorrowful,

wan ime ist vröude tiure.
for to-him is joy dear.

mit vremder aventiure
with strange adventure

muoz er von iu werden brâht,
must he from you be brought,

swie übelz ir über in hât gedâht.«
however ill-it you over him have thought.«

Der wirt sprach: »liebe wirtîn,
The host spoke: »dear hostess,

dû solt dîn spotten lâzen sîn;
thou shalt thy mocking let be;

het' ich in vunden hinne,
had I him found herein,

ime wæren dîne minne
to-him would-have thy love

ze sûre worden, samir Got!
too bitter become, so-help-me God!

dâ von sô lâz uns âne spot;
there from so let us without mockery;

mîn ist gespottet harte genuok:
of-me is mocked very enough:

daz tet des tiuvels unvuok.«
that did the devil's mischief.«

Dô sprach aber diu wirtîn:
Then spoke again the hostess:

»wol verstandenre meister mîn,
»well understanding master my,

spot nâch schaden hœret.
mockery after harm belongs.

ir werdet baz vertœret,
you are better befooled,

daz wil ich offenlîche sagen.«
that will I openly say.«

innen des begund' ez tagen.
in that began it to-dawn.

Nû was gesezzen neben in
Now was settled beside them

ein hûs bach [kluoge] brôt bekkerin,
a house baking [clever] bread baker-woman,

diu wol der mære sich verstuont,
who well of-the tale herself understood,

alse hübsche vrouwen dikke tuont,
as courtly ladies often do,

diu wiste wol der minnen reht,
she knew well of-the love's right,

siu wiste, bêde, krump und sleht,
she knew, both, crooked and straight,

waz heimelîche minne hôrte an,
what secret love belonged to,

dar ûf siu sich gar wol versan;
there on she herself wholly well understood;

der selben ouch der zuber was,
of-the same also the tub was,

dâ der ritter under saz,
where the knight under sat,

diu wolte des morgens bachen
she would in-the morning bake

unde ir teig machen,
and her dough make,

dô muoste siu iren zuber hân;
then must she her tub have;

siu sprach ze der megede: »gâ hin dan
she spoke to the maid: »go hence away

zuo mînre gevatern hûs,
to my gossip's house,

bring mir den zuber balde her ûz,
bring me the tub quickly hither out,

den ich ir nehten spâte lêch,
which I to-her last-night late lent,

und ir'n ungerne verzêch.«
and her-it unwillingly withheld.«

Diu maget diu gienk balde dar,
The maid she went quickly thither,

siu sprach: »vrouwe mîn, gât har,
she spoke: »lady my, go hither,

gebt uns den zuber wider hein,
give us the tub back home,

wir muezen in haben über ein.«
we must it have over one.«

Diu vrouwe sprach: »mîn trût gespil,
The lady spoke: »my dear playmate,

hœre, waz ich dir sagen wil,
hear, what I to-thee tell will,

sage dînre vrouwen, er sî haft,
tell thy lady, it be held,

daz siu durch rehte gevaterschaft
that she for right gossiphood

mir den zuber lâze hie;
to-me the tub let here;

siu tet mir sô liebe nie.«
she did to-me so dear never.«

Diu maget diu gienk wider hein.
The maid she went back home.

diu vrouwe sprach: »bringestu?« — »nein.«
the lady spoke: »bringest-thou?«— »no.«

Siu sprach: »wie gevueget sich daz?« —
She spoke: »how fits itself that?«—

»vrouwe, siu wil in brûchen baz,
»lady, she will it use better,

und wil ez ze grôzem dienste hân,
and will it to great service have,

welt ir ir den zuber lân.«
(if)-will you to-her the tub let.«

Diu vrouwe zurnde sêre,
The lady raged sorely,

siu sprach: »ûf alle mîn êre,
she spoke: »upon all my honor,

heiz mir den zuber wider gên;
bid me the tub back go;

oder ez muoz allez daz vernên,
or it must all that hear,

daz in dirre gazzen ist,
what in this street is,

samer der werde suezer Krist!«
so-help-me the worthy sweet Christ!«

Diu maget gie balde wider dan,
The maid went quickly back thence,

siu sprach: »ich muoz den zuber hân,
she spoke: »I must the tub have,

vrouwe, daz geloubet mir.«
lady, that believe me.«

siu sprach: »gâ wider, und sage ir,
she spoke: »go back, and tell her,

wîbes nôt diu irre mich;
woman's need she troubles me;

niht mê ze dînre vrouwen sprich:
not more to thy lady speak:

ich hân dâ vür, siu merk' ez wol,
I have there for, she mark it well,

des ich ir getrûwen sol.«
what I her trust shall.«

Diu maget gie wider hein und sprach:
The maid went back home and spoke:

»vrouwe mîn, hât guot gemach,
»lady my, have good ease,

des zubers muezet ir enbern;
of-the tub must you do-without;

des wil ich iuch mit triuwen wern,
for-that will I you with faith assure,

wanne ez meinet wîbes nôt.«
for it means woman's need.«

»lôsâ!« [sprach siu] »durch des tiuvels tôt!
»lo!« [spoke she] »through the devil's death!

Bristet mînre gevatern anders niht?
Lacks my gossip otherwise nothing?

daz ist ein wunderlîcher sit',
that is a wondrous custom,

hete siu mir des hiute [lange] gedâht,
had she to-me of-it today [long] thought,

ich hete sie von sorgen brâht,
I would-have her from cares brought,

swie zornig mîn gevater sî.«
however wrathful my gossip be.«

nû stuont ein schiurlîn dâ bî
now stood a little-barn there by

ein wênink von dem hûse hindan,
a little from the house thence,

daz zunte diu brot bekkerin an
it kindled the bread baker-woman on

mit eime viure sâ ze hant.
with a fire at-once at hand.

dô daz schiurlîn was enbrant,
when the little-barn was afire,

dô schrê siu: »viurâ!« sêre.
then cried she: »fire!« sorely.

waz sol diu rede mêre?
what shall the speech more?

Dar kam geloufen manig man,
Thither came running many man,

der wirt mit sînen bruedern kan
the host with his brothers came

geloufen zuo dem viure.
running to the fire.

die wîle diu gehiure
the while the gentle-one

den zuber abe dem ritter stiez,
the tub off the knight pushed,

zer hinder tür siu in ûz liez,
at-the back door she him out let,

diu kleider gap siu im an den arm,
the clothes gave she him on the arm,

siu sprach: »nû mueze iuch Got bewarn!«
she spoke: »now must you God guard!«

unt kuste in guetlîch an sîn munt.
and kissed him kindly on his mouth.

hin schiet der ritter dâ ze stunt.
hence departed the knight there at hour.

Alsus sô wart der wirt betrogen.
Thus so was the host deceived.

diz mære ist wâr und niht gelogen.
this tale is true and not lied.

Wîp künnen grôze kündikeit:
Women can great cleverness:

alse Iakob Appet dô hât geseit:
as Jakob Appet then has said:

der habe, der huete deste baz;
who has, he guard the better;

verliurt er iht, waz schat ime daz?
loses he anything, what harms him that?

Der kozze

XV · THE HALF BLANKET

An old burgher gives his house and goods to his son, who marries and lodges his father under the stairs beside the pigs. Only the grandson cares for him. In a bitter winter the old man sends the boy for an old blanket; the son sends half of it, and the boy asks for the other half to keep for his father's old age. Struck, the son repents, bathes his father, and seats him above himself at table, and the boy says he will honor his father as he has seen. The poet warns that as we treat our parents, our children will treat us.

Ez saz ein rîcher burgær(e),
There dwelt a rich burgher,

milt', biderb' und gewær(e),
generous, upright and true,

in einer stat mit hûs(e);
in a town with house;

nû hœret alters grûs(e):
now hear of-age horror:

der tugend was er unverzeit,
of-the virtue was he unwearied,

sîn brôt was den unverseit,
his bread was to-those unrefused,

die ze sînem hûse kwâmen
who to his house came

und ez in der minne nâmen.
and it in the love took.

Nû kom ez im an die stunde,
Now came it to-him to the hour,

daz ein krükken begunde
that a crutch began

in vor sîn[en] triten leiten,
him before his steps to-lead,

von [sînes] alters arbeiten,
from [his] age's hardships,

daz im an der kraft gebrast.
that to-him in the strength failed.

des sint engalt (manik) armer gast,
for-that afterward paid (many) poor guest,

dem er williklîche[n] enbot
to-whom he willingly offered

sînen wîn, sîn vleisch, [und ouch] sîn brôt.
his wine, his meat, [and also] his bread.

Sîn wîp enpfolhen wart dem grab(e);
His woman committed was to-the grave;

beide, sîn hûsêre und sîn hab(e)
both, his household-honor and his possessions

sînem lieben sun er selt',
to-his dear son he gave-over,

dem waren zweinzik jâr gezelt.
to-him were twenty years counted.

Daz selbe kint gewan den muot,
The same child got the mind,

als(ô) kint noch hiute tuot,
as children yet today do,

dô er von im selben kwam,
when he from him self came,

daz er des vaters klein war nam
that he of-the father little heed took

und[e] sîner triuwen gar vergaz
and his faithfulness wholly forgot

an im; sô man ze tische saz,
toward him; when one at table sat,

so lie er den vater sîn,
so let he the father his,

als einen armen pilgerîn,
as a poor pilgrim,

un(t)riu[wek]lîch[en] sizzen bî der tür,
unfaithfully sit by the door,

dem truog man wênik des besten vür.
to-him bore one little of-the best before.

Daz hûs nâch êren was erboun,
The house after honors was built,

dâ sazte der sun im ein vroun,
there set the son to-himself a lady,

diu vand darinne, swaz ein man
who found therein, whatever a man

ze bette, ze tische ertrahten kan,
for bed, for table devise can,

unt ze allen den sachen
and for all the matters

daz gebresten kan swachen,
which lack can weaken,

daz der alt' mit wizzen lêren
that the old-one with wisdom taught

da er het gehôr[e]t mit êren
there he had heard with honors

ob des jungen menscheit
whether the young-one's humanity

darumbe nie erleit arbeit.
there-for never suffered hardship.

Dâvon enwizzen niht diu kint,
There-from know not the children,

sô si in grôzem vollen sint,
when they in great plenty are,

beide, geweget und erzogen,
both, rocked and reared,

wannen die krân sint gevlogen,
whence the cranes are flown,

unt versmæhent den alten stam.
and scorn the old stock.

nû hœret, wie ez ende nam.
now hear, how it end took.

Der alte muost' sich smiegen,
The old-one must himself crouch,

bi der erde under ein stiegen
by the earth under a stair

wart im ein bettelîn geströut.
was for-him a little-bed strewn.

der sun in selten dâ gevröut
the son him seldom there gladdened

mit guoter handelunge.
with good treatment.

nu gewan der selbe junge
now got the same young-one

ouch ein degenkindelîn,
also a boy-child,

daz im gebar diu vrouwe sîn.
which to-him bore the lady his.

Dô daz siben jâr alt wart,
When that seven years old became,

den enen ez vil selten spart'
the grandfather it very seldom spared

mit liebe, er ez an sich went
with love, he it to himself accustomed

und der muoter sîn entspent,
and from-the mother his weaned,

daz ez vil nâch allen den tak
that it very nearly all the day

bî im under der stiege(n) lak,
by him under the stair lay,

unt truog im spât unde vruo,
and carried to-him late and early,

swaz ez kunde, daz beste zuo,
whatever it could, the best to,

daz ez ze tische, ze keller vant.
which it at table, in cellar found.

etwen stal'z ein alt gewant
sometimes stole-it an old garment

unt truog ez ouch dem enen dar;
and carried it also to-the grandfather thither;

wan sîn vergezzen was vil gar,
for of-him forgotten was very wholly,

daz im nieman niht enbôt;
that to-him no-one anything offered;

des leit er armuot unde nôt.
for-that suffered he poverty and distress.

Mit sînen tugenden ez in nert',
With its virtues it him fed,

der tôt in ander(s) het' entwert
the death him otherwise would-have deprived

des lebens von gebresten.
of-the life from lack.

bî im zenæhest mesten
by him nearest fattened

des jungen wirtes kneht' diu swîn,
the young host's servants the pigs,

die gâben ouch im der selben klîn,
they gave also to-him of-the same bran,

ê daz kint darzuo würd(e),
before the child thereto became,

daz ez im half tragen sîn bürd(e).
that it him helped carry his burden.

Er drukt' ez dikke an sîn brust,
He pressed it often to his breast,

diu wengelîn, den munt er kust'
the little-cheeks, the mouth he kissed

und swaz er blôzęz an im vant,
and whatever he of-bare on it found,

er sprach: »Got hât dich mir gesant
he spoke: »God has thee to-me sent

von sîner grôzen barmherzikeit.
from his great mercy.

dîn lôn ze himel wirt bereit,
thy reward in heaven is prepared,

und ûf der erde wunnehaft.
and on the earth delightful.

der pâtriarken segen kraft
the of-patriarchs blessing's power

die sullen, kint, an erben dich;
they shall, child, on inherit thee;

den wunsch dû dienest umbe mich
the wish thou servest for me

mit dîner handelunge grôz,
with thy treatment great,

dîn tugent sint engels genôz.«
thy virtues are of-angels peers.«

Nach den zîten kom ein winder
After the times came a winter

sô kalt und sô swinder,
so cold and so severe,

den man kreftiklîchen kôs,
which one powerfully perceived,

wan manik wazzer tief gevrôs;
for many water deep froze;

dô muost' ouch vriesen den alden
then must also freeze the old-one

von der grôzen kalden.
from the great cold.

Er sprach zuo dem kleinen:
He spoke to the little-one:

»der vrost mir an den beinen
»the frost to-me in the legs

tuot wê und an den lenden;
does woe and in the loins;

getörst' ich dich gesenden
dared I thee send

zuo mînem herren, dînem vater,
to my lord, thy father,

einen alten kozzen hât er,
an old blanket has he,

den brâht' ich wîlent über mer:
which brought I once over sea:

sent' er mir den, der wær' mîn wer
(if)-sent he me it, it would-be my defense

vür dise kalden, die ich dol.« —
against this cold, which I endure.«—

»jâ, enel, ich trouw(e) wol
»yes, grandfather, I trust well

den kozzen dir gewinnen,
the blanket for-thee to-win,

und ist er indert hinnen.«
and (if)-is it anywhere hence.«

Daz kindelîn huob sich zehant,
The little-child raised itself at-once,

dâ ez sînen vater vant,
where it its father found,

umb den kozzen ez in bat.
for the blanket it him asked.

er sprach: »wer hât dir den rât
he spoke: »who has to-thee the counsel

umb den kozzen gegeben?«
about the blanket given?«

ez jach: »mîn enel wil daz leben
it avowed: »my grandfather will the life

von der kalden enden;
from the cold end;

dâvon soltu im senden
there-from shalt-thou to-him send

den selben alten rûhen vlek.«
the same old rough rag.«

er sagt' einem kneht: »nû gê enwek
he said to-a servant: »now go away

und bringe mînem sun den kozzen,
and bring to-my son the blanket,

daz er darûf muge getozzen,
that he thereupon may lie-dozing,

under die stiege(n) dâniden. —
under the stair down-there.—

waz hân ich ungemaches erliden
what have I of-discomfort suffered

von dem selben alten man!
from the same old man!

daz ez der tôt niht enden kan
that it the death not end can

unde nem' in von hinne!«
and take him from hence!«

daz kint sprach mit sinne,
the child spoke with sense,

als im sîn engel gab die lêre:
as to-it its angel gave the teaching:

»dise rede Got an dir verkêre!
»this speech God on thee turn!

Jâ lebt er doch mit kranker maht.«
Yes lives he yet with feeble strength.«

der alte kozze der wart brâht,
the old blanket it was brought,

des der alte sieche gert',
which the old sick-one desired,

er was doch krankes schazzes wert,
it was yet of-feeble value worth,

ze mâzen lank, ze mâzen breit.
in measure long, in measure broad.

an der mitte er in sneit
in the middle he it cut

enzwei mit einem mezzer,
in-two with a knife,

und (hiez) hin tragen daz bezzer
and (bade) hence carry the better

teil behalten ab dem wege;
part kept off the way;

er seit': »kint, diz teil daz lege
he said: »child, this part it lay

im über, er hât sîn genuok.«
him over, he has of-it enough.«

den halben kozzen ez dar truok
the half blanket it thither carried

sînem enen ûf daz strô.
to-its grandfather onto the straw.

des dankt' er im, und was sîn vrô,
for-that thanked he to-it, and was of-it glad,

er sprach: »Got lône dir, kindelîn,
he spoke: »God reward thee, little-child,

der kintlîchen triuwen dîn,
for-the childlike faithfulness thy,

die dû mir kanst bescheinen.«
which thou to-me canst show.«

er begunde vor vröuden weinen,
he began for joys to-weep,

diu ougen im über wielen,
the eyes to-him over welled,

daz im die treher vielen
that to-him the tears fell

ze tal über den grâwen bart.
to valley over the gray beard.

er sprach: »ô wol mich nû wart,
he spoke: »o well-for me now became,

daz mîn sûn hât ernen(d)et
that my son has ventured

und den kozzen mir gesendet.« 150
and the blanket to-me sent.«

Daz kindelîn warte[t] allez dar
The little-child watched all thither

und nam des e[i]nen vröude war,
and took of-the grandfather's joy heed,

die er mit dem kozzen treip;
which he with the blanket drove;

niht langer ez dâ beleip,
not longer it there remained,

hin wider ez zuo dem vater lief. 155
hence back it to the father ran.

sîn arm' ez umb den hals swief,
its arms it around the neck swung,

ez weint', ez bat, ez kust' in,
it wept, it begged, it kissed him,

ez sprach: »gedenk et, daz ich bin
it spoke: »think but, that I am

dîn einez kint, gewere mich.« —
thy only child, grant me.«—

»swes dû gerest, des were ich dich, 160
»whatever thou desirest, of-that grant I thee,

vil lieber sun, gehabe dich wol.« —
very dear son, fare thee well.«—

»sint mîn bet' vervâhen sol,
»since my request avail shall,

sô ger ich, liebez veterlîn,
so desire I, dear little-father,

des andern trumes, daz sî min,
the other piece, that be mine,

daz ab dem kozzen ist gesniten.«
which off the blanket is cut.«

er vrâget' daz kint mit suezen siten,
he asked the child with sweet manners,

daz ez im sagt', durch welhen vrum
that it to-him told, for which profit

ez halden wolde daz selbe trum.
it keep would the same piece.

Der vrâg' ez im antwort gap:
To-the question it to-him answer gave:

»sô nû dîn trit kumt an den stap,
»when now thy step comes to the staff,

daz dich daz alder binden wirt,
that thee the age bind will,

und dir aller gemach verbirt,
and from-thee all ease forgoes,

sam mînen enen, der dâ lît,
as my grandfather, who there lies,

dem niemen trôst, noch helfe gît,
to-whom no-one comfort, nor help gives,

sô lîhe ich dir des kozzen ort,
so lend I thee the blanket's corner,

der wirt dir denne, als im, ein hort
it becomes to-thee then, as to-him, a hoard

vür den vrost unt vür den wint.«
against the frost and against the wind.«

er sprach: »wê mir wê, liebez kint,
he spoke: »woe to-me woe, dear child,

wiltu mir alsô mit(e) varn!
wilt-thou me so with deal!

ob Got wil, daz sol ich bewarn:
if God will, that shall I guard:

dû sprichest ûz der wîsen munt,
thou speakest out-of the of-wise-ones mouth,

ân' Gotes lêre, [dir] nieman kunt'
without God's teaching, [to-thee] no-one could

dir, kint, gemezzen disen sin;
to-thee, child, measure this sense;

der dir in hât gestôzen in,
who to-thee it has thrust in,

daz ist Got der suezze,
that is God the sweet,

der wil, daz ich daz buezze;
who will, that I that atone;

der muoz gelobt sîn und geêr[e]t,
he must praised be and honored,

daz er den sin dich hât gelêr[e]t!«
that he the sense thee has taught!«

Er hiez junge und alde,
He bade young and old,

daz man bereit(e) balde
that one prepared quickly

in sînem stübelîn ein bat;
in his little-room a bath;

daz wart bereitet an der stat.
that was prepared on the spot.

Hinab er zuo dem grîsen gie,
Down he to the gray-one went,

ûf sîniu knie er sich lie,
upon his knees he himself let,

er bôt im minnenklîchen gruoz.
he offered to-him loving greeting.

der alt(e) neig im ûf den vuoz,
the old-one bowed to-him to the foot,

in wundert', ob er wolde,
him wondered, whether he would,

daz er im wider solde
that he to-him back should

den kozzen geben; wan er z'wâr
the blanket give; for he in-truth

in (in) einem halben jâr
in (in) a half year

mit sînen wizzen (niht) hât' gesehen;
with his knowledge (not) had seen;

oder waz im wær' geschên,
or what to-him were happened,

daz er die diemuot an sich nam
that he the humility on himself took

unt zuo sîner stieg(en) kwam,
and to his stair came,

dâ er bî den swînen lak
where he by the pigs lay

und was gelegen mangen tak.
and was lain many day.

Der sun den alten vater bat:
The son the old father asked:

»vergip mir mîne missetât,
»forgive me my misdeed,

die ich an dir begangen hân.«
which I on thee committed have.«

diu starke riuwe het in bestân
the strong remorse had him beset

und der gebrest(e), den er sach;
and the lack, which he saw;

die spang' und diu breter er brach
the clasps and the boards he broke

von der stiege(n) türlîn,
from the stair's little-door,

ûf huob er den vater sîn.
up raised he the father his.

In daz bat er in truok,
Into the bath he him carried,

selbe reib er in unt twuok,
self rubbed he him and washed,

beide, sîn houbt und sîn hâr.
both, his head and his hair.

dar nâch ein badelachen klâr
there after a bath-sheet clear

daz gab er dem alden an,
that gave he the old-one on,

und wîste in an ein bette dan,
and led him to a bed thence,

dar er selbe an lak.
where he self on lay.

nâch dem slâfe er in wak[t]
after the sleep he him woke

wider ûf sâ zehant,
again up straightway at-once,

guot lînîn unde vêch gewant,
good linen and fur clothing,

des er hete dikke wol gepfleget,
of-which he had often well tended,

daz wart der alte vor an geleget,
that was the old-one before on laid,

und gewîset in den sal,
and led into the hall,

da er durch hûsêre manik mâl
where he for household-honor many time

vil williklîchen hât' gegeben;
very willingly had given;

der schœnen hûsvrouwen neben
the fair housewife beside

wart der werde gesezzet
was the worthy-one set

und sîner muede ergezzet;
and for-his weariness compensated;

mit wîn und mit spîse
with wine and with food

ergezzet wart der grîse
compensated was the gray-one

des kozzen und der klîen,
for-the blanket and for-the bran,

mit der sueze ûz den bîen,
with the sweetness out-of the bees,

daz von dem honig gegrawen wart,
which from the honey dug was,

und mit manger handelunge zart,
and with many treatment tender,

der an im wart vergezzen.
which on him was forgotten.

Nâch des tisches ezzen
After the table's eating

hiez den kleinen gân vür sich
bade the little-one go before himself

sîn vater; er sprach: »kint, nû sprich,
his father; he spoke: »child, now speak,

wie wil dû mir lân geschên?« —
how wilt thou to-me let happen?«—

»vater, als ich hân gesehen,
»father, as I have seen,

wie ir mînem enen getâtet
how you to-my grandfather did

und in ze tische gebâtet,
and him to table asked,

ûz der stieg(en) gewandelt,
out-of the stair changed,

nâch êren schôn gehandelt:
after honors finely treated:

daz gibet mir die lêre,
that gives to-me the teaching,

daz ich dîn alter êre,
that I thy age honor,

ob ich daz ge(le)ben sol.« —
if I that live-to-see shall.«—

»lieber sun, sô lerne wol.
»dear son, so learn well.

[Gegen] dem kozzen hân ich grûse,
[Toward] the blanket have I horror,

er muoz ûz dem hûse,
it must out-of the house,

von herzen ich im vînt bin;
from heart I to-it hostile am;

nû traget in den armen hin,
now carry it in-the arms hence,

er ist mir ungenæme
it is to-me unpleasing

und ist mir widerzæme.
and is to-me repugnant.

Den vater mîn ich êren wil
The father my I honor will

unz an mînes ende(s) zil;
until to my end's goal;

dû hâst die lêre mir gegeben;
thou hast the teaching to-me given;

die wîl' ich und er sol leben,
the while I and he shall live,

sô muoz er mîn herre sîn,
so must he my lord be,

unt ze tische obhalb mîn,
and at table above me,
nâch hûses êren, sizzen.
after house's honors, sit.
Got gunne mir der wizzen,
God grant to-me the wits,
die mir ê wilde wâren
which to-me before wild were
mînen tagen und jâren.«
in-my days and years.«
Daz merket, arm' und rîche,
That mark, poor and rich,
junge und alt' gelîche,
young and old alike,
daz nâch Gotes lêre
that after God's teaching
ein ieglîch mensche êre
an every person honor
sin[en] vater und sîn muoter;
his father and his mother;
Got ist im dester guoter
God is to-him the better
an sînes lebens orte,
at his life's end,
sô diu sêle von der porte
when the soul from the gate
scheiden sol des mundes,
part shall of-the mouth,
und beget im des grundes
and spares him of-the abyss
der êwigen helle.
of-the eternal hell.
daz merke, geselle,
that mark, companion,

ob dû si beide êrest,
if thou them both honorest,

dîn selbes kint dû lêrest,
thy self's child thou teachest,

daz ez hernâch dich êret,
that it hereafter thee honors,

so der stap dich treten lêret,
when the staff thee to-tread teaches,

unde gedenket daran:
and thinks thereon:

»als dû dînem vater hâst getân,
»as thou to-thy father hast done,

alsô tuon ich, vater, dir.«
so do I, father, to-thee.«

mit disen dröuwen sulle wir
with these threats shall we

leben an unser ende,
live to our end,

unz (wir) diz blind' ellende
until (we) this blind exile

mit suezen zühten rûmen,
with sweet breeding leave,

die wârheit niht ensûmen,
the truth not neglect,

die êwikeit erkennen,
the eternity know,

und Gotes barmde nennen,
and God's mercy name,

sîn[en] hôhen namen prîsen.
his high name praise.

daz tuont alle die wîsen,
that do all the wise,

die betrahtent disen sin,
who consider this sense,

daz die tage slîchent hin
that the days creep hence

und der tôt allez nâch,
and the death all after,

der sagt uns mit den alten »schâch!«
he says to-us with the old-ones »check!«

Darnâch erzeiget er sîn »mat.«
There-after shows he his »mate.«

wie aber ez darnâch ergât,
how however it there-after goes,

an Gotes genâden daz stât:
on God's graces that stands:

wir muezen ot alle an daz pfat.
we must just all onto the path.

Der Wiener mervart

XVI · THE VIENNESE SEA VOYAGE: THE VOW

The poet laments that the world prizes goods above honor, then tells a tale by the Joyless, passed to him by Burgrave Herman of Duino, set in Vienna, a city of every pleasure. Rich burghers drinking in a gallery grow so warm with wine that all vow a pilgrimage to Acre. Over spices and wine they imagine the voyage; past midnight they believe themselves at sea, sing their pilgrims' hymn, and commend wives and children to friends. As they stumble and fall, one takes it for the ship's rocking, another cries storm, and all lament.

Diu werlt stuond etswenne sô,
The world stood once so,

daz die liute wâren vrô
that the people were glad

in tugentlîchem muote
in virtuous spirit

unde kêrten ze guote
and turned to good

allez daz sie kunden;
all that they could;

swes sie dô begunden,
whatever they then began,

daz was gerne tugentlîch:
that was gladly virtuous:

nû hât diu werlt verkêret sich
now has the world turned itself

allez hin nâch guote;
all hence after goods;

in wunnenklîchem muote
in delightful spirit

vindet man ir kleine,
finds one of-them few,

die rîchen alle gemeine
the rich all in-common

habent iezuo lieber guot,
have now rather goods,

denne wunnenklîchen muot;
than delightful spirit;

vrôlîcher muot ist tiuwer:
glad spirit is dear:

daz guot ist sô gehiuwer,
the goods is so pleasing,

daz sîn alliu diu werlt gert.
that of-it all the world desires.

hievor dô was vrouw' Ere wert:
before-this then was lady Honor worthy:

nû ist daz guot werder gar,
now is the goods worthier wholly,

denne vrouw' Ere, daz ist wâr,
than lady Honor, that is true,

den bœsen missewenden.
to-the wicked wrongdoers.

man vindet mangen enden
one finds in-many ends

noch sô tugendrîchen man,
yet so virtue-rich man,

der Ere baz getriuten kan,
who Honor better cherish can,

dan ein schemelîchez guot:
than a shameful goods:

daz ist hovelîcher muot,
that is courtly spirit,

swer die vuoge gerne tuot.
whoever the fitness gladly does.

Mir hât ein wârhafter munt
To-me has a truthful mouth

ein(e) rede gemachet kunt,
a speech made known,

diu mag wol heizen wunderlîch;
which may well be-called wondrous;

alsô hât verrihtet mich
so has informed me

von Dewîn burgrâve Herman,
of Duino burgrave Herman,

der nie schanden mâl gewan
who never disgrace's stain got

an schentlîcher missetât.
from shameful misdeed.

daz im der sêle werde rât,
that to-him for-the soul become remedy,

des sol man im von schulden biten;
for-that shall one for-him by right pray;

er was ein man von guoten siten,
he was a man of good manners,

gezogen und getriuwe gar
bred and faithful wholly

was der herre, daz ist wâr,
was the lord, that is true,

gegen vremden und[e] gegen vründen;
toward strangers and toward friends;

des mach' in Got von sünden
of-that make him God of sins

dort an der sêle vrî
there in the soul free

durch sîner hôhsten namen drî!
by his highest names three!

Der saget' mir diz mære:
He told to-me this tale:

daz hât der Vröudenlære
that has the Joyless-one

gemachet, als ez dort geschach,
made, as it there happened,

als man im ze Wienen jach,
as one to-him at Vienna avowed,

von guoter liute worte,
from good people's word,

dô er daz mære hôrte;
when he the tale heard;

daz lît in Osterrîche,
that lies in Austria,

man lebt dâ wunnenklîche;
one lives there delightfully;

swer silber unde golt hât,
whoever silver and gold has,

der vindet mangerhande rât.
he finds many-kinds provision.

In derselben guoten stat
In the-same good town

man vindet einerhande bat,
one finds a-kind-of bath,

daz hân ich dikke wol gehôrt,
that have I often well heard,

dâ man unz an den le[t]sten ort
where one until to the last place

einen unbekanten man
an unknown man

schiere blôz gemachen kan,
quickly bare make can,

des silbers und der kleider
of-the silver and of-the clothes

pfendet man in beider.
strips one him of-both.

Swer dem bade volgen wil,
Whoever the bath follow will,

der wirt gesezzet an daz zil,
he is set at the goal,

er habe wênik oder vil.
he have little or much.

Daz bat gevellet mir niht wol,
The bath pleases me not well,

die stat ich anders loben sol:
the town I otherwise praise shall:

Wiene daz ist lobes wert,
Vienna that is of-praise worth,

dâ vindet man ros unde pfert,
there finds one steeds and horses,

grôzer kurzewîle vil,
of-great pastime much,

sagen, singen, seitenspil,
telling, singing, string-play,

des vindet man ze Wiene(n) gnuok,
of-that finds one at Vienna enough,

hübscheit und(e) ungevuok,
courtliness and rudeness,

swem diu wirt ze teile,
to-whomever it becomes to share,

die vindet man dâ veile.
them finds one there for-sale.

Swelch[e] man hât den pfennink,
Whichever man has the penny,

der vindet mangerhande dink,
he finds many-kinds things,

den hûsen und den suezen wîn,
the houses and the sweet wine,

und manek schœnez vröuwelîn
and many fair little-lady

vil wunnenklîches muotes
of-very delightful spirit

und rîche des guotes,
and rich of-the goods,

die mag man dâ ze Wien(en) sehen.
them may one there at Vienna see.

in der stat ist geschehen
in the town is happened

diz seltsæne mære.
this strange tale.

die rîchen burgære
the rich burghers

sâzen ze einen stunden,
sat at one hour,

die vremden mit den künden,
the strangers with the acquaintances,

ze einem wîne, der was guot,
at a wine, which was good,

der dikke trûregen muot
which often sad spirit

ze vröuden kan gewenken gar,
to joys can turn wholly,

und liezen vaste holen dar
and let fast fetch thither

in hovelîcher wîse
in courtly manner

ir wolgemachten spîse
their well-made food

mit wurzen und mit safrân,
with spices and with saffron,

der ietslîchez wol gemachen kan
of-which each well make can

dem starken wîne suezen smak.
to-the strong wine sweet taste.

sie trunken vaste durch den tak,
they drank fast through the day,

unz ir trûren gar gelak.
until their sadness wholly lay-still.

Ûf einer louben dô geschach
On a gallery then happened

diz vrôlîche hûsgemach,
this glad house-comfort,

dâ die herren sâzen,
where the lords sat,

[beide], trunken und(e) âzen,
[*both*], *drank and ate,*

und[e] heten kurzewîle [vil] gnuok.
and had pastime [*much*] *enough.*

die spîse man vür sie truok;
the food one before them bore;

dâ was geströuwet gruenez gras,
there was strewn green grass,

beide, becher unde glas
both, cup and glass

wart dâ selden lære;
became there seldom empty;

sie trunken âne swære,
they drank without heaviness,

unz in daz bat erwarmete;
until to-them the bath warmed;

ir keinen daz erbarmete,
of-them none it pitied,

sie trunken alle zuo der stunt
they drank all at the hour

daz tiefe glas an den grunt
the deep glass to the ground

durch des wînes sueze;
for the wine's sweetness;

des wurden in die vueze
of-that became to-them the feet

als die kugeln sinewel;
like the balls round;

ez ist wâr und niht ein spel;
it is true and not a fable;

der wîn was guot und niht sûr,
the wine was good and not sour,

etlîcher sînen nâchgebûr
many-a-one his neighbor

zejungest niht erkante.
at-last not knew.

darnâch man lieht enbrante,
there-after one lights kindled,

diz geschach vil drâte,
this happened very quickly,

dô der âbend nâhte,
when the evening neared,

dô huob sich trinken aber, als ê,
then raised itself drinking again, as before,

sie hiezen vaste holen mê:
they bade fast fetch more:

daz tet dem wirte nirgen wê.
that did to-the host nowhere woe.

Sie wurden alle rîche:
They became all rich:

der vil kumberlîche
he-who very wretchedly

des morgens nuehtern muoste leben,
in-the morning sober must live,

der wolde dâ ze wette geben;
he would there in wager give;

der gelobte mit der hant,
this-one vowed with the hand,

beide, silber unde gewant
both, silver and clothing

ze gebene sînem vründe;
to give to-his friend;

der klagete sîne sünde;
that-one lamented his sins;

der reite (dâ) die sippe:
this-one reckoned (there) the kinship:

»von Adâmes rippe
»from Adam's rib

sî wir gar mâge,
are we wholly kinsmen,

als Akers unde Prâge.«
as Acre and Prague.«

sprach einer zuo dem andern dô,
spoke one to the other then,

und wurden ûz der mâzen vrô;
and became out-of the measure glad;

sie sagten ir mære.
they told their tales.

der stolze schrîbære
the proud scribe

holte vaste kuelen wîn,
fetched fast cool wine,

der wolde mit den besten sîn;
he would with the best be;

sie trunken vaste, âne wer.
they drank fast, without defense.

einer sagete von dem mer
one told of the sea

unt von Sant Jâkobes wege,
and of Saint James's way,

unt trunken vaste (dâ) ze pflege,
and drank fast (there) by custom,

der von der Priuzen vart:
that-one of the of-Prussians journey:

mit hellender stimme wart
with ringing voice was

vil swinde dâ getrunken,
very swiftly there drunk,

daz die starken sunken
that the strong-ones sank

nider bî die benke;
down by the benches;

der wart sô gelenke,
that-one became so nimble,

daz er tûmelt' unde sprank
that he tumbled and sprang

von der tâvel ûf die bank,
from the table onto the bench,

daz er sider vaste hank,
that he afterward fast limped,

dô diz allez geschach,
when this all happened,

ein rîcher burger sider sprach:
a rich burgher afterward spoke:

»wol(de)t ir mir volgen nû,
»(if)-would you me follow now,

ich wolde râten wol darzuo,
I would counsel well thereto,

waz daz beste möhte sîn.«
what the best might be.«

sie riefen alle: »bringe wîn,
they cried all: »bring wine,

sô lose wir dem mære.«
so listen we to-the tale.«

dô sprach der burgære:
then spoke the burgher:

»ich sag' iu, waz mich dunket guot;
»I tell you, what me seems good;

welt ir an (Got) den muot
(if)-will you to (God) the mind

nâch mînem râte kêren,
after my counsel turn,

wir sullen unserm hêrren
we shall to-our lord

dienen lobelîche,
serve praiseworthily,

wir sîn des guotes rîche
we are of-the goods rich

unt vermugen'ʒ harte wol,
and can-it very well,

Got uns darumbe danken sol,
God to-us there-for thank shall,

und sullen über mer varn;
and shall over sea go;

da enwil ich nimmer vor gesparn
there will I never before spare

weder lîp, noch daʒ guot.« —
neither life, nor the goods.«—

»ich hân ouch den selben muot.«
»I have also the same mind.«

sprach sîn nâkebûr dâ bî.
spoke his neighbor there by.

darnâch schiere wart ir drî,
there-after quickly became of-them three,

die sprâchen alle gemeine:
they spoke all in-common:

»der antlâʒ ist reine,
»the indulgence is pure,

den man über mer holt.«
which one over sea fetches.«

[und] unlange wart diz sint verdolt,
[and] unlong was this afterward endured,

sie riefen (dâ) mit schalle,
they cried (there) with din,

die kumpân' almetalle:
the companions all-together:

»wir wellen endelîchen dar
»we will finally thither
mit einer kreftiklîchen schar
with a mighty host
varen durch Gotes guete.«
go for God's goodness.«
des wînes übervluete
the wine's overflowing
half vil sêre zuo der vart,
helped very sorely to the journey,
daz in des ze muote wart,
that to-them of-it to mind became,
daz sie der grôzen arbeit
that they for-the great hardship
gerne wolden sîn gereit.
gladly would be ready.
sust wart diu mervart ûf geleit.
thus was the sea-journey up laid.
Diz wart gelobet under in,
This was vowed among them,
sie wolden miteinander hin
they would together hence
gegen Akers varen, als man pflît,
toward Acre go, as one is-wont,
kæm' ez immer an die zît,
(if)-came it ever to the time,
daz man ze rehte varen sol;
that one by right go shall;
daz geviel in allen wol.
that pleased them all well.
Dô rukten sie zesamne baz,
Then moved they together better,
sunder allen bœsen haz,
without all wicked hatred,

unde vi[e]l darunder;
and fell there-among;

sie sageten alle wunder,
they told all wonders,

waz sie wolden vueren;
what they would take;

der wîn begunde rueren
the wine began to-stir

ir houbet dô mit sîner kraft;
their head then with its power;

spîse wart dâ vil geschaft
food was there much procured

und[e] guotes trankes in den kiel;
and of-good drink into the keel;

mit worten, als ich wænen wil,
with words, as I ween will,

mit den werken kleine.
with the works little.

daz wizzet algemeine,
that know all-together,

sie wâren vil vermezzen;
they were very bold;

da enwart niht vergezzen,
there was nothing forgotten,

swaz man haben solde,
whatever one have should,

von silber unt von golde,
of silver and of gold,

des heten sie ze Wien(en) gnuok.
of-that had they at Vienna enough.

der schrîber vaste wîn dar truok,
the scribe fast wine thither bore,

und[e] sprach gegen in allen:
and spoke toward them all:

»lâzt iu die rede gevallen,
»let to-you the speech please,

wir haben unser zeche nû.«
we have our reckoning now.«

er gap vil grôze trünke zuo.
he gave very great drafts to.

Der wirt was ouch der besten ein,
The host was also of-the best one,

der des nahtes dâ erschein
who of-the night there appeared

an der pilgerîme schar;
in the of-pilgrims host;

der liez zejungest holen dar
he let at-last fetch thither

vil laktwârje drâte;
very-much electuary quickly;

der gab die muschâte,
this-one gave the nutmeg,

der ingeber, der galgan;
that-one ginger, that-one galingale;

dâ bî gab ein hübscher man
there by gave a courtly man

kubêben; dirre neilikîn.
cubebs; this-one cloves.

darnâch trunken sie den wîn,
there-after drank they the wine,

den gewermet, disen kalt,
that-one warmed, this-one cold,

daz die jungen wurden alt
that the young became old

und die alden sêre junk.
and the old sorely young.

sust begegent in manik trunk,
thus met them many draft,

[under] einander ûf der louben dâ,
[among] each-other on the gallery there,

zuo der vart wart in gâ:
to the journey became to-them hasty:

daz mer was noch vil unnâ.
the sea was yet very un-near.

Dô huob sich singen unde sagen,
Then raised itself singing and telling,

daz diu loube mohte wagen
that the gallery might rock

von dem grôzen schalle,
from the great din,

die kumpân' almetalle
the companions all-together

heten (sich) geneiget,
had (themselves) inclined,

daz in wart erzeiget
that to-them was shown

des suezen wînes guete;
the sweet wine's goodness;

sie heten ir gemuete
they had their mind

alle zuo dem mer gekart;
all to the sea turned;

trinken wart dâ niht gespart;
drinking was there not spared;

sie îlten ir strâze;
they hastened their road;

von wînes übermâze
from wine's excess

heten sie den sin verlorn;
had they the sense lost;

sie heten alle wol gesworn,
they had all well sworn,

sie wæren halben weg gevarn;
they were half way gone;

dô hiezen sie den kil bewarn,
then bade they the keel guard,

daz in daz wazzer schatte niht;
that to-them the water harmed not;

sust wart der segel ûf geriht
thus was the sail up raised

und ir dink wol begat:
and their thing well performed:

sie wâren verre von der stat,
they were far from the place,

dâ Got menschlîchen gienk;
where God humanly walked;

des wînes kraft sie bevienk;
the wine's power them seized;

daz sie wurden tôreht gar,
that they became foolish wholly,

als diu kint, daz ist wâr.
as the children, that is true.

Mit sulhen vröuden sâzen sie,
With such joys sat they,

und retten dort unde hie,
and talked there and here,

unz diu zît hin gie,
until the time hence went,

allez von dem Gotes wege;
all of the God's way;

sie trunken vaste (dâ) ze pflege
they drank fast (there) by custom

den starken wîn über maht;
the strong wine beyond strength;

dô kom ez über die mitternaht,
then came it past the midnight,

dô wurden sie durchschellik
then became they loud-ringing

unde sô gar gesellik,
and so wholly sociable,

von des wînes suezikeit
from the wine's sweetness

wurden sie sô gar gemeit
became they so wholly glad

und des muotes alsô vrô,
and of-the spirit so joyful,

daz sie wânten alle dô,
that they weened all then,

sie wæren iezuo an dem mer;
they were now at the sea;

sie liezen allen herzen sêr
they let all of-hearts pain

und sungen vil schône
and sang very finely

in einem lûten dône
in a loud tune

ûf der louben offenbâr
on the gallery openly

irn leisen, daz ist wâr:
their hymn, that is true:

»in Gotes namen vare wir!«
»in God's name fare we!«

der sprach: »vriunt, ich lâze dir,
this-one spoke: »friend, I leave to-thee,

beide, kint unde wîp
both, child and woman

ûf sêle unde ûf lîp,
on soul and on body,

daz dû der mit triuwen pflegest,
that thou of-them with faithfulness takest-care,

und dich nimmer des bewegest,
and thee never of-it move-away,

als ein vriunt ze rehte sol.
as a friend by right shall.

daz geviel in allen wol.
that pleased them all well.

wan sie wâren wînes vol.
for they were of-wine full.

Sust vuoren sie mit vröuden hin,
Thus fared they with joys hence,

âne wîslîchen sin,
without wise sense,

sie wâren tumb, als diu kint,
they were foolish, as the children,

sie bâten umbe guoten wint,
they prayed for good wind,

daz in den Got gesente;
that to-them it God sent;

daz ein bruoder kente
that a brother knew

den andern, des enwæn' ich niht;
the other, that ween I not;

dô sie vuoren in der schiht
when they fared in the order

und an der wunnenklîchen stat,
and at the delightful place,

der gebôt, dirre bat,
this-one commanded, that-one asked,

daz der schrîber bræhte wîn;
that the scribe brought wine;

mich dunket an den sinnen mîn,
me seems to the senses my,

sie heten guotes windes genuok;
they had of-good wind enough;

sô man den wîn vür sie truok,
when one the wine before them bore,

durch trunkenheit und durch guft,
through drunkenness and through boasting,

sô sluog in diu vil suezę luft
so struck them the very sweet air

allen under diu ougen;
all under the eyes;

ich rede ez âne lougen,
I speak it without denial,

sie trunken harte swinde,
they drank very swiftly,

des wînes ingesinde,
the wine's household,

daz einer lag unde slief,
that one lay and slept,

der ander schallet' unde rief,
the other shouted and cried,

der dritte strouch unde viel,
the third stumbled and fell,

der vierde sprach: »ez ist der kiel,
the fourth spoke: »it is the keel,

der sust wankende gêt.« —
which thus rocking goes.«—

»ein sturmweter uns bestêt,«
»a storm-weather us besets,«

sprach der vünfte sâ zehant;
spoke the fifth straightway at-once;

dem sehsten sorge was bekant,
to-the sixth care was known,

der gesegent' sich vil swinde
he crossed himself very swiftly

vor dem grôzen winde;
before the great wind;

dô wânten sie der mære,
then weened they of-the tidings,

daz ez daz mer wære:
that it the sea were:

dô was ez der vil suezę wîn,
then was it the very sweet wine,

der tet sîne guete schîn.
which made its goodness shown.

Sust wurden sie erværet;
Thus became they frightened;

von wîne gar beswæret
with wine wholly burdened

was ir houbet, daz ist wâr,
was their head, that is true,

sie wâren alle trunken gar,
they were all drunk wholly,

daz was ir hœhster ungemach.
that was their highest discomfort.

der eine jæmerlîchen sprach:
the one wretchedly spoke:

»mir tuot daz houbet sêre wê;
»to-me does the head sorely woe;

swaz Got welle, daz ergê,
whatever God will, that come-about,

uns wil ein sturmweter kumen,
to-us will a storm-weather come,

daz wirt uns allen klein(e) vrumen.«
that will to-us all little profit.«

Dô huob sich michel trûren
Then raised itself great sadness

von den nâkebûren,
from the neighbors,

der eine klagt(e) den lîp,
the one lamented the life,

der diu kint, der daz wîp,
that-one the children, that-one the woman,

der die sêle, der daz guot.
that-one the soul, that-one the goods.

alsust lag ir übermuot,
thus lay their arrogance,

als er noch vil dikke tuot.
as it yet very often does.

Der Wiener mervart

XVII · THE VIENNESE SEA VOYAGE: THE STORM

In terror of the storm the drunken pilgrims vow penance. Spying a burgher fallen by the bench, they decide a dead pilgrim aboard has angered the sea and, deaf to his protests, throw him from a high window into the street, breaking his arm and leg. At morning they boast to their sober neighbors of the voyage, and the man's friends nearly come to blows with them. Only on the third day do they see their folly and pay him two hundred pounds. The poet warns that wine gladdens in measure and ruins honor, goods, and soul beyond it.

Der wîn begunde vaste toben,
The wine began fast to-rage,

sich huob ein swern und geloben
itself raised a swearing and vowing

mit henden und mit vuezen;
with hands and with feet;

sie wolden gerne buezen
they would gladly atone

swaz sie heten getân,
whatever they had done,

und[e] wolden des ze buoze stân.
and would of-it to penance stand.

Der eine ze ietslîchem sprach:
The one to each spoke:

»daz diu vart ie geschach,
»that the journey ever happened,

daz mueze Got(e) sîn geklaget!
that must to-God be lamented!

der wint den kiel ze sêre jaget
the wind the keel too sorely hunts

und des wazzers ünde;
and of-the water waves;

mich riuwe(n)t mîn sünde.«
me rue my sins.«

In tobte daz gehirne,
To-them raged the brain,

sie kunden daz gestirne
they could the stars

vor der louben niht gesehen,
before the gallery not see,

des wil ich iu verwâre jehen,
that will I to-you truly avow,

dô gieng ez an den morgen;
then went it to the morning;

sie vuoren (dâ) mit sorgen,
they fared (there) with cares,

und wâren dannoch, Goteweiz,
and were yet, God-knows,

(niht) halben wek gegen Brandeiz,
(not) half way toward Brindisi,

dô nam der wîn überhant,
then took the wine upper-hand,

sie ruorten dannoch niht daz lant,
they touched yet not the land,

und[e] riefen doch vil sêre:
and cried yet very sorely:

»hilfâ, lieber hêrre,
»help-ah, dear lord,

dîner armen hantgetât!
thy poor handiwork!

du engebest lêre unde rât,
thou unless-give teaching and counsel,

sô mueze wir verderben gar.«
so must we perish wholly.«

innes sach der eine dar,
meanwhile looked the one thither,

dô lag ein rîcher burger dort,
then lay a rich burgher there,

der was von einer tâveln ort
who was from a table's end

bî die bank gevallen,
by the bench fallen,

er sprach gegen in allen:
he spoke toward them all:

»geverten, nû gehabt iuch wol,
»fellows, now fare you well,

menlîch Got(e) danken sol,
every-man to-God thank shall,

daz er uns geholfen hât;
that he us helped has;

sîn sol werden vil guot rât,
of-it shall become very good remedy,

dirre grôzen wazzernôt:
for-this great water-distress:

ein pilgerîm der lît hie tôt,
a pilgrim he lies here dead,

des ist gewesen disiu schult,
of-that is been this guilt,

daz daz mer sîn ungedult
that the sea its impatience

an uns hât erzeiget hier.
on us has shown here.

ir hêren, volget alle mir,
you lords, follow all me,

nemet disen tôten man,
take this dead man,

der uns niht gehelfen kan,
who us not help can,

den werfet drâte âne wer
him throw quickly without defense

ûz dem kiel(e) in daz mer,
out-of the keel into the sea,

sô læzt ez sîn toben sîn.« —
so lets it its raging be.«—

»nû walde sîn unser trehtîn!«
»now rule of-it our Lord!«

sprâchen sie gemeine
spoke they in-common

»daz mer ist sô reine,
»the sea is so pure,

daz ez keine bôsheit
that it no wickedness

mak gelîden, sô man seit.«
may suffer, as one tells.«

und wurden alle gar gemeit.
and became all wholly glad.

Sie stuonden ûf vil drâte,
They stood up very quickly,

mit gemeinem râte,
with common counsel,

den vor grôzer trunkenheit
those-to-whom from great drunkenness

dannoch daz gên was gereit,
yet the going was ready,

und nâmen iren nâkebûr,
and took their neighbor,

dem wart der sueze wîn vil sûr,
to-whom became the sweet wine very sour,

und[e] truogen in mit grimme
and carried him with fury

in einer lûten stimme
in a loud voice

gegen einem venster, daz was hô.
toward a window, that was high.

der man begunde ruofen dô:
the man began to-cry then:

»lâzt mich mit gemache,
»let me with ease,

ir seht wol, daz ich wache,
you see well, that I wake,

und[e] bin gesunt, sam iuwer ein.«
and am sound, as of-you one.«

sie sprâchen alle: »triuwen, nein,
they spoke all: »in-faith, no,

ir sît veige (hie) gewesen,
you are doomed (here) been,

ir möht(et) nimmer doch genesen,
you might never yet be-saved,

daz ist uns allen wol bekant.«
that is to-us all well known.«

und(e) truogen in zehant,
and carried him at-once,

swaz er gerief unde gebat,
whatever he cried and begged,

vaste hin von siner stat
fast hence from his place

unde wurfen in hinvür,
and threw him out,

ûz dem venster vür die tür
out-of the window before the door

mitten in die strâze,
amid into the street,

daz was ein unmâze,
that was an excess,

ûf stok und(e) ûf stein,
onto stump and onto stone,

daz im der arm und daz bein
that to-him the arm and the leg

von dem valle (dâ) zebrach;
from the fall (there) broke;

daz was ein bœse hûsgemach. —
that was a wicked house-comfort.—

Vor sus getâner mervart
From thus made sea-journey

wil ich gerne sîn bewart;
will I gladly be guarded;

tuot ez aber der sûre wîn,
(if)-does it however the sour wine,

sô muoz ich mit den andern sîn. —
so must I with the others be.—

Dô giengen sie mit vröuden wider
Then went they with joys back

unde sazten sich darnider
and set themselves there-down

unt trunken anderweide.
and drank a-second-time.

sie liezen herzeleide,
they let heart's-sorrow,

unde krigen aber vürbaz.
and strove again further.

diu loube was von wîne naz,
the gallery was from wine wet,

daz mer schat' in kleine;
the sea harmed to-them little;

sie sprâchen alle gemeine:
they spoke all in-common:

»uns ist ein michel heil geschên,
»to-us is a great salvation happened,

daz wir den man haben gesehen,
that we the man have seen,

der sô veige ist gewesen;
who so doomed is been;

wir möhten nimmer sîn genesen,
we might never be saved,

wær(e) der man hinnen bliben:
were the man hence remained:

Got hât in selbe hin vertriben
God has him self hence driven

und ûz dem kiele gesant
and out-of the keel sent

mit sîner gotlîchen hant,
with his godly hand,

und(e) hât uns alle erhôrt;
and has us all heard;

daz wazzer gieng uns an den bort.«
the water went to-us to the board.«

und[e] sungen vaste lobes wort.
and sang fast of-praise words.

Nû schrei der burger sêre:
Now cried the burgher sorely:

»zether immermere!
»alas evermore!

Waz ist an mir gerochen?
What is on me avenged?

mîn bein ist mir zebrochen
my leg is to-me broken

und der arm ouch enzwei.«
and the arm also in-two.«

in jæmerlîcher stimme schrei
in wretched voice cried

der rîche burgære
the rich burgher

von sô grôzer swære
from so great heaviness

unde klagte sinen val,
and lamented his fall,

daz ez über al die gazze schal.
that it over all the lane resounded.

Die hergesellen wâren vrô,
The war-fellows were glad,

und[e] sungen alsô lûte dô,
and sang so loudly then,

daz sie in niht enhôrten,
that they him not heard,

von sust getânen worten,
from thus made words,

diu der burger klagete.
which the burgher lamented.

bî der zît ez tagete,
by the time it dawned,

der eine zuo dem andern sprach:
the one to the other spoke:

»wol uns, daz ez ie geschach,
»well-for us, that it ever happened,

daz wir gegen Akers sîn gevarn!
that we toward Acre are gone!

Got sol uns desterbaz bewarn
God shall us the-better guard

sêle, guot unde lîp;
soul, goods and body;

Got behuete unser wîp
God guard our women

und diu kint, nâch grôzem vrumen,
and the children, after great profit,

unz daz wir ze lande kumen.«
until that we to land come.«

Sie enwesten niht der mære,
They knew not of-the tidings,

die tumben Wienære,
the foolish Viennese,

daz sie ze Wiene(n) wâren,
that they at Vienna were,

dâ sie von kindes jâren
where they from child's years

alle wâren erzogen;
all were reared;

der wîn het(e) sie betrogen.
the wine had them deceived.

Darnâch wart ez liehter tak,
There-after became it bright day,

daz ich verwâr sagen mak,
that I truly say may,

sie muosten sinne darben;
they must of-sense lack;

sie wâren, sam die garben,
they were, like the sheaves,

gestrûchet und gevallen.
stumbled and fallen.

der burger liez sîn schallen,
the burgher let his shouting,

der des nahtes alsô rief,
who of-the night so cried,

und sô rehte kleine slief,
and so right little slept,

der was noch betoubet,
he was still dazed,

doch hete sîn houbet
yet had his head

des wînes kraft gerûmet;
the wine's power vacated;

er hete sich versûmet,
he had himself neglected,

daz er ze schiere entslâfen was,
that he too quickly fallen-asleep was,

dâvon er kûme sint genas,
there-from he scarcely afterward recovered,

dem tet der val harte wê,
to-him did the fall very woe,

und was im verre wirs, dan [w]ê;
and was to-him far worse, than woe;

daz was sîn bester antlâz,
that was his best indulgence,

daz er was von bluote naz,
that he was from blood wet,

und des valles niht vergaz.
and of-the fall not forgot.

Des morgens vruo kômen dar
In-the morning early came thither

ir nâch[t]gebûren, daz ist wâr,
their neighbors, that is true,

die den schal vernâmen;
who the din heard;

dô sie zesamen kwâmen,
when they together came,

die nuehtern sprâchen alle dô:
the sober-ones spoke all then:

»ir sît ûz der mâzen vrô
»you are out-of the measure glad

gewesen alle dise naht
been all this night

und habt lange gnuok gewaht
and have long enough waked

und habt grôzen schal getriben.
and have great din driven.

ist des wînes iht mêre bliben?
is of-the wine anything more remained?

Diu sunne stêt wol boumes hô.«
The sun stands well tree high.«

die trunkenbolde sprâchen dô:
the drunkards spoke then:

»ir sult uns des wol gunnen,
»you shall to-us of-it well grant,

wir sîn in grôzen wunnen
we are in great delights

hînaht gevarn über mer,
tonight gone over sea,

gewaldiklîchen, âne wer;
mightily, without defense;

dâ hât uns Got geholfen zuo,
there has us God helped to,

beide, spat unde vruo,
both, late and early,

er gab uns sêre guoten wint:
he gave to-us sorely good wind:

darnâch huob sich aber sint
there-after raised itself again afterward

ein sturmweter harte grôz,
a storm-weather very great,

daz uns daz wilde mer vlôz
that to-us the wild sea flowed

gewaltiklîchen in den kiel;
mightily into the keel;

dâvon huop sich sorgen vil,
there-from raised itself of-cares much,

wir wânten alle des verwâr,
we weened all of-it truly,

wir solden sîn ertrunken gar,
we should be drowned wholly,

wan daz uns doch ein heil geschach,
except that to-us yet a fortune happened,

daz ein pilgerîm ersach
that a pilgrim espied

einen man, der was tôt,
a man, who was dead,

als ez selbe Got gebôt,
as it self God commanded,

den wurfe wir vil drâte,
him threw we very quickly,

mit gemeinem râte,
with common counsel,

ûz dem kiele über den bort,
out-of the keel over the board,

als wir heten vor gehôrt
as we had before heard

und der marner uns gebôt,
and the mariner us commanded,

unt verwunden sulhe nôt,
and overcame such distress,

dô der sturmwint gelak
when the storm-wind lay-still

unt vil manik donerslak.«
and very many thunder-clap.«

Die nuohtern lachten vaste;
The sober-ones laughed fast;

der wirt lag bî dem gaste,
the host lay by the guest,

und wâren sêre trunken;
and were sorely drunk;

der schrîber was gesunken
the scribe was sunk

bî der bank hin ze tal,
by the bench hence to valley,

der weste klein(e) von der zal,
he knew little of the tally,

wer daz meiste teil galt;
who the most part paid;

noch was der wîn unbezalt.
still was the wine unpaid.

Dô rief der burgære
Then cried the burgher

und[e] klagte sîne swære,
and lamented his heaviness,

der in daz mer geschoz̨z̨en wart.
who into the sea shot was.

dô wart ein michel zuovart
then became a great throng

zuo den selben stunden,
at the same hours,

dô sie den man vunden,
when they the man found,

der was gevallen, hôch enpor
who was fallen, high aloft

von dem venster, in daz hor,
from the window, into the mire,

daz man sîn niht erkante,
that one him not knew,

unz er sich selbe nante;
until he himself self named;
dô was er der besten ein.
then was he of-the best one.
sie sprâchen alle: »triuwen, nein,
they spoke all: »in-faith, no,
der spot ist nû niht guot gewesen;
the mockery is now not good been;
der man sol kûme genesen:
the man shall scarcely recover:
diz lôzbuoch ist unreht gelesen.«
this lot-book is wrongly read.«
Dô die vriunde dâ gesân,
When the friends there saw,
daz der schade was getân
that the harm was done
an dem manne rîche,
to the man rich,
sie liefen zorniklîche
they ran wrathfully
miteinander alle hin,
together all hence,
übellîch was ir begin,
ill was their beginning,
sie wolden jene erslân,
they would those slay,
die daz het(t)en getân,
who that had done,
sie sprâchen zorniklîchen gar:
they spoke wrathfully wholly:
»ir habt unsern vriunt verwâr
»you have our friend truly
verderbet vrevellîche,
ruined wantonly,

der was nehten rîche,
who was last-night rich,

dem ist der lîp zebrochen;
to-him is the body broken;

ez wirt an iu gerochen,
it is on you avenged,

daz ir die grôzen kündikeit
that you the great cunning

an disen man habt geleit.«
on this man have laid.«

Die hêrren sprâchen sâ zehant:
The lords spoke straightway at-once:

»diu mære sint uns unbekant,
»the tidings are to-us unknown,

wir haben rehte gevarn,
we have rightly fared,

Got sol uns desterbaz bewarn,
God shall us the-better guard,

an des dienste vare wir (i)e;
in whose service fare we ever;

beswært ir uns an ihte hie,
(if)-burden you us in anything here,

des welle wir uns mit rehte wern;
of-that will we ourselves with right defend;

sulle wir guot alsô verzern,
shall we goods so spend,

daz ir uns missebieten wolt?
that you us mistreat would?

jâ habe wir silber unde golt
yes have we silver and gold

ûf dem Gotes wege verzert;
on the God's way spent;

dan daz uns der hât ernert,
except that us he has saved,

wir wæren alle bliben tôt;
we would-have all remained dead;

wir kwâmen in sô grôzẹ nôt,
we came into so great distress,

daz wir kûme sîn genesen;
that we scarcely are saved;

welt ir uns darûmbe vînt wesen,
(if)-will you us there-for hostile be,

daz ist uns leit, daz wizzẹ Got;
that is to-us sorrowful, that know God;

ez was des marners gebot,
it was the mariner's command,

und niht gar ein kindes spot;
and not wholly a child's mockery;

[des lobte(n) wir alle Got].«
[*for-that praised we all God*].«

Nû huop sich aber ein grôzer haz
Now raised itself again a great hatred

von den vriunden umbe daz
from the friends about that

und ein zuo dringen
and a to pressing

und ein swert klingen
and a sword ringing

und ein bœser sturmwint:
and a wicked storm-wind:

wan daz die besten alle sint
except that the best all afterward

vaste darzuo trâten,
fast thereto stepped,

vlêhten unde bâten,
entreated and begged,

unz siz brâhten ze tage,
until they-it brought to settlement,

allez nâch ir beider klage.
all after their both lament.

Des mannes schade was in leit,
The man's harm was to-them sorrowful,

und wâren vrô der trunkenheit,
and were glad of-the drunkenness,

diu den hêrren was geschehen;
which to-the lords was happened;

sie heten alle wol gesehen,
they had all well seen,

daz diz von grôzen trünken kwam.
that this from great drafts came.

menlîch sînen vriunt dô nam
every-man his friend then took

und[e] vuorten sie ze bette.
and led them to bed.

daz ich die muoze hette,
if I the leisure had,

ich sagete hie von wunders gnuok.
I would-tell here of wonders enough.

den burger man ze hûse truok,
the burgher one to house bore,

der sô hôh' gevallen was,
who so high fallen was,

daz er kûme genas.
that he scarcely recovered.

Dô sie dâ gelâgen
When they there lay

unde der ruowe pflâgen
and of-the rest tended

wol biz an den dritten tak,
well until to the third day,

daz der sturmwint gelak
that the storm-wind lay-still

unde des suezen wînes kraft,
and the sweet wine's power,

dâmite sie wâren behaft,
there-with they were afflicted,

dô stuonden sie mit sorgen
then stood they with cares

ûf gegen dem morgen;
up toward the morning;

alrêst wart in dô bekant,
first-of-all became to-them then known,

daz sie wâren gepfant
that they were stripped

von trunkenheit, der sinne.
by drunkenness, of-the senses.

Sant Ge(r)drûden minne
Saint Gertrude's love

wart in sider harte sûr.
became to-them afterward very sour.

der burger, ir nâhgebûr,
the burgher, their neighbor,

der was der reise niht ze vrô,
he was of-the voyage not too glad,

der beklaget' sie alle dô:
he accused them all then:

dô huop sich Krimhilden nôt;
then raised itself Kriemhild's distress;

sie wurden schemelîchen rôt,
they became shamefully red,

dô sie die wârheit gesân,
when they the truth saw,

daz sie het(t)en getân
that they had done

den schaden an dem guoten man;
the harm to the good man;

dâ gewunnen sie niht an.
there won they nothing in.

Die burger sprâchen alle nû
The burghers spoke all now

daz beste vaste darzuo,
the best fast thereto,

daz ez kûm(e) darzuo kwam,
that it scarcely thereto came,

daz man bezzerunge nam,
that one amends took,

daz sie gæben zuo der stunt
that they gave at the hour

dem selben man[ne] zwei hundert pfunt
to-the same man two hundred pounds

vür den grôzen schaden sîn.
for the great harm his.

sust wart in sûr der suezе wîn,
thus became to-them sour the sweet wine,

dô sie daz silber wuogen dar.
when they the silver weighed thither.

dâmite wæren sie verwâr
there-with would-have they truly

mit êren über mer gevarn.
with honors over sea gone.

swer den wîn niht kan gesparn,
whoever the wine not can spare,

und wil in trinken über reht,
and will it drink beyond right,

dâ wirt der man des wînes kneht,
there becomes the man the wine's servant,

und niht des wînes hêrre.
and not the wine's lord.

swer trinken wil ze sêre,
whoever drink will too sorely,

ez krenket im sîn êre.
it weakens to-him his honor.

Nû hœret, waz der wîn tuot:
Now hear, what the wine does:

er vröuwet trûrigen muot,
it gladdens sad spirit,

beide, vrouwen unde man,
both, ladies and men,

swer in ze rehte trinken kan;
whoever it by right drink can;

und schadet doch den êren,
and harms yet the honors,

swer den sin wil kêren
whoever the sense will turn

ûf den grôzen übertrank,
onto the great over-drinking,

dâvon wirt der lîp krank,
there-from becomes the body sick,

und[e] schadet ouch dem guote.
and harms also the goods.

nû merk[e]t in iuwerm muote,
now mark in your mind,

waz der wîn geschaden mak:
what the wine harm may:

der wîn ist der sêle slak;
the wine is the soul's blow;

swer in trinket über daz zil
whoever it drinks beyond the goal

unt kein mâze haben wil,
and no measure have will,

daz ist der sêle unheil;
that is the soul's misfortune;

an allen houptsünden teil
in all deadly-sins share

hât diu leide trunkenheit;
has the loathsome drunkenness;

dâvon wirt der lîp gemeit,
there-from becomes the body glad,

dem er vliuzet durch den munt,
to-whom it flows through the mouth,

daz machet mangen ungesunt
that makes many unsound

die sêle, guot unde lîp.
the soul, goods and body.

des huetet, man unde wîp,
of-that beware, man and woman,

daz ir von sulher trunkenheit
that you from such drunkenness

iht kumet ze langer arbeit.
not come to long hardship.

Man vindet ouch vil mangen man,
One finds also very many man,

der die beste(n) mâze kan
who the best measure knows

an grôzem übertranke;
in great over-drinking;

daz ist Got wol ze danke
that is to-God well to thanks

und der werlde ouch dâmit,
and to-the world also there-with,

swer trinken wil nâch rehtem sit'.
whoever drink will after right custom.

Swer aber sî des des muotes,
Whoever however be of-the of-the mind,

daz er des kranken guotes
that he the feeble goods

mêr schônet, dan der êren,
more spares, than the honors,

den wil ich trinken lêren:
him will I to-drink teach:

der mag underwîlen wol
he may at-times well

sîn houbet guotes wînes vol
his head of-good wine full

durch kurzewîle trinken;
for pastime drink;

sô muoz sîn karkeit sinken,
so must his stinginess sink,

daz er durch grôze trunkenheit
that he through great drunkenness

eine kleine miltikeit
a little generosity

underwîlen doch begêt.
at-times yet commits.

swem der muot aber stêt
to-whom the mind however stands

anders niht, dan ûf guot,
otherwise not, than on goods,

der hât zaghaften muot,
he has cowardly spirit,

er sî nuohtern oder sat,
he be sober or sated,

swaz man den bœsen ie gebat,
whatever one the wicked ever bade,

daz hilfet niht ein minzenblat:
that helps not a mint-leaf:

Got werfe in von gelükkes rat,
God throw him from fortune's wheel,

der sich bôsheit undersat,
who himself with-wickedness fills,

swer worden ist an êren mat. —
whoever become is in honors mate.—

Diz mære ist ûz an dirre stat,
This tale is out at this place,

daz ist diu mervart genant;
that is the sea-journey named;

den namen lâzt iu sîn bekant.
the name let to-you be known.

Daz mære ist ûz an dirre stunt:
The tale is out at this hour:

ich kuste gerne ein[en] rôten munt.
I would-kiss gladly a red mouth.

Daz schretel und der wazzerber

XVIII · THE GOBLIN AND THE WATER-BEAR

The king of Norway sends a tame white bear to the king of Denmark. Its Norwegian keeper seeks lodging with a Danish farmer whose house a goblin has taken over, driving everyone out. The keeper sleeps in the bakehouse with his bear; at night the goblin comes to roast its meat, strikes the bear with its spit, and the two fight, the keeper hiding in the oven, until toward midnight the goblin flees mauled. Next day it asks the farmer whether his great cat still lives; told she has borne five kittens, it vows never to return, and the farmer moves home.

Wer hovelîcher mære ger,
Whoever of-courtly tales desires,

der neige herze und ôre her,
he bend heart and ear hither,

dem gibet disiu âventiure
to-him gives this adventure

ein lachen ze stiure.
a laugh as support.

Ich lache ouch, wen des wirt zît,
I laugh also, when of-it becomes time,

ob sorge mir die muoze gît,
if care to-me the leisure gives,

der ich von sorge (not?) ie muoste pflegen.
which I from care (need?) ever must tend.

nû hœre(t), wie der von Norwegen,
now hear, how he of Norway,

ein künik edel und hôchgeborn,
a king noble and high-born,

ei[ne]m andern künige ûzerkorn,
to-an other king chosen-out,

an adele sînem genôzen,
in nobility his peer,

an rîcheit dem grôzen,
in riches the great,

und ane gewalt dem starken
and in power the strong

künige von Tenemarken
king of Denmark

Sante einen zamen wazzerbern;
Sent a tame water-bear;

z'wâr, ich wil iuch der wârheit wern,
in-truth, I will you of-the truth grant,

er was der wîzen einer,
it was of-the white-ones one,

ein grôzer, niht ein kleiner.
a great-one, not a small-one.

Dem bern dâ gegeben wart
To-the bear there given was

gein Tenemarken ûf die vart
toward Denmark on the journey

ein wegewîser villân
a way-showing peasant

von dem lande, ein Norman,
from the land, a Norseman,

der in vueren solde,
who him lead should,

und sîn durch miete wolde
and of-him for hire would

schôn ûf der selben verte pflegen.
finely on the same journey take-care.

hin vuoren sie von Norwegen
hence fared they from Norway

über den sê, den starken,
over the sea, the strong,

unt kwâmen ze Tenemarken
and came to Denmark

in des edelen küniges lant.
into the noble king's land.

dô sie von stade ûf den sant
when they from shore onto the sand

kwâmen beide, dirre und der,
came both, this-one and that-one,

des bern meister und der ber,
the bear's master and the bear,

des bern pfleger nam den bern
the bear's keeper took the bear

bî der lannen, hin vuort' er'n,
by the chain, hence led he-him,

er sûmte kleine sînen gank,
he delayed little his going,

wan in der âbent des tages twank,
for him the evening of-the day pressed,

daz er îlte vaste
that he hastened fast

gein herbergen durch raste,
toward lodging for rest,

er gâhte sêre durch gemach,
he hastened sorely for ease,

unz daz er ligen vor im sach
until that he lie before him saw

ein schœn dorf, dâhin kêrte er,
a fair village, thither turned he,

im volgte an sîner hant der ber;
him followed at his hand the bear;

dô er in daz dorf kwam,
when he into the village came,

dâ sach er wît und wunnesam
there saw he wide and delightful

in einem hove guot hûs gemach,
in a court good house comfort,

und er den hof sô schœnen sach,
and he the court so fair saw,

er dâhte in sînem sinne,
he thought in his mind,

dâ sæze ein ritter inne,
there dwelt a knight inside,

oder sus ein guoterhande man;
or else a good-kind man;

dar kêrte der villân
thither turned the peasant

mit dem bern sânzehant.
with the bear at-once.

den wirt des hoves er dâ vant
the host of-the court he there found

gar trûrik vor dem hove stân,
wholly sad before the court stand,

er was ein guot einvaltik man,
he was a good simple man,

von art ein rehter gebûre;
by birth a true peasant;

swie ofte im wart und (vil?) sûre
however often to-him became and (very?) sour

sîn lîpnar mit nôt,
his livelihood with distress,

er gab doch guetlîch sîn brôt
he gave yet kindly his bread

itslîchem, der sîn geruochte
to-each, who of-it cared

und in mit zühten suochte.
and him with breeding sought.

Mit dem bern der Norman
With the bear the Norseman

den wirt dâ gruezen began.
the host there to-greet began.

Der wirt im dankte schône,
The host to-him thanked finely,

er jach: »daz iu Got lône!«
he avowed: »that to-you God reward!«

und hiez in willekomen sîn,
and bade him welcome be,

er sprach: »vil lieber vriunt mîn,
he spoke: »very dear friend my,

durch iuwer zuht tuot mir bekant,
by your breeding make to-me known,

waz tieres vuer[e]t ir an der hant?
what of-beast lead you at the hand?

Ist diu selbe krêatiure
Is the same creature
gehiure oder ungehiure?
tame or monstrous?
Daz eislîche kunder,
The horrible creature,
ist ez ein merwunder?
is it a sea-wonder?
Muoz ich mich vor im vürhten iht?«
Must I myself before it fear anything?«
der Norman sprach: »nein, herre, niht;
the Norseman spoke: »no, lord, not;
ez ist ein zamer wazzerber,
it is a tame water-bear,
mîn her[re] der künik sant' in her,
my lord the king sent it hither,
der êrenrîche von Norwegen
the honor-rich-one of Norway
disem küniklichem degen
to-this kingly thane
hât er in ze prêsant
has he it as present
her gesendet in diz lant,
hither sent into this land,
dem ich in vüeren und bringen sol.
to-whom I it lead and bring shall.
vil lieber wirt, nû tuot sô wol,
very dear host, now do so well,
als iuwern tugenden sî geslaht,
as to-your virtues be natural,
unt lât mich mit iu über naht.
and let me with you over night.

Blîben under dache
Remain under roof

in iuwerm hûsgemache.«
in your house-comfort.«

Der guote Tene einvaltik
The good Dane simple

sprach: »ich bin ungewaltik
spoke: »I am powerless

des hûses und des hoves mîn.«
over-the house and the court my.«

der Norman sprach: »wie mak daz sîn?«
the Norseman spoke: »how may that be?«

Des antwurt' im der wirt zehant,
To-that answered to-him the host at-once,

er jach: »des tiuvels vâlant
he avowed: »the devil's fiend

und sîn gespenste ist zuo mir komen
and his specter is to me come

in mînen hof und hât benomen
into my court and has taken

mir, swaz ich vröuden ie gewan.
from-me, whatever I of-joys ever won.

mit niht ich daz ervaren kan,
with nothing I that learn can,

waz krêatiuren ez sî:
what of-creature it be:

sîn hant ist swær alsam ein blî,
its hand is heavy as a lead,

wen ez erreichet mit dem slage,
whomever it reaches with the blow,

swie grôz ez sî, swie stark sîn klage,
however great it be, however strong his lament,

ez sleht in, daz er vellet nider.
it strikes him, that he falls down.

sîne gestalt und sîniu gelider
its shape and its limbs

diu moht' ich leider nie gesehen,
them might I alas never see,

wan daz ich des vür wâr muoz jehen,
except that I of-it for true must avow,

und sage ez iu ze wunder,
and tell it to-you as wonder,

daz ich gevriesch nie kunder
that I heard-of never creature

sô stark, noch sô gelenke:
so strong, nor so nimble:

tische, stuele und benke,
tables, chairs and benches,

die sint im ringe alsam ein bal,
they are to-it light as a ball,

ez wirfet ûf unt zetal
it throws up and down

die schüzzeln und die töpfe gar,
the bowls and the pots wholly,

ez rumpelt stæte vür sich dar,
it rumbles steadily before itself thither,

ovenbrete und ovensteine,
oven-boards and oven-stones,

körbe, kisten algemeine
baskets, chests all-together

die wirfet ez hin unde her;
them throws it hence and hither;

ez gêt ot allez daz entwer,
it goes just all that crosswise,

swaz ist in dem hove mîn.
whatever is in the court my.

nû hab' ouch ich die vreise sîn
now have also I the terror its

unde sîn untât gevlogen
and its misdeed fled

und hab' mich gar von im gezogen.
and have myself wholly from it withdrawn.

Des ich mich an iuch selben zich:
Of-that I myself to you self appeal:

seht, mîn gesinde und al mîn vich
see, my household and all my cattle

hât ez herûz von im getriben,
has it out from it driven,

und ist aleine darinne bliben.
and is alone therein remained.

Von im ich grôzen kumber dol.
From it I great trouble endure.

vil lieber gast, ir seht ouch wol,
very dear guest, you see also well,

daz mir hûsrât ist wilde;
that to-me household-goods is wild;

ich hân ûf diz gevilde
I have on this field

vor disen hof gehüttet;
before this court built-a-hut;

zestœret unt zerüttet
destroyed and shattered

ist leider al mîn hûsgemach.«
is alas all my house-comfort.«

der gast gezogenlîchen sprach:
the guest courteously spoke:

»vil lieber wirt, daz ist mir leit;
»very dear host, that is to-me sorrowful;

lât mich durch iuwer hovischeit
let me for your courtliness
und durch iuwer zuht hinin,
and for your breeding in,
und lât mich hînt darinne sîn;
and let me tonight therein be;
waz ob mir lîhte hilfet Got,
what if me perhaps helps God,
daz der tiuvel und sîn spot
that the devil and his mockery
und sîn truknusse mich verbirt.« —
and his deception me spares.«—
»turret ir'z gewâgen,« sprach der wirt
»(if)-dare you-it hazard,« spoke the host
»ich gan es iu innenklîchen wol;
»I grant it to-you inwardly well;
ob ich die wârheit sprechen sol,
if I the truth speak shall,
sô dunket ez mich tumplîch.«
so seems it to-me foolish.«
der Norman sprach: »nû stiuret mich
the Norseman spoke: »now support me
und mînen bern mit [der] spîse;
and my bear with [the] food;
ich dunke iu tump oder wîse,
I seem to-you foolish or wise,
ich wâg' ez, swie mir'z halt ergât.« —
I hazard it, however to-me-it but goes.«—
»sint ir sîn niht welt haben rât,«
»since you of-it not will have remedy,«
sprach der wirt, der guote man
spoke the host, the good man
»ich teile iu mite, swaz ich hân.
»I share you with, whatever I have.

Mîn einvaltigez armuot,
My simple poverty,

vil lieber gast, daz nemt vür guot.«
very dear guest, that take for good.«

Der wirt ez im guetlîch erbôt,
The host it to-him kindly offered,

er gab im bier unde brôt,
he gave to-him beer and bread,

vleisch, rueben unde salz,
meat, turnips and salt,

er gab im eijer unde smalz,
he gave to-him eggs and lard,

unt vrischer butern gnuok dâmite,
and of-fresh butter enough there-with,

ze spîse, nâch des landes site,
for food, after the land's custom,

und sînem bern einen wider,
and to-his bear a ram,

der im doch sûre gnuok wart sider.
which to-him yet sour enough became afterward.

Der gast im seite grôzen dank,
The guest to-him said great thanks,

er nam die spîse und den trank,
he took the food and the drink,

in Gotes namen dâ gienk er
in God's name there went he

hin in den hof, mit im der ber.
hence into the court, with him the bear.

Der guote man von Norwegen
The good man of Norway

tet vor sich den Gotes segen,
made before himself the God's blessing,

hin gienk er in ein bachûs;
hence went he into a bakehouse;

er ahte klein ûf sulhen grûs,
he heeded little to such horror,

als im der wirt dâ seite;
as to-him the host there told;

ein viuwer er bereite,
a fire he prepared,

als im der hunger geriet,
as to-him the hunger counseled,

sîne kost er sôt und briet.
his fare he boiled and roasted.

Dô nû diu kost was bereit,
When now the fare was ready,

er az unt trank und was gemeit,
he ate and drank and was glad,

und gab ouch sînem bern genuok.
and gave also to-his bear enough.

darnâch diu muede in darzuo truok,
there-after the weariness him thereto brought,

daz er sich leit[e] ûf ein bank
that he himself laid on a bench

und der slâf in des betwank.
and the sleep him of-it compelled.

Der bere was von dem gêne laz,
The bear was from the going slack,

do er im gnuok des widers gaz,
when he for-himself enough of-the ram ate,

er leit' sich bî daz viuwer nider,
he laid himself by the fire down,

im wâren muede sîniu glider.
to-him were weary his limbs.

Dô nû der guote man gelak
When now the good man lay

und slâfes nâch der muede pflak,
and of-sleep after the weariness tended,

und ouch der muede ber entslief,
and also the weary bear fell-asleep,

hœret, wie ein schretel dort her lief,
hear, how a goblin there hither ran,

daz was kûm[e] drîer spannen lank,
that was scarcely of-three spans long,

gein dem viu[we]r ez vaste sprank:
toward the fire it fast sprang:

ez was gar eislîch getân,
it was wholly horribly made,

und het ein rôtez keppel an;
and had a red little-cap on;

daz ir die wârheit wizzet,
that you the truth know,

ez het ein vleisch gespizzet
it had a meat spitted

an einen spiz îsenîn,
on a spit of-iron,

den truog ez in der hende sîn;
it bore it in the hand its;

daz schretel ungehiure
the goblin monstrous

sich sazte zuo dem viure
itself set to the fire

und briet sîn vleisch durch lîpnar,
and roasted its meat for livelihood,

und ez des bern wart gewar,
and it of-the bear became aware,

ez dâhte in sînem sinne:
it thought in its mind:

»waz tuot diz kunder hinne?
»what does this creature inside?

Ez ist sô griulîch getân,
It is so horribly made,

und sol ez bî dir hie bestân,
and (if)-shall it by thee here remain,

dû muost sîn lîhte schaden nemen:
thou must of-it likely harm take:

nein, blîbens darf ez niht gezemen;
no, of-remaining may it not befit;

ich hân die andern gar verjaget,
I have the others wholly chased,

ich bin ouch noch sô niht verzaget,
I am also yet so not disheartened,

ez muoz mir rûmen diz gemach.«
it must to-me vacate this dwelling.«

nîtlîch ez ûf den bern sach,
spitefully it at the bear looked,

ez sach ot dar und allez dar,
it looked just thither and always thither,

zelest erwak ez sich sîn gar
at-last bethought it itself of-it wholly

und gap dem bern ein[en] slak
and gave to-the bear a blow

mit dem spiẓẓe ûf den nak.
with the spit on the neck.

Er rampf sich unde grein ez an;
He wrinkled himself and grinned it at;

daz schretel sprank von im hindan,
the goblin sprang from him away,

und briet sîn vleischel vürbaz,
and roasted its little-meat further,

unz daz ez wart von smalze naz:
until that it became of lard wet:

den bern ez aber eines sluok.
the bear it again once struck.

der ber im aber daz vertruok.
the bear to-it again that endured.

Ez briet sîn vleisch vür sich dar,
It roasted its meat before itself thither,

unz daz ez rehte wart gewar,
until that it rightly became aware,

daz nû der brâte sûste
that now the roast sizzled

und in der hizze brûste,
and in the heat crackled,

den spiz ez mit dem brâten zôch
the spit it with the roast drew

vaste ûf über daz houbet hôch,
fast up over the head high,

daz bœse tuster ungeslaht
the wicked monster ill-bred

sluok ûz aller sîner maht
struck out-of all its might

den mueden bern über daz mûl.
the weary bear over the snout.

nû was der ber doch niht sô vûl,
now was the bear yet not so lazy,

er vuor ûf und lief ez an,
he went up and ran it at,

daz schretel im dâ niht entran,
the goblin from-him there not escaped,

er begreif ez mit den tazzen,
he seized it with the paws,

bîzen, krimmen unt krazzen
biting, clawing and scratching

begunde er ez sô grimme,
began he it so grimly,

daz ez in grimmer stimme
that it in grim voice

und überlût engestlîchen schrê:
and over-loud fearfully cried:

»wê, herre, wê! wê, herre, wê!«
»woe, lord, woe! woe, lord, woe!«

Swie kleine im wâren sîniu gelider,
However small to-it were its limbs,

ez was doch stark, und greif hin wider
it was yet strong, and grasped hence back

dem mueden bern in den giel,
the weary bear into the maw,

ez zezerret im den griel,
it tore to-him the gullet,

ez beiz, ez krazte in unde kram,
it bit, it scratched him and clawed,

daz er vor zorne lûte erbram
that he for anger loudly roared

und schrei in grôzem grimme,
and cried in great fury,

sîn angeborne stimme,
his inborn voice,

diu alsô grimmiklîch erhal,
which so grimly resounded,

daz allez daz dâvon erschal,
that all that there-from resounded,

daz in dem wîten hove was.
which in the wide court was.

ob ir ietwederz dâ genas,
whether of-them each-one there survived,

vürwâr, daz was ein wunder.
truly, that was a wonder.

der ber und diz unkunder
the bear and this monster

begunden grimmiklîchen toben,
began grimly to-rage,

iezunt lak daz schretel oben,
now lay the goblin above,

bî einer wîle lak ob der ber;
for a while lay above the bear;

sie wielken'z hin unde her,
they rolled-it hence and hither,

die zwêne kampfgeverten
the two combat-fellows

sich beide vaste werten:
themselves both fast defended:

nû bîzâ bîz! nû limmâ lim!
now bite-ah bite! now growl-ah growl!

nû krazza kraz! nû krimma krim!
now scratch-ah scratch! now claw-ah claw!

Sie bizzen unde lummen,
They bit and growled,

sie krazten unde krummen
they scratched and clawed

einander alsô grimmiklîch,
each-other so grimly,

daz als harte ervorhte sich
that so hard feared himself

des bern meister, daz er vlôch
the bear's master, that he fled

und in den bachoven krôch,
and into the bake-oven crept,

er krôch hinin, und sach hervür
he crept in, and looked out

gar trûrik ûz des ovens tür;
wholly sad out-of the oven's door;

er luoget' ûz dem luoge
he peered out-of the peephole

und sach die grôze unvuoge,
and saw the great outrage,

diu an dem bern dâ geschach;
which to the bear there happened;

daz was sîn[e]s herzen ungemach.
that was his heart's discomfort.

Daz schretel mit dem bern vaht
The goblin with the bear fought

vil vaste hin gein mitternaht:
very fast hence toward midnight:

zelest er ez doch überwant,
at-last he it yet overcame,

ez vlôch von im, unt verswant.
it fled from him, and vanished.

War ez kwam, wer weiz daz?
Where it came, who knows that?

der ber was von dem strîte laz,
the bear was from the strife slack,

er leit' sich ûf den estrich wider
he laid himself on the floor again

und raste diu kampfmueden lider.
and rested the combat-weary limbs.

Der Norman sach wol dise geschiht,
The Norseman saw well this event,

er kwam ot ûz dem oven niht,
he came just out-of the oven not,

mit vorhten er darinne lak,
with fears he therein lay,

unz daz er sach den liehten tak,
until that he saw the bright day,

dô alrêrst krôch er hervür,
then first-of-all crept he out,

gar ruoẓik, ûz des ovens tür.
wholly sooty, out-of the oven's door.

Dô er ûz dem oven kwam,
When he out-of the oven came,

sînen bern er dâ nam
his bear he there took

unt vuort' in ûz dem hove hin vor.
and led him out-of the court hence before.

der wirt des hoves stuont vor dem tor,
the host of-the court stood before the gate,

dem gaste er guoten morgen bôt;
to-the guest he good morning offered;

er het gehôrt wol dise nôt,
he had heard well this distress,

diu in dem hove dâ geschach;
which in the court there happened;

der guote wirt guotlîchen sprach:
the good host kindly spoke:

»und lebt ir noch, vil guoter man?« —
»and live you still, very good man?«—

»jâ, sint mir Got des lebens gan,
»yes, since to-me God of-the life grants,

sô lebe ich gerne vürbaz.«
so live I gladly further.«

Ze vil geredet, waz touk daz?
Too much spoken, what avails that?

Mit kurzen worten überslagen,
With short words passed-over,

er dankte im grôz, hôrt' ich sagen,
he thanked to-him greatly, heard I tell,

und nam urloup, hin gienk er,
and took leave, hence went he,

mit im gienk der zekrazte ber.
with him went the scratched bear.

Der guote wirt, der villân,
The good host, the peasant,

dâ sînen pfluok rüsten began,
there his plow to-ready began,

des pflak er, und was sîn site,
of-that took-care he, and was his custom,

wan er betruok sich dâmite;
for he supported himself there-with;

er vuor ûf daz gevilde hin
he went onto the field hence

durch sîner lîpnar gewin;
for his livelihood's gain;

sînen pfluok er dâ enpfienk,
his plow he there took,

ze akker er dâmite gienk,
to field he there-with went,

er mente sîn ohsen, hin treip er.
he drove his oxen, hence drove he.

nû lief daz schretel dort her
now ran the goblin there hither

unt trat ob im ûf einen stein;
and stepped above him onto a stone;

mit bluote wâren sîniu bein
with blood were its legs

berunnen ûf unt zetal,
run-over up and down,

sîn lîbel daz was überal
its little-body that was all-over

zekrazzet unt zebizzen,
scratched and bitten,

zezerret unt zerizzen
tattered and torn

was sîn keppel, daz er truok;
was its little-cap, which it wore;

ez rief eislîch und lûte genuok
it cried horribly and loudly enough

und sprach dem bûmanne zuo,
and spoke to-the farmer to,

ez rief wol drîstunt: »hœrest dû'z, dû!
it cried well thrice: »hearest thou-it, thou!

Hœrest dû'z, dû! hœrest dû'z! idoch
Hearest thou-it, thou! hearest thou-it! however

lebet dîn grôze kazze noch?«
lives thy great cat still?«

Er luoget' ûf und sach ez an,
He looked up and saw it at,

sust antwurt' im der bûman:
thus answered to-it the farmer:

»jâ jâ, mîniu grôze kazze,
»yes yes, my great cat,

dir ze truzze unt ze trazze
to-thee in defiance and in spite

lebet sie, dû bœsez wihtel, noch,
lives she, thou wicked little-wight, still,

sam mir daz öhsel und daz joch,
as-help me the little-ox and the yoke,

vünf jungen sie mir hînt gewan,
five young she to-me tonight bore,

diu sint schœne und wolgetân,
they are fair and well-made,

lanksîtik, wîz und herlîch,
long-flanked, white and splendid,

der alten kazzen alle gelîch.« —
to-the old cat all like.«—

»Vünf jungen?« sprach daz schretelîn.
»Five young?« spoke the little-goblin.

»jâ,« sprach er »ûf die triuwe mîn;
»yes,« spoke he »upon the faith my;

loufe hin und schouwe sie,
run hence and behold them,

dun [en] gesæhe sô schœner kazzen nie:
thou [—] sawest so of-fair cats never:

besich doch, ob ez wâr sî.« —
look yet, whether it true be.«—

»pfî dich!« sprach daz schretel »pfî!
»fie on-thee!« spoke the goblin »fie!

Sol ich sie schouwen? wê mir wart;
Shall I them behold? woe to-me became;

nein, nein, ich kum' niht ûf die vart;
no, no, I come not on the journey;

sint ir nû sehs worden,
(if)-are they now six become,

sie begünden mich ermorden;
they would-begin me to-murder;

diu eine tet mir ê sô wê.
the one did to-me before so woe.

in dînen hof ich nimmermê
into thy court I nevermore

kume diewîle ich hân mîn leben.«
come the-while I have my life.«

diu rede kwam dem bûman eben;
the speech came to-the farmer evenly;

daz schretel sâ vor im verswant.
the goblin at-once before him vanished.

der bûman kêrte heim zehant,
the farmer turned home at-once,

in sînen hof zôch er sich wider,
into his court drew he himself back,

und was dâ mit gemache sider,
and was there with ease afterward,

er und sîn wîp und sîniu kint,
he and his woman and his children,

diu lebten dâ mit vröuden sint.
they lived there with joys since.

Die böse Frau

XIX · THE WICKED WIFE: THE MARRIAGE

A husband laments his marriage: on their first night they were served a dish salted with grief and a wine of anger and hatred, and they have contradicted each other ever since, she saying white whenever he says black. Life with an evil wife is a martyrdom worse than any saint's, for it never ends. He contrasts happy marriages and the heroes of legend, whose fights never wounded them, while she has wounded him forty-five times. Then he tells his battles with her: the pear, the swingle when he brings nothing home, the scutching board broken over his head, the mortar, and the fight with crutch, poker, and stick.

Ez was ein süeziu stunde
It was a sweet hour

dô got der ê begunde,
when God the marriage began,

dâmit der man und sîn wîp
there-with the man and his woman

beide sêle unde lîp
both soul and body

vor gote suln behalten
before God shall keep

und des himelrîches walten.
and of-the heaven's-kingdom rule.

phlegent sî der rehten ê,
(if)-tend they the right marriage,

sô wirt in an der sêle wê
so becomes to-them in the soul woe

nimmer in der helle grunt:
never in the hell's ground:

daz ist mir von den buochen kunt.
that is to-me from the books known.

got sîs gelobt, mit mîner konen
God be-for-it praised, with my wife

wil ich niht ze helle wonen.
will I not in hell dwell.

ez mac wol wesen ein lîp
it may well be one body

beide ich und mîn wîp.
both I and my woman.

seht ob daz sî ein triuwe:
see whether that be a faithfulness:

mîn freude ist ir riuwe,
my joy is her grief,

ir riuwe ist mîn wunne.
her grief is my delight.

got uns beiden gunne
God to-us both grant

daz wir müezen lange leben.
that we may long live.

ir wart vil nâch mit mir vergeben:
to-her was very nearly by me poisoned:

dâwider gap sî mir ein tranc,
there-against gave she to-me a drink,

daz mir naht und tac was lanc
that to-me night and day was long

sît die wîle ich hân den lîp.
since the while I have the life.

die vergift gap mir mîn wîp.
the poison gave to-me my woman.

dô ich bî ir unz an den tac
when I by her until to the day

niwan die êrsten naht gelac
only the first night lay

(gote wil ichz immer klagen),
(to-God will I-it ever lament),

dô wart ein phannèl dar getragen
then was a little-pan thither carried

mit eiern in dem smalze.
with eggs in the lard.

daz was mit einem salze
that was with a salt

gesalzen, heizet riuwe:
salted, is-called grief:

daz smalz was untriuwe,
the lard was faithlessness,

diu eier angest unde nôt.
the eggs fear and distress.

darzuo truoc man uns ein brôt
thereto carried one to-us a bread

an daz bette zuo der phannen:
to the bed to the pan:

daz was grînen unde zannen.
that was whining and snarling.

man truoc uns bêden ein môraz,
one carried to-us both a mulberry-wine,

dâvon gie vil swinder wâz:
there-from went very sharp smell:

ez was getempert in ein vaz
it was tempered into a vat

beide zorn unde haz,
both anger and hatred,

darzuo gewerre unde nît,
thereto strife and envy,

beide hazzen unde strît.
both hating and quarrel.

daz selbe trinken trunken wir.
the same drink drank we.

von dem trinken bin ich ir
from the drink am I to-her

noch hiute vînt und sî mir sam
still today hostile and she to-me likewise

und immermêr einander gram.
and evermore each-other hostile.

Daz wir zesamen komen sîn,
That we together come are,

daran hât mîn trähtîn
thereon has my Lord

gewendet allen sînen vlîz.
turned all his diligence.

und spriche ich swarz, sî sprichet wîz;
and (if)-speak I black, she speaks white;

spriche ich wîz, sî sprichet swarz.
(if)-speak I white, she speaks black.

nû hüete sich umb den nacsnarz
now beware himself for the neck-snare

swer êlîchen neme ein wîp:
whoever in-marriage take a woman:

daz râtet im mîn tumber lîp.
that counsels him my foolish body.

er hât unheiles sich versehen,
he has of-misfortune himself expected,

geschiht im sam mir ist geschehen.
(if)-happens to-him as to-me is happened.

si ist mir ein leider nâchgebûr.
she is to-me a loathsome neighbor.

spriche ich guot, sî sprichet sûr;
(if)-speak I good, she speaks sour;

spriche ich sûr, sî sprichet guot.
(if)-speak I sour, she speaks good.

wir haben ungelîchen muot.
we have unlike spirit.

seht ob daz sî ein rehtiu ê:
see whether that be a right marriage:

swaz mir tuot wol daz tuot ir wê;
whatever to-me does well that does to-her woe;

swaz ir tuot wê daz tuot mir wol.
whatever to-her does woe that does to-me well.

swenne ich bî ir wonen sol,
whenever I by her dwell shall,

sô tæte sanfter mir der tôt.
so would-do gentler to-me the death.

spriche ich gel, sî sprichet rôt;
(if)-speak I yellow, she speaks red;

spriche ich rôt, sî sprichet gel:
(if)-speak I red, she speaks yellow:

spriche ich laz, sî sprichet snel;
(if)-speak I slow, she speaks swift;

spriche ich snel, sî sprichet laz.
(if)-speak I swift, she speaks slow.

alsô trage wir immer haz,
so bear we ever hatred,

ich gên ir und sî gên mir.
I toward her and she toward me.

slah ich sî eins, sî sleht mich zwir.
(if)-strike I her once, she strikes me twice.

Swaz ie daz ein und ander tuot
Whatever ever the one and other does

daz dünket uns dewederz guot.
that seems to-us neither good.

sî ziuhet hin, ich ziuhe her.
she pulls hence, I pull hither.

wâfen hiute und immermêr
alarm today and evermore

der nœte die ich hân von ir!
for-the distresses which I have from her!

dâmit sî lîden muoz mit mir.
there-with she suffer must with me.

spriche ich guot, sî sprichet übel:
(if)-speak I good, she speaks evil:

spriche ich krump alsam ein swübel,
(if)-speak I crooked like a scroll,

sî sprichet sleht alsam ein zein;
she speaks straight like a rod;

spriche ich herter danne ein stein,
(if)-speak I harder than a stone,

sî sprichet weicher danne ein blî.
she speaks softer than a lead.

seht welh geselleschaft daz sî.
see what companionship that be.

sprich ich ein wort, sî sprichet driu;
(if)-speak I one word, she speaks three;

gên vier worten sibeniu
against four words seven

kan sî unnützes klaffen.
can she of-useless babbling.

unsælic sîn die phaffen,
unblessed be the priests,

der bâbest, die kardinâle,
the pope, the cardinals,

sine erlouben zeinem mâle
they-unless allow at-one time

wandel iegelîchem man.
change to-every man.

swie ich der buoche niene kan,
however I of-the books nothing know,

ich hân doch tiutsche gelesen:
I have yet German read:

ez möhte ein man sus baz genesen,
it might a man thus better be-saved,

behalten sêle unde lîp,
keep soul and body,

danne ob er ein übel wîp
than if he an evil woman

sol haben unz an sînen tôt.
shall have until to his death.

daz sint zweier hande nôt,
those are of-two kinds distress,

der sêle und ouch des lîbes:
of-the soul and also of-the body:

des sînen übelen wîbes
of-the his evil woman

gefreut er sich niht halben tac;
gladdens he himself not half day;

und darzuo der sêle slac:
and thereto of-the soul blow:

der vergizzet er vor zorne;
it forgets he for anger;

des ist sî diu verlorne.
for-that is she the lost-one.

Und hieze mich ieman affen,
And (if)-called me anyone ape,

sô wolte ich mit den phaffen
so would I with the priests

gerne zallen zîten
gladly at-all times

umb die wârheit strîten.
about the truth strive.

swaz aber ich dar umbe erlit,
whatever however I there about suffered,

daz mich des ieman überstrit,
that me of-it anyone outargued,

prôbst, abbet und pharrære,
provost, abbot and parish-priest,

michel bezzer wære
much better were

sô getâniu ê verkorn
so made marriage forsworn

dan mit übelm wîbe diu sêle verlorn.
than with evil woman the soul lost.

ich rede ez niht von mîner nôt:
I speak it not of my distress:

dem selben wære ein kurzer tôt
to-the same were a short death

noch bezzer snelliclîche erliten
yet better swiftly suffered

danne ob er in riuwen siten
than if he in grief's manner

müeste leben drîzic jâr:
must live thirty years:

wande er in riuwen vâr
for he in grief's peril

sich nider leget und ûf stât,
himself down lays and up stands,

in riuwen sitzt, in riuwen gât,
in grief sits, in grief goes,

in riuwen slæft, in riuwen wachet,
in grief sleeps, in grief wakes,

sîn herze in riuwen krachet,
his heart in grief cracks,

in riuwen trinkt, in riuwen izzet;
in grief drinks, in grief eats;

mit riuwen er vergizzet
with grief he forgets

swaz im liebes ie geschach;
whatever to-him of-pleasure ever happened;

sîn riuwe ist aller riuwen dach,
his grief is of-all griefs roof,

sîn riuwe ist aller riuwen
his grief is of-all griefs

gruntveste entriuwen;
foundation truly;

ich wil im riuwe senden
I will to-him grief send

neben, hinden, vor, zen wenden.
beside, behind, before, at-the walls.

swer mit übelen wîben nôt
whoever with evil women distress

sol haben unz an sînen tôt,
shall have until to his death,

der selbe klage mir sîn leit;
he self lament to-me his sorrow;

sam tuon ich im mîn arbeit:
likewise do I to-him my hardship:

sîn herze enwære steinen,
his heart unless-were of-stone,

mîn nôt muoz er beweinen,
my distress must he bewail,

sît er ist mîn geselle:
since he is my companion:

hœre waz ich im klagen welle.
hear what I to-him lament will.

Swaz ich wil daz wil sî niht,
Whatever I will that will she not,

swaz sî wil daz geschiht
whatever she will that happens

mit mînem willen selten.
with my will seldom.

und möhte ich ir vergelten
and (if)-might I to-her repay

daz zehende leit daz sî mir tuot,
the tenth sorrow that she to-me does,

ich wære immer wolgemuot.
I would-be ever well-spirited.

swenn ich mit ir gemelîchen wil,
whenever I with her jest will,

sô sleht sî mir slege vil
so strikes she to-me blows many

ûf hende und ûf die knübele,
on hands and on the knuckles,

sô rehte gruntübele
so right thoroughly-evil

als ich wæn ieman wizze.
as I ween anyone knows.

swaz ich gerne izze,
whatever I gladly eat,

durch nieman sî daz æze.
for no-one she that would-eat.

so ist sî sô muotes ræze,
so is she so of-spirit fierce,

ob sî worden wære ein man:
if she become were a man:

noch küener wærs dan Aspriân.
yet bolder would-be-she than Asprian.

Dâwider hân ich einen muot:
There-against have I a mind:

allez daz sî dunket guot
all that her seems good

daz ist mir gar ein galle.
that is to-me wholly a gall.

seht wie iu gevalle
see how to-you pleases

unser beider ordenunge.
of-us both order.

sî giht ez gê von sprunge
she avows it go from spring

und sî ein anegenge;
and be a beginning;

sî wart mir nie sô strenge,
she was to-me never so harsh,

sî werde mir noch strenger.
she become to-me yet harsher.

mir wart daz phat nie enger
to-me was the path never narrower

daz mich gên freuden leitet;
which me toward joys leads;

die strâze sî mir breitet
the road she to-me broadens

diu mich gên riuwen wîsen sol.
which me toward grief show shall.

und was mir etewenne wol
and was to-me sometime well

und hâte an freuden werdekeit,
and had in joys worth,

daz ist ze spelle mir geseit.
that is as fable to-me told.

Swer mit übeln wîben
Whoever with evil women

die lenge wil belîben,
the length will remain,

ich gelîche ir eines swære
I liken of-them one's heaviness

für eines marterære,
before a martyr's,

der durch gotes willen
who for God's will

sich hie bevor liez villen,
himself here before let flay,

und ûz des hût man senwen sneit,
and out-of whose skin one sinews cut,

und die marter ûf dem rôste leit,
and the martyrdom on the grill suffered,

durch den man schôz die phîle
through whom one shot the arrows

und die îsenînen kîle
and the iron wedges

sluoc durch fuoz und durch hant,
struck through foot and through hand,

und den man durch diu reder want.
and whom one through the wheels twisted.

swie man in briet, swie man in sôt,
however one him roasted, however one him boiled,

iedoch was ez ein kurzer tôt
yet was it a short death

und nam ende in einem tage.
and took end in one day.

nâch der buochmeister sage
after the of-book-masters saying

habent sî diz kurze leben
have they this short life

umb daz êwige gegeben
for the eternal given

und sint der engel genôz.
and are of-the angels peers.

ir marter wart nie sô grôz,
their martyrdom was never so great,

disiu sî verre
this-one be far

grœzer unde merre.
greater and more.

swer ein übel wîp hât,
whoever an evil woman has,

er liget, sitzet oder stât,
he lies, sits or stands,

er slâfe oder er wache,
he sleep or he wake,

er lebt mit ungemache.
he lives with discomfort.

Wol in wart der sô gevert
Well to-him became who so fared

daz im ein wîp ist beschert
that to-him a woman is allotted

darnâch als im sîn muot gert.
after as to-him his mind desires.

den hât got vil wol gewert,
him has God very well granted,

der mac die sêle wol bewarn,
he may the soul well guard,

wil er mit reinen zühten varn
(if)-will he with pure breeding fare

hie in disem lîbe
here in this life

mit sînem guoten wîbe.
with his good woman.

tuot er allez des sî gert,
(if)-does he all of-what she desires,

ob sî in des hinwider gewert
if she him of-it in-return grants

mit triuwen nâch dem willen sîn,
with faithfulness after the will his,

daz ist der geloube mîn,
that is the belief my,

und habent sî got vor ougen
and (if)-have they God before eyes

(diu rede ist gar unlougen),
(the speech is wholly undeniable),

die varnt in Abrahâmes schôz,
they fare into Abraham's bosom,

dâ Lucifer und sîne genôz
whence Lucifer and his fellows

wurden von verstôzen,
were from thrust,

dô er sich genôzen
when he himself equal

wolte dem oberisten got.
would to-the highest God.

swelch wîp ir mannes gebot
whichever woman her man's command

behaltet an ieglîcher stet,
keeps in every place,

und tuot er gar nâch ir bet
and (if)-does he wholly after her request

williclîchen als er sol,
willingly as he shall,

die lebent mit einander wol.
they live with each-other well.

ob sî vor valsche ist behuot,
if she from falseness is guarded,

hât er sô manlîchen muot
(if)-has he so manly spirit

daz er sîne sinne
that he his senses

wendet von der minne
turns from the love

diu üppic und mit sünden sî,
which wanton and with sins be,

sint sî des bêdenthalben frî,
(if)-are they of-it on-both-sides free,

ist ez in gar unmære,
(if)-is it to-them wholly indifferent,

für einen clûsenære
before a hermit

lobe ich ir beider lîp,
praise I of-them both body,

den guoten man und sîn wîp.
the good man and his woman.

ir beider riuwe, ob diu sô stê
of-them both grief, if it so stand

daz diu sîn durch ir herze gê
that the his through her heart go

und diu ir hinwider durch daz sîn,
and the her in-return through the his,

des gibe ich iu die triuwe mîn,
for-that give I to-you the faith my,

swer âne got die scheidet,
whoever without God them parts,

daz sich der got leidet.
that himself to-the God makes-loathsome.

Diu rede ist leider mir ein spel.
The speech is alas to-me a fable.

sælde diu ist sinewel
fortune it is round

und walzet umbe als ein rat.
and rolls around as a wheel.

dô ich sî mit vlîze bat
when I her with diligence asked

daz sî mir ze wîbe
that she to-me as woman

gæbe diu mîm lîbe
gave one-who to-my body

wære wol ze mâzen,
were well in measure,

daz hât sî leider lâzen,
that has she alas left,

und hât mir ein wîp gegeben
and has to-me a woman given

daz bî mir alle die nu leben
that by me all who now live

immer sîn gebezzert.
ever are bettered.

mîn kunst ist vermezzert.
my art is knife-cut.

ich wânde ê ich genæme sî
I weened before I took her

daz inder zwô oder drî
that anywhere two or three

lebeten alsô guote:
lived so good:

des ist ir unzemuote
of-that is to-her displeasing

daz sî bî guoten wîben
that she by good women

mit lobe welle belîben.
with praise will remain.

Maneger sagt von Witegen nôt
Many tells of Witege's distress

(nu vernemet ouch die mîn durch got)
(now hear also the mine for God)

und sagt von Dietrîche:
and tells of Dietrich:

der nôt wac ungelîche
the distress weighed unlike

der mînen, des ich wæne.
to-the mine, as I ween.

sî vâhten daz die spæne
they fought that the chips

von ir schildes rande stuben
from their shield's rim flew

und sich diu breter gar zerkluben;
and themselves the boards wholly split;

ir helme wurden fiuwervar:
their helmets became fire-colored:

darunder in doch niht enwar.
there-under to-them yet nothing was.

sus vâhten sî vil manegen tac,
thus fought they very many day,

daz ir deweder nie gelac
that of-them either never lay

tôt von swerte noch von sper.
dead by sword nor by spear.

der vaht hin und jener her:
this-one fought hence and that-one hither:

einer sluoc den andern nider;
one struck the other down;

so erholt sich diser des hinwider
so recovered himself this-one of-it in-return

und sluoc den andern ûf diu knie.
and struck the other onto the knees.

sî vâhten alsô daz sî nie
they fought so that they never

von swertslegen wurden wunt.
from sword-blows became wounded.

diu nôt der mînen ist unkunt.
the distress to-the mine is unknown.

ich bin wol fünf und vierzic stunt
I am well five and forty times

von mînem wîbe worden wunt,
by my woman become wounded,

âne stôzen gên dem kopfe
without thrusting toward the head

und roufen hâr ûz dem schopfe:
and tearing hair out-of the forelock:

der zühte ist âne mâzen vil;
of-the breeding is without measure much;

dâvon ich iu niht sprechen wil.
there-from I to-you not speak will.

Ich hete niht sîe
I had not her

ganzer tage drîe,
whole days three,

ein unzuht sî mir nie vertruoc:
an ill-breeding she to-me never pardoned:

mit einem knütel sî mich sluoc
with a cudgel she me struck

ob dem ougen durch daz hirn
above the eye through the brain

niwan umb ein gebrâten birn.
only for a roasted pear.

die zukte ich ir ûz einer gluot:
it snatched I from-her out-of an ember:

dô sluoc sî mich daz mir daz bluot
then struck she me that to-me the blood

ûf die füeze nider ran.
onto the feet down ran.

niwan daz ich ir entran,
only that I from-her escaped,

ez wære gewesen dô mîn tôt.
it would-have been then my death.

daz ist von ir mîn êrstiu nôt.
that is from her my first distress.

Swenne ich nâch gewinne var,
Whenever I after gain go,

so ist durft daz mir der mûsar
so is need that to-me the buzzard

über die strâze fliege
over the road fly

und mich des niht entriege.
and me of-it not deceive.

ob ich ir niht enbringe,
if I to-her not bring,

lanc breit ist ir swinge
long broad is her swingle

und ist hagenbuochîn;
and is of-hornbeam;

die sleht sî durch daz houbet mîn.
it strikes she through the head my.

daz selbe tet sî hiure.
the same did she this-year.

so getâne âventiure
so made adventures

wârn hern Walthern unkunt,
were to-sir Walther unknown,

dô er und mîn frou Hildegunt
when he and my lady Hildegund

fuoren durch diu rîche
fared through the realms

alsô behagenlîche.
so pleasantly.

vernemt durch iuwer hövescheit,
hear by your courtliness,

daz ist von ir mîn ander leit.
that is from her my second sorrow.

Sî saz eins tages unde dahs:
She sat one day and scutched:

dô viel ein wênigez vlahs
then fell a little flax

in die gluot ûf einen kolen.
into the ember onto a coal.

von ir zorne muoste ich dolen
from her anger must I endure

grôzen schaden âne frumen.
great harm without profit.

sî sluoc ze zwein hundert drumen
she struck into two hundred pieces

daz dehsschît über mînen kopf,
the scutching-board over my head,

daz ich gie umbe als ein topf
that I went around as a top

und sturzte ir under füeze nider.
and tumbled to-her under feet down.

dâ lac ich lange ê daz ich wider
there lay I long before that I again

mich kûme ûf gerihte.
myself scarcely up raised.

sî nam ze mîner gesihte
she took in my sight

in die hant daz vorhîn schît
into the hand the before-mentioned board

und sluoc mir eine wunden wît
and struck me a wound wide

mit dem dehsîsen.
with the scutching-iron.

durch nôt muoz ich grîsen
from distress must I grow-gray

und alten ê vil maniger tage.
and grow-old before very many days.

daz ist von ir mîn drittiu klage.
that is from her my third lament.

Ez ist noch ein kindes spil
It is yet a child's play

dâwider ich nu sprechen wil
there-against I now speak will

von dem vierden kampfe.
of the fourth combat.

daz geschach bî einem stampfe,
that happened by a mortar,

dâ lac inne brîe.
there lay inside porridge.

dô hiez ich niuwen sîe.
then bade I to-pound her.

dô sprach sî 'nu niu ouch duo!'
then spoke she 'now pound also thou!'

ich sprach 'jâ niuwe ich iezuo!'
I spoke 'yes pound I at-once!'

dô sprach sî 'waz ist umbe diu?
then spoke she 'what is about it?

stant ûf balde unde niu!'
stand up quickly and pound!'

ich sprach 'nein ich entriuwen!'
I spoke 'no I in-truth!'

sî sprach 'jâ muostu niuwen!'
she spoke 'yes must-thou pound!'

vor grimme ich die hende krampf
for fury I the hands clenched

und trat oben ûf den stampf.
and stepped above onto the mortar.

vor vorhten und vor riuwen
for fears and for grief

muost ich den brîen niuwen.
must I the porridge pound.

ich hete in baz genouwen,
I would-have it better pounded,

het sî mich niht zeblouwen.
had she me not beaten-blue.

daz ich ir niht guotes nou,
that I for-her nothing good pounded,

daz was des schult daz sî mich blou.
that was of-it guilt that she me beat.

ez erwande ir bliuwen
it ended her beating

an mir vil schœnez niuwen.
on me very fair pounding.

Welt ir nu merken hie zehant
Will you now mark here at-once

waz mich des niuwens hât erwant?
what me of-the pounding has ended?

ich bat sî treten hindersich:
I bade her tread behind-herself:

sî sprach 'ich lieze ê hâhen mich.'
she spoke 'I would-let before hang myself.'

dô sprach ich 'daz wirde et duo!'
then spoke I 'that become but thou!'

zehant griffen wir darzuo.
at-once grasped we thereto.

ich begunde zucken
I began to-snatch

den schürstap, sî die krucken.
the poker, she the crutch.

ich wil niwan der wârheit jehen:
I will only the truth avow:

sî liez mich nie ûf gesehen;
she let me never up look;

mit swinden slegen sî mich treip,
with swift blows she me drove,

unz ich bî der tür beleip.
until I by the door remained.

iedoch gap mir got die maht
yet gave to-me God the might

daz ich alsô hinwider vaht;
that I so in-return fought;

ich sluoc slac nâch slage
I struck blow after blow

(ez ist wâr daz ich iu sage):
(it is true that I to-you tell):

dô ich sî treip unz an die banc,
when I her drove until to the bench,

zehant tet sî den widerwanc:
at-once did she the counter-turn:

'lâzâ nâher rucken!'
'let-ah nearer move!'

dô vazte sî die krucken
then grasped she the crutch

vaste in beide hende;
fast in both hands;

sî sluoc mich ûf die lende.
she struck me on the loins.

den andern slac sî erreit
the other blow she reached

(daz was mir dô und immer leit)
(that was to-me then and ever sorrowful)

und traf mich hinden ûf den bürel
and hit me behind on the rump

daz mir emphiel der ovenstürel.
that from-me fell the oven-poker.

sî sluoc ie den andern slac
she struck ever the other blow

daz er für den êrsten wac,
that it before the first weighed,

unz sî mich treip an den oven.
until she me drove to the oven.

dâ strûchtes über einen schroven
there stumbled-she over a clod

und sluoc mir der krucken ort
and struck me the crutch's end

durch daz houbet daz ich mort
through the head that I murdered

vil nâhen von dem slage was:
very near from the blow was:

doch half mir got daz ich genas.
yet helped me God that I survived.

Tispê unde Pyramus
Thisbe and Pyramus

gevohten wênic habent sus,
fought little have thus,

die sich durch minne stâchen
who themselves for love stabbed

und enwesten waz sî râchen.
and not-knew what they avenged.

der sit ist nu verkêret,
the custom is now turned,

des sî got immer gêret:
for-that be God ever honored:

bî diser zît ligt nieman tôt
at this time lies no-one dead

von minne noch von senender nôt:
from love nor from longing distress:

der rîche senet sich umb den wîn
the rich-one longs himself for the wine

mêr dan nâch der frouwen sîn;
more than after the lady his;

sô hât der arme senende nôt
so has the poor-one longing distress

tägelîchen umb daz brôt.
daily for the bread.

Ich gedâhte in mînem muote
I thought in my mind

'herre got der guote!
'lord God the good!

sol mir ein wîp an gesigen,
(if)-shall to-me a woman on conquer,

und vor ir sigelôs geligen,
and before her victoryless lie,

daz ist schade unde scham.'
that is harm and shame.'

ein schît ich ab der âsen nam.
a stick I off the rafter took.

dô was ouch ir diu krucke enzwei;
then was also to-her the crutch in-two;

sî nam daz lenger drumzei,
she took the longer stump,

und vâhten eine schanze:
and fought a chance:

ich wær bî einem tanze
I would-have at a dance

die wîle michels baz gewesen,
the while much better been,

od ich hiete tiusche gelesen
or I would-have German read

von dem werden Parzivâle,
of the worthy Parzival,

ê daz ich die quâle
before that I the torment

von ir slegen hiete erliten.
from her blows had suffered.

alsô vil wênic hât gestriten
so very little has striven

Êrec mit froun Ênîten
Erec with lady Enite

mit prügelen und mit schîten.
with cudgels and with sticks.

Die böse Frau

XX · THE WICKED WIFE: THE BATTLES

The husband's battles continue. Coming home from a wedding empty-handed, he is kissed by his spinning wife for the goods she expects, then struck by her flung distaff. Another day she drives him through house and yard with a stick; he shields himself with a stool, which loses three legs, and strikes back, but she repays every blow, breaking a rib and his kneecap. At last three friends part them; he is revived with water while she boasts she could fight all the heathens. Told to be silent, he keeps still as a mouse, fearing she will break the peace.

Hœret aber alsam ê:
Hear again like before:

dô ergie wê unde wê
then came-about woe and woe

von mînem wîbe und von mir.
from my woman and from me.

sî traf mich; daz galt ich ir.
she hit me; that repaid I to-her.

sî sluoc slege ungezalt;
she struck blows uncounted;

vil kûme ich ir den dritten galt.
very scarcely I to-her the third repaid.

ir spil stuont ze allen gelten;
her game stood at all stakes;

ich verbôt ez vil selten.
I forbade it very seldom.

sî trat mir zuo mit île,
she stepped to-me to with haste,

sî liez mir nie die wîle
she let me never the while

daz ich ez eines hiet verboten.
that I it once had forbidden.

sî hiez mich dicke zochen, kroten,
she called me often lout, toad,

daz ich mich torste gewern.
that I myself dared defend.

sî sprach 'jâ kan dich niht ernern
she spoke 'yes can thee nothing save

vor mir, wan ich dîn meister bin.'
from me, for I thy master am.'

zehant warf sî die krucken hin
at-once threw she the crutch away

und underlief mir daz schît
and ran-under to-me the stick

(daz klagte ich dô und immer sît)
(that lamented I then and ever since)

und sluoc mir einen mûlslac
and struck me a mouth-blow

und warf mich rehte als einen sac
and threw me right as a sack

bî dem hâre under sich.
by the hair under herself.

sî kratzet unde sluoc mich
she scratched and struck me

mit der fiuste in den munt.
with the fist into the mouth.

sô getâniu minne unkunt
so made love unknown

was dem herren Ênêas
was to-the lord Aeneas

dô er von Troye komen was
when he from Troy come was

ûf die burc ze Cartâgô
up-to the castle at Carthage

zuo der frouwen Dîdô.
to the lady Dido.

Sît ich ir êrste künde vie,
Since I with-her first acquaintance caught,

sît des selben tages nie
since the same day never

ir hazzes wider mich zeran.
her hatred toward me ran-out.

sî saz eins âbents unde span:
she sat one evening and spun:

ich was von einer hôchzît komen;
I was from a wedding come;

dô sî daz het vernomen,
when she that had heard,

gegen mir sî balde lief,
toward me she quickly ran,

mit den armen sî mich umbeswief,
with the arms she me around-swung,

sî wânde deich ir bræhte guot:
she weened that-I to-her brought goods:

des truoc sî mir sô holden muot.
for-that bore she to-me so loving mind.

sî kuste mich mêr danne zwir,
she kissed me more than twice,

sî sprach ‘wis got unde mir,
she spoke ‘be to-God and to-me,

trûtgeselle, willekomen!'
darling-companion, welcome!'

dô sî daz het vernomen
when she that had heard

daz ich ir niht brâhte,
that I to-her nothing brought,

zehant ich ir versmâhte;
at-once I to-her was-despised;

sî lie die hende slîfen dan
she let the hands slip thence

und sach mich harte dwerhes an.
and looked me very crosswise at.

alrêrst ich mich versinnet
first-of-all I myself realized

daz sî mich sêrer minnet
that she me more-sorely loves

umb mîn guot dan umbe mich.
for my goods than for me.

sî sprach vil übellîch hindersich
she spoke very wickedly behind-herself

'warumbe hâst du mir niht brâht?
'why hast thou to-me nothing brought?

und ist dir ninder des gedâht
and is to-thee nowhere of-it thought

wes ich sol leben und dîniu kint?
by-what I shall live and thy children?

wærens künege die hinne sint,
were-they kings who inside are,

du genüzzest ir sô kleine
thou wouldst-profit of-them as little

sam ob wir wæren eine.
as if we were alone.

du emphindest mîner tucke.'
thou feelest my malice.'

sî vie daz überrucke
she seized the distaff

und swanc ez von der hende
and swung it from the hand

alsô daz ich den ende
so that I the end

vil nâhen het aldâ genomen,
very near would-have there taken,

und wærez an die want niht komen.
and were-it to the wall not come.

doch traf mich der rocken ort,
yet hit me the distaff's end,

swie verre ich sæze von ir dort,
however far I sat from her there,

alsô sêre an den giel
so sorely on the maw

daz mir der gloube gar emphiel.
that from-me the belief wholly fell.

sus gelac ich bî der wende.
thus lay I by the wall.

mit ir wîzen hende
with her white hands

Isalde, der sælden krône,
Isolde, the of-blessings crown,

diu sich ie vil schône
who herself ever very finely

behüetet hât vor schanden,
guarded has from disgraces,

jâ wæne sî Tristranden
yes ween-I she Tristan

selten sluoc mit rocken
seldom struck with distaffs

noch gezogte bî den locken
nor pulled by the locks

ûf die füeze nie ze tal,
onto the feet never to valley,

als mich diu mîne âne zal
as me the mine without number

vil dicke hât geswenket.
very often has swung.

swer marterære gedenket,
whoever of-martyrs thinks,

der lâze ouch sich erbarmen
he let also himself have-pity

über mich vil armen.
over me very poor-one.

Welt ir nu hœren mêre
Will you now hear more

von grôzem herzensêre?
of great heart's-sorrow?

ich kom aber eines tages:
I came again one day:

des wart ich herre maneges slages,
of-that became I lord of-many blow,

leider guotes lære.
alas of-goods empty.

dâvon leit ich swære;
there-from suffered I heaviness;

die mac ich lange zeigen.
it may I long show.

stürb ieman wan die veigen,
(if)-died anyone except the doomed,

sô wære ich tôt vor maneger zît.
so would-be I dead before many time.

hie gât ez ûf einen strît:
here goes it to a strife:

ez was ir itewîzen
it was her reproaching

'waran sol ich enbîzen
'wherewith shall I breakfast

od gên dem âbende ezzen?
or toward the evening eat?

dîn hât got vergezzen'
of-thee has God forgotten'

sprach sî 'vor mîner hende.'
spoke she 'before my hand.'

dô zuktes von der wende
then snatched-she from the wall

ein liehtschît, daz was swære.
a light-stick, that was heavy.

hie gât ez an ein dære,
here goes it to a din,

dâ wart lachen tiure.
there became laughing dear.

doch gap mir got ze stiure
yet gave to-me God as support

ein eichen übersticke
an oak lintel

und einen stuol der dicke
and a stool which thick

was und niht ze swære:
was and not too heavy:

der wart mîn buckelære.
it became my buckler.

mir wær dâ schade gewahsen,
to-me would-have there harm grown,

niwan daz ich ze Sahsen
only that I at Saxony

wîlen lernte schirmen.
once learned to-fence.

sî liez mich nie gehirmen.
she let me never rest.

den stuol ich dicke für mich warf:
the stool I often before me threw:

doch sluoc sî mich daz ich mich snarf
yet struck she me that I myself huddled

bî dem buckelære,
by the buckler,

swie nütze et er mir wære.
however useful but it to-me were.

Hiete meister Hildebrant
Had master Hildebrand

sô sêre verhouwen schildes rant
so sorely hewn shield's rim

als sî mir den stuol zersluoc,
as she to-me the stool smashed,

daz wære et im vil und genuoc.
that would-be but to-him much and enough.

sî ist her Dietrîch ze mir:
she is sir Dietrich to me:

ouwê daz ich gegen ir
alas that I toward her

niht her Witege werden mac;
not sir Witege become may;

sô gülte ich ir den dritten slac.
so would-repay I to-her the third blow.

mit slegen tet sî mir vil wê,
with blows did she to-me much woe,

noch drîstunt dicker dan der snê
yet thrice thicker than the snow

ûz den lüften rêret sich.
out-of the air sheds itself.

mit dem schîte sluoc sî mich
with the stick struck she me

ûz disem winkel hin in jenen,
out-of this corner hence into that,

sî kunde slac nâch slage denen,
she could blow after blow stretch,

sî sluoc mich hin, sî sluoc mich her,
she struck me hence, she struck me hither,

mit slegen treip sî mich entwer,
with blows drove she me crosswise,

sî sluoc mich wider unde für,
she struck me back and forth,

sî sluoc mich ûz zuo der tür,
she struck me out to the door,

sî sluoc mich verre in den hof.
she struck me far into the court.

ez geschuof nie kein bischof
it ordained never any bishop

sündæren sô gedîhte
to-sinners so thick

mit besmen an der bîhte
with brooms at the confession

sô sî mich mit dem schîte sluoc.
as she me with the stick struck.

sî sluoc daz ie der slac getruoc
she struck that ever the blow bore

'slahâ, slach!' über rucke.
'strike-ah, strike!' over back.

ich het dâ ze Insbrucke
I had there at Innsbruck

vil guoten Bôzenære
very good Bolzano-wine

getrunken für die swære
drunk against the heaviness

und für die grôzen arbeit
and against the great hardship

die ich von ir slegen leit.
which I from her blows suffered.

Dô sî kom an die wîte,
When she came to the open,

sî trat mir mit dem schîte
she stepped to-me with the stick

mit slegen zuo ie baz und baz.
with blows to ever better and better.

mîn selbes ich doch niht vergaz:
my self I yet not forgot:

ich begunde zecken
I began to-tease

hinwider mit dem stecken,
in-return with the stick,

unz ich sî treip an den stadel.
until I her drove to the barn.

zehant wart ich âne wadel
at-once became I without whisk

die widervart gelecket.
the return-journey licked.

ir slac unsanfte smecket:
her blow ungently tastes:

des wart ich vil wol gewar.
of-that became I very well aware.

sî sluoc mir ûz dem stuole gar
she struck to-me out-of the stool wholly

der vier stecken drîe.
of-the four legs three.

solt ich niht fürhten sie,
should I not fear her,

sô wære ich gar ein tôre.
so would-be I wholly a fool.

der ein fuor an mîn ôre,
the one went at my ear,

daz ez dar nâch vil lange sanc.
that it there after very long sang.

der ander stecke nam den swanc
the other leg took the swing

daz mir diu nase bluote.
that to-me the nose bled.

got vor schaden mich behuote.
God from harm me guard.

der dritte fuor an mîn kinne.
the third went at my chin.

alsô getâner minne
so made love

wârn die gelieben erlân,
were the lovers spared,

Gahmuret und Belakân,
Gahmuret and Belakane,

diu dô Feirefîzen,
who then Feirefiz,

den swarzen und den wîzen,
the black and the white,

gebar von sîner frühte;
bore from his fruit;

sî phlac sô schœner zühte
she tended so fair breeding

und was sô wîplîchen guot:
and was so womanly good:

het er durch sînen frechen muot
had he through his bold spirit

die dannenvart niht genomen,
the departure not taken,

er wære nimmer von ir komen.
he would-have never from her come.

Hie gât ez an ein strîten
Here goes it to a striving

mit prügeln und mit schîten.
with cudgels and with sticks.

gesâhet ir solch vehten ie?
saw you such fighting ever?

mit drischelslegen ez hie gie:
with threshing-blows it here went:

ich hetez nâch, sî hetez vor;
I had-it after, she had-it before;

sî treip mich vaste unz an daz tor.
she drove me fast until to the gate.

daz ich ir slegen niht enpflôch,
that I from-her blows not fled,

daz was des schult, der zûn was hôch,
that was of-it guilt, the fence was high,

daz tor was verslozzen,
the gate was locked,

ein rigel für geschozzen.
a bolt before shot.

do gedâhte ich als ein man tuot
then thought I as a man does

der beide lîp unde guot
who both life and goods

ûf die wâge setzet.
on the balance sets.

mîn zorn was gewetzet
my anger was whetted

gên ir zorne, der was scharf.
toward her anger, which was sharp.

vil sæleclîchen ich gewarf:
very blessedly I threw:

mit dem stecken ich sî traf
with the stick I her hit

daz ir daz bluotige saf
that from-her the bloody sap

ûz wischte durch ganzez vel:
out wiped through whole skin:

des wart sî als ein tôte gel.
of-that became she as a dead-woman yellow.

ich wânde ich het sî nider brâht:
I weened I had her down brought:

des ir doch ninder was gedâht;
of-that to-her yet nowhere was thought;

sî sluoc ûf mich sô dicke
she struck on me so thickly

daz mir des fiures blicke
that to-me of-the fire flashes

vor den ougen glesten.
before the eyes gleamed.

mit starken slegen vesten
with strong blows firm

treip sî mich gên der krippe
drove she me toward the manger

und sluoc mir eine rippe
and struck me a rib

mitten ûf der brust enzwei.
amid on the breast in-two.

'lâzâ hin niht' sî dô schrei:
'let-ah hence not' she then cried:

'ez ist ein anegenge noch.'
'it is a beginning yet.'

sî vazte in beide hende dez bloch,
she grasped in both hands the log,

mit slegen tet sî mir vil wê,
with blows did she to-me much woe,

noch drîstunt dicker dan der snê
yet thrice thicker than the snow

ûz den lüften snîte
out-of the air snows

sluoc sî mit dem schîte
struck she with the stick

ûf mich slege âne zal.
on me blows without number.

heiâ wie slac nâch slage hal!
hey-ah how blow after blow resounded!

der stuol hete sich zerkloben,
the stool would-have itself split,

der stuol von slegen wær zerstoben,
the stool from blows would-have shattered,

wan durch den stuol was ein wimmer.
except through the stool was a knot.

sî hete mirz vertragen nimmer
she would-have to-me-it forgiven never

⟨daz ich ie getraf ze ir⟩.
⟨that I ever hit at her⟩.

wan der stuol, sô hiet sî mir
except the stool, so would-have she to-me

daz houbet mîn zerslagen gar.
the head my smashed wholly.

der stuol was mîn lîpnar,
the stool was my livelihood,

der stuol was mîn houbetdach,
the stool was my head-roof,

der stuol für slege mîn gemach,
the stool against blows my ease,

der stuol was mîn swertes brief,
the stool was my sword's letter,

den stuol ich dicke für mich swief,
the stool I often before me swung,

der stuol was mîn bester trôst;
the stool was my best comfort;
wan durch den stuol het sî belôst
except through the stool would-have she released
mich des mînen verhes;
me of-the my life;
wan durch den stuol, vil dwerhes
except through the stool, very crosswise
wær mîn dinc gestanden;
would-have my thing stood;
wan durch den stuol, ze schanden
except through the stool, to disgrace
wære ich worden an dem tage:
would-have I become on the day:
der stuol nert mich vor manegem slage.
the stool saves me from many blow.
ich lobte den stuol, und künde ich, baz.
I praised the stool, and could I, better.
ûf bezzern stuol nie man gesaz,
on better stool never man sat,
bezzer stuol wart nie gebort;
better stool was never bored;
wan durch den stuol, ich het bekort
except through the stool, I would-have tasted
von ir slegen den ende.
from her blows the end.
ich enphie von ir hende
I received from her hand
vil biulen unde reize.
many bumps and welts.
der wellegen arweize
to-the boiling peas
geschach nie sô wê im kezzel.
happened never so woe in-the kettle.

einen hirzînen vezzel
a deerskin belt

den truoc ich niden umbe mich;
that wore I below around me;

den sluoc sî daz er zarte sich
it struck she that it tore itself

als ein marwez lindenblat.
as a withered linden-leaf.

gehôrt ir ie der nœte gat
heard you ever of-the distresses kind

die sî mir tet und die ich leit?
which she to-me did and which I suffered?

mîn roc, mîn wambîs, noch mîn pheit
my coat, my doublet, nor my shirt

mit slegen sî wênic sparte;
with blows she little spared;

daz sluoc sî deiz sich zarte
that struck she that-it itself tore

hinden unde vor hinabe.
behind and before downward.

doch traf ich sî mit dem stabe
yet hit I her with the staff

niden an den schenkel,
below on the thigh,

ich sluoc sî ûf daz enkel
I struck her on the ankle

daz ez ir nâch was ûz dem lide.
that it to-her nearly was out-of the joint.

zwischen uns was der fride
between us was the peace

leider dâ vil tiure.
alas there very dear.

mir galt diu ungehiure
to-me repaid the monster

sô gâhes an der selben stunt,
so hastily at the same hour,

het ich entlihen ir ein phunt,
had I lent her a pound,

sî wære mir vil selten
she would-be to-me very seldom

sô willic mit ir gelten.
so willing with her repaying.

Manic man der schiltet
Many man he scolds

ob man im niht engiltet:
if one to-him not repays:

ich het sî nie bescholten,
I would-have her never scolded,

het sî mir niht vergolten,
had she to-me not repaid,

und hete ez lâzen âne zorn.
and had it left without anger.

sî galt mir hinden unde vorn,
she repaid me behind and before,

sî galt mir oben unde niden,
she repaid me above and below,

daz ez mich swar ûf allen liden.
that it me ached in all limbs.

ir enkel sî mit willen galt.
her ankle she with will repaid.

sî sint immer ungezalt,
they are ever uncounted,

ir slege ûf mich zewâre.
her blows on me truly.

ez ist in dem jâre
it is in the year

ninder alsô manic tac,
nowhere so many day,

noch drîstunt sô manegen slac
yet thrice so many blow

sluoc sî mir nâch dem kopfe.
struck she me after the head.

ez gewan nie topfe
it got never top

von geiseln solhen umbeswanc
from whips such swinging

als sî mich âne mînen danc
as she me without my thanks

mit slegen umb und umbe treip.
with blows around and around drove.

gehôrt ir ie wie Dietleip
heard you ever how Dietleib

mit dem merwîbe vaht
with the mermaid fought

den langen tac unz an die naht?
the long day until to the night?

daz leben im nieman gehiez.
the life to-him no-one promised.

sî schôz ein stähelînen spiez
she shot a steel spear

breiten unde wessen,
broad and sharp,

gesmidet von siben messen,
forged from seven masses,

als der tihtære sprach,
as the poet spoke,

in die erde, daz in nieman sach,
into the earth, that it no-one saw,

dô sî sîn wolte râmen.
when she of-him would aim.

die sælde in dâ von nâmen
the blessings him there from took

und sîn snelheit, diu was grôz,
and his swiftness, which was great,

daz si in ze tôde niht enschôz.
that she him to death not shot.

daz ich von disem wîbe
that I from this woman

mit lebendigem lîbe
with living body

kom, daz was ein zeichen.
came, that was a sign.

swâ sî mich erreichen
wherever she me reach

mohte mit der zochen,
might with the club,

wol über drî wochen
well over three weeks

moht man die biule vinden
might one the bump find

vorne unde hinden.
before and behind.

‘Sol mich tœten ditze wîp?
‘Shall me kill this woman?

nu ist mir guot noch der lîp
now is to-me goods nor the life

bî dirre konen niht gegeben:
by this wife not given:

ich sol ouch fürbaz geleben
I shall also further live

einen tac nimmermêre.
one day nevermore.

mîne friunt haben des unêre!'
my friends have of-it dishonor!'

gedâhte ich tougenlîchen.
thought I secretly.

ich liez et an sî strîchen
I let but at her stroke

mit slegen alsô dicke;
with blows so thickly;

mit einem übersticke
with a lintel

traf ich sî vor an den kopf.
hit I her before on the head.

sî sprach 'verdeust du disen kropf,
she spoke '(if)-digestest thou this crop,

du maht ezzen ungesoten
thou mayst eat unboiled

nâtern, egel unde kroten
adders, leeches and toads

und alliu eiter trinken.'
and all venom drink.'

ich het den einen schinken,
I had the one shank,

leider mir erbaret;
alas for-me laid-bare;

dâ het sî mîn gevâret:
there had she for-me laid-wait:

als ez z'unheile mir ergie,
as it to-misfortune to-me came-about,

sî sluoc mir ûz dem zeswen knie
she struck to-me out-of the right knee

des slages die knieschîben.
with-the blow the kneecap.

sî sprach ‘liez ichz belîben
she spoke ‘(if)-let I-it remain

mit dem einen smerzen,
with the one pain,

vor freude möhtst du scherzen:
for joy mightst thou jest:

des ich weizgot niht entuon.
which I God-knows not do.

ez wirt fride noch stætiu suon
it becomes peace nor steadfast atonement

weizgot nimmer zwischen uns zwein.
God-knows never between us two.

waz von diu, ist dir ein bein
what from it, is to-thee a leg

von mînen slegen worden lam?
from my blows become lame?

dir geschiht an dem andern sam.
to-thee happens to the other likewise.

ich slahe dir abe den rucke,
I strike to-thee off the back,

oder mir sol gelucke
or to-me shall fortune

daz wilde nimmermêre
the wild nevermore

gefüegen guot und êre.
arrange goods and honor.

ich mache dir sô dwerhen munt
I make to-thee so crosswise mouth

daz allen liuten wirt unkunt
that to-all people becomes unknown

ob sî dînen gelîchen
whether they thy equal

ie gesæhen in den rîchen.
ever saw in the realms.

alle gnâde ich dir versperre.
all grace I to-thee lock-away.

diu ougen ich dir ûz zerre
the eyes I to-thee out tear

sam sî nie dâ gewüehsen.
as-if they never there grew.

under mînen üehsen
under my armpits

trag ich dich hin ze Wienen.
carry I thee hence to Vienna.

und wilt du mir niht dienen
and (if)-wilt thou to-me not serve

als einer frouwen tuot ir kneht,
as to-a lady does her servant,

dîn antlütze wirt sô sleht
thy face becomes so smooth

sam nie nase kœme dran.'
as-if never nose came thereon.'

unser zweier friunde drî man
of-us two friends three men

kômen dort geloufen her
came there running hither

und schieden uns bêd, als ein ber
and parted us both, as a bear

der an einer lannen strebt,
which against a chain strains,

dem gelîch sî dannoch lebt.
to-that like she yet lives.

sî phnurrete jenen unde disen,
she snarled-at that-one and this-one,

sî gebârte als sî mit einem risen
she behaved as-if she with a giant

dannoch het gevohten.
yet had fought.

die drî man enmohten
the three men might

niht erwenden sîe,
not turn her,

sî zuktes alle drîe
she dragged-them all three

nâch ir wol vierdehalben schrit.
after her well three-and-a-half steps.

sî het dannoch ir unsit
she would-have yet her ill-manners

vil gerne an mir erzeiget.
very gladly on me shown.

mîn leben wart geveiget,
my life was doomed,

wær an den selben zîten
were at the same times

niht gescheiden unser strîten.
not parted our strife.

Man mohte lîhte mich gehaben.
One might easily me hold.

man muoste mich mit wazzer laben.
one must me with water refresh.

dô ich von dem strîte gie,
when I from the strife went,

ein altez wîp mich gevie;
an old woman me caught;

der seic ich under hant ze tal.
to-her sank I under hand to valley.

ich was bleich unde val:
I was pale and wan:

darunder was diu vilwe
there-under was the pallor

gemischet mit der gilwe.
mixed with the yellowness.

sus lac ich als ein tôte.
thus lay I as a dead-man.

ez lief ein kneht genôte
there ran a servant urgently

balde hin nâch wazzer:
quickly hence after water:

schiere kom er alsô nazzer.
quickly came he so wet.

betoubet lac ich âne sin:
dazed lay I without sense:

doch gôz er mir daz wazzer in.
yet poured he to-me the water in.

ich blikte ûf mit armen staten.
I looked up with poor state.

sî sprach 'jâ trûwe ich dich gesaten
she spoke 'yes trust I thee to-sate

strîtes wol mit mîner kraft.
of-strife well with my power.

væht ich mit al der heidenschaft
(if)-fought I with all the heathendom

sô gar âne sorgen,
so wholly without cares,

ich næme daz kriuze morgen.'
I would-take the cross tomorrow.'

Dô wir alsô gerihten
When we so made-settlement

und daz sî geslihten
and that they settled

den strît zwischen uns beiden,
the strife between us both,

dô wurden wir gescheiden.
then were we parted.

sî saz dort, ich saz hie:
she sat there, I sat here:

diu ougen sî an mich verlie
the eyes she on me let-rest

vil ungüetlîche.
very unkindly.

dô sprach ich 'got der rîche,
then spoke I 'God the mighty,

die nôt lâ dich erbarmen.
the distress let thee pity.

ouwê mir vil armen!
alas to-me very poor-one!

waz rechet ir, frouwe, an mir?'
what avenge you, lady, on me?"

sî sprach 'hâst du rede in dir?
she spoke 'hast thou speech in thee?

mich müet dîn klaffen sêre.
me vexes thy babbling sorely.

swîc! du muost unêre
be-silent! thou must dishonor

mit schaden laden in daz hûs'.
with harm load into the house'.

dô sweic ich alsam ein mûs
then was-silent I like a mouse

und redet dô niemêre,
and spoke then never-more,

wan ich vorhte sêre,
for I feared sorely,

ob ich ein wortel spræche,
if I a little-word spoke,

daz sî den fride bræche.
that she the peace would-break.

Der Weinschwelg

XXI · THE WINE-GUZZLER

The poet tells of a drinker who scorns cups and drinks only from great cans. At each draft he praises wine: it gives courage, joy, and youth; it is worth more than jousting, dance, or love; it is master of the senses and better game than the bison Duke Iram hunted. Every speech ends the same way: he raised the can and drank. His boasts swell with his drinking until the bench cracks, his girdle bursts, and his shirt tears, and at last he laces himself into a hart-hide collar and a narrow iron cuirass so that the wine's pressure cannot burst him.

Swaz ich trinkens hân gesehen,
Whatever I of-drinking have seen,

daz ist gar von kinden geschehen:
that is wholly by children happened:

ich hân einen swelch gesehen,
I have a guzzler seen,

dem wil ich meisterschefte jehen.
to-him will I mastery avow.

den dûhten becher gar enwiht,
to-him seemed cups wholly nothing,

er wolde näpfe noch kopfe niht:
he would bowls nor goblets not:

er tranc ûz grôzen kannen.
he drank out-of great cans.

er ist vor allen mannen
he is before all men

ein vorlouf allen swelhen.
a forerunner to-all guzzlers.

von ûren und von elhen
by aurochs and by elks

wart solher slünde nie niht getân.
was such gulps never anything done.

ez muos alle zît vor im stân
it must all time before him stand

ein grôziu kannel wînes vol.
a great can of-wine full.

er sprach 'wîn, ich erkenn dich wol!
he spoke 'wine, I know thee well!

ich weiz wol daz du guot bist.
I know well that thou good art.

die wîle dîn in dem vazze iht ist,
the while of-thee in the vat anything is,

sô wil ich bûwen dise banc.'
so will I dwell-on this bench.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc von zweinzec slünden.
A draft of twenty gulps.

er sprach 'nu wil ich künden
he spoke 'now will I make-known

waz tugent du hâst, vil lieber wîn.
what virtue thou hast, very dear wine.

wie möhtestu tugenthafter sîn?
how mightest-thou more-virtuous be?

du hâst schœne und grôze güete,
thou hast beauty and great goodness,

du gîst uns hôchgemüete,
thou givest to-us high-spirit,

du machest küene den zagen.
thou makest bold the coward.

swer dîn wâfen wil tragen,
whoever thy arms will bear,

der wirt wîse unde karc,
he becomes wise and shrewd,

er wirt snel unde starc,
he becomes swift and strong,

er fürhtet niemannes drô.
he fears no-one's threat.

du machest die trûrigen frô,
thou makest the sad glad,

du gîst dem alten jungen muot,
thou givest to-the old young spirit,

du rîchest den armen âne guot,
thou enrichest the poor without goods,

du machest die liute wol gevar.
thou makest the people well colored.

du bist ouch selbe schœne gar,
thou art also self fair wholly,

du bist lûter unde blanc.'
thou art clear and bright.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc der für die andern gie.
A draft which before the others went.

er sprach 'warumbe oder wie
he spoke 'why or how

sold ich den wîn vermîden?
should I the wine avoid?

ich mac in wol erlîden,
I may it well endure,

sît er allen mînen willen tuot.
since it all my will does.

er dunket mich bezzer denne guot,
it seems to-me better than good,

ich geniete mich sîn nimmer.
I sate myself of-it never.

ich wil in loben immer
I will it praise ever

für bûhurdieren und für tanz.
before jousting and before dance.

krône, tschapel unde kranz,
crown, chaplet and garland,

pfelle, samît, scharlât,
brocade, samite, scarlet,

swaz gezierde disiu werlt hât,
whatever adornment this world has,

die næm ich niht für den wîn.
them would-take I not for the wine.

in hât in dem herzen mîn
it has in the heart my

mîn minne alsô behûset,
my love so housed,

versigelt und verklûset:
sealed and enclosed:

wir mugen uns niht gescheiden.
we may ourselves not part.

swer mir in wolde leiden,
whoever to-me it would make-hateful,

der mües immer haben mînen haz.
he must ever have my hatred.

er kürzet mir die wîle baz
it shortens to-me the while better

denne sagen, singen, seitenklanc.'
than telling, singing, string-sound.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc noch grœzer denne ê.
A draft yet greater than before.

er sprach 'gras, bluomen unde klê
he spoke 'grass, flowers and clover

und aller krûte meisterschaft,
and of-all herbs mastery,

die würze und aller steine kraft,
the spices and of-all stones power,

der walt und elliu vogelîn
the forest and all little-birds

diu möhten dîn, vil lieber wîn,
they might for-thee, very dear wine,

die liute niht ergetzen.
the people not compensate.

si möhten dich niht ersetzen
they might thee not replace

mit allem dem sî kunnen.
with all that they can.

ich wil dir gerne gunnen
I will to-thee gladly grant

daz du mir kürzest die zît.
that thou to-me shortenest the time.

swaz fröuden mir diu werlt gît,
whatever of-joys to-me the world gives,

daz kumt vil gar von dîner tugent;
that comes very wholly from thy virtue;

dîn lop hât immer wernde jugent,
thy praise has ever lasting youth,

dîn werdekeit wirt nimmer kranc.'
thy worth becomes never weak.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc grôzen und sô starc:
A draft great and so strong:

und solde er eine halbe marc
and should he a half mark

ze lône dâmit verdienet hân,
as reward there-with earned have,

ern dörfte niht bezzers hân getân:
he would-need not better have done:

‘beidiu ich und der wîn
‘both I and the wine

müezen immer ensamt sîn.
must ever together be.

mir ist an im gelungen:
to-me is in it succeeded:

er hât mich des betwungen
it has me of-it compelled

daz ich ie tet swaz er mir gebôt.
that I ever did whatever it to-me commanded.

der wîn ist guot für manige nôt.
the wine is good for many distress.

künde er niht wan fröude geben,
could it nothing except joy give,

diu werlt sold immer gein im streben:
the world should ever toward it strive:

fröude ist vor allen dingen!
joy is before all things!

ich wil nâch fröuden ringen.
I will after joys struggle.

sît mir der wîn fröude gît,
since to-me the wine joy gives,

nu wil ich trinken unz an die zît
now will I drink until to the time

daz er mir sô vil fröuden gebe
that it to-me so much of-joys gives

daz ich mit fröuden immer lebe:
that I with joys ever live:

wie kan ich denne verderben?
how can I then perish?

ich wil nâch fröuden werben.
I will after joys strive.

des habe mîn lîp immer danc!'
for-that have my body ever thanks!'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Daz man nie solhes niht vernam.
That one never such anything heard.

er sprach 'der herzoge Iram
he spoke 'the duke Iram

der was gar âne wîsheit,
he was wholly without wisdom,

daz er einem wisent nâch reit,
that he a bison after rode,

er und sîn jäger Nordiân:
he and his hunter Nordian:

sî solden den wîn gejaget hân,
they should the wine hunted have,

sô wærn sî wîse als ich pin.
so would-be they wise as I am.

mir ist vil samfter denne in:
to-me is much gentler than to-them:

ich kan jagen unde vâhen,
I can hunt and catch,

mich enmüedet niht mîn gâhen.
me tires not my hastening.

ich jage den vil lieben wîn,
I hunt the very dear wine,

des jäger wil ich immer sîn:
of-it hunter will I ever be:

er hât mir ie sô wol getân;
it has to-me ever so well done;

swaz ich sîn her getrunken hân
whatever I of-it hither drunk have

und swaz ich sîn naht unde tac
and whatever I of-it night and day

in mînen lîp geswelhen mac,
into my body swallow may,

daz ist niwan ein anevanc.'
that is only a beginning.'

alrêst huob er unde tranc
first-of-all raised he and drank

Vil manigen ungefüegen slunt:
Very many monstrous gulp:

'wîn, mir ist dîn tugent kunt
'wine, to-me is thy virtue known

ich erkenne wol dîne kraft,
I recognize well thy power,

dîne kunst und dîne meisterschaft.
thy art and thy mastery.

du bist meister der sinne,
thou art master of-the senses,

du liebest mir für die minne;
thou pleasest me before the love;

du machest stæte manigen kouf,
thou makest firm many bargain,

du machest manigen wettelouf,
thou makest many race,

dû machest maniger hande spil,
thou makest of-many kinds play,

mit fröuden kurzewîle vil.
with joys pastime much.

diu werlt ist gar mit dir erhaben.
the world is wholly by thee raised.

du kanst die durstigen laben,
thou canst the thirsty refresh,

du machest die siechen gesunt.
thou makest the sick sound.

sît du mir êrste würde kunt,
since thou to-me first became known,

sô bin ich dir gewesen bî:
so am I to-thee been by:

swie vil dîner diener sî,
however many of-thy servants be,

daz mich doch niemen von dir dranc.'
that me yet no-one from thee pressed.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Daz die slünde lûte erklungen
That the gulps loudly rang

und vaste einander drungen:
and fast each-other pressed:

dâ wart von starken slünden
there was from strong gulps

ein sturm daz von den ünden
a storm that from the waves

diu drozze wart ze enge,
the throat became too narrow,

daz sich von dem wâcgedrenge
that itself from the water-crush

diu güsse begunde werren,
the floods began to-tangle,

blôdern unde kerren
to-gurgle and to-roar

als ein windesprût ûf dem mere.
as a wind's-bride on the sea.

dâ wart mit hurteclîcher were
there was with charging defense

versuochet maniges slundes kraft.
tried many gulp's strength.

er sprach ‘daz ist ein meisterschaft
he spoke ‘that is a mastery

daz ich noch niht getrunken hân.
that I yet not drunk have.

mîn kunst ist alsô getân
my art is so made

daz ich mich niht vergâhe
that I myself not overhaste

und ez müezeclîche an vâhe,
and it leisurely on take,

durch daz ichz lange trîben wil.
so that I-it long drive will.

ich lebe wênic ode vil,
I live little or much,

mir wirt trinkens nimmer buoz.
to-me becomes of-drinking never remedy.

hab iemen einen ringen fuoz,
(if)-have anyone a light foot,

der bringe mir guoten aneganc.’
he bring to-me good beginning.’

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Als er nimmer wolde erwinden.
As-if he never would stop.

er sprach ‘wâ sol man vinden,
he spoke ‘where shall one find,

swenn ich erstirbe, einen man
when I die, a man

der trinke als ich trinken kan?
who drink as I drink can?

mîn habent alle trinker êre.
of-me have all drinkers honor.

man sol mir danken sêre
one shall to-me thank sorely

daz ich ir leben sô ziere.
that I their life so adorn.

der besten trinker viere
the best drinkers four

die volgent mir wan einen tac.
they follow me only one day.

ich kan wol trinken unde mac,
I can well drink and may,

ich hân kunst unde kraft.
I have art and strength.

mîn herze ist sô tugenthaft
my heart is so virtuous

daz ez an trinken nie gehanc.'
that it to drinking never limped.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc der die andern übersteic.
A draft which the others surpassed.

dô stuont er ûf unde neic,
then stood he up and bowed,

er sprach 'wîn, dir sî genigen!
he spoke 'wine, to-thee be bowed!

ich trûwe mit dir wol gesigen:
I trust with thee well to-conquer:

die wîle du bist mîn nachgebûr,
the while thou art my neighbor,

mir enschadet der schîme noch der schûr;
me not-harms the sunshine nor the shower;

ich kan deheiner sorgen pflegen:
I can no cares tend:

mir enschadet diu sunne noch der regen,
me not-harms the sun nor the rain,

diu fröude bûwet mînen muot.
the joy inhabits my spirit.

ich ensorge umb êre noch umbe guot,
I not-care about honor nor about goods,

umbe friunde noch umbe mâge.
about friends nor about kinsmen.

ichn urliuge noch enbâge
I-not war nor quarrel

und enruoch wie blôz der walt stê.
and not-care how bare the forest stand.

mir enschadet der wint noch der snê,
me not-harms the wind nor the snow,

der rîfe noch der anehanc.'
the hoarfrost nor the rime.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc der grôze güsse truoc.
A draft which great floods bore.

er sprach 'diu houwe und der pfluoc
he spoke 'the hoe and the plow

diu müesen immer ledic sîn,
they must ever idle be,

wessen die gebûren daz der wîn
(if)-knew the peasants that the wine

sô maniger êren wielte
so many honors wielded

und sô manic lop behielte.
and so many praise held.

erkanten si rehte sîne tugent,
(if)-knew they rightly its virtue,

si vertriben ir alter unde ir jugent
they would-spend their age and their youth

bî dem wîne algemeine.
by the wine all-together.

nu erkennent sîn vil kleine.
now know of-it very few.

daz hân ich zeinem heile:
that have I as-a fortune:

dâvon ist er wolveile.
there-from is it cheap.

daz machet mir mîn leben lanc.'
that makes to-me my life long.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen hundertslündigen trunc.
A hundred-gulp draft.

er sprach 'daz machet mich junc,
he spoke 'that makes me young,

daz ich mîne trünke lenge
that I my drafts lengthen

und den slünden des verhenge
and to-the gulps of-it allow

daz sî swellent unde grôzent
that they swell and grow-great

und sô hurticlîchen stôzent,
and so chargingly thrust,

daz die slege von den ünden
that the blows from the waves

ein sturm hebent in den slünden
a storm raise in the gullets

swer mir êrste gap den wîn,
whoever to-me first gave the wine,

des lop müez immer sælic sîn:
his praise must ever blessed be:

er hât mich wol gelêret.
he has me well taught.

er ist sîn immer gêret,
he is of-it ever honored,

wan mir ie wol an im gelanc.'
for to-me ever well in him succeeded.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc langen und sô grôz
A draft long and so great

daz sîn alle die liute bedrôz
that of-it all the people irked

die ez hôrten unde sâhen.
who it heard and saw.

er sprach 'ez wil im nâhen
he spoke 'it will itself near

daz ich trinkens wil beginnen.
that I to-drink will begin.

ich bin wol worden innen
I am well become aware

daz mir der wîn süezet
that to-me the wine sweetens

und mîn herze grüezet.
and my heart greets.

dâwider biut ich mînen gruoz:
there-against offer I my greeting:

wîn, ich valle dir ze fuoz.
wine, I fall to-thee at foot.

ich enphienge dich gerne, künde ich, baz.
I would-receive thee gladly, could I, better.

ich enphâhe dich immer âne haz,
I receive thee ever without hatred,

du enphâhest mich, als tuon ich dich;
thou receivest me, as do I thee;

der anphanc ist minneclich.
the reception is lovely.

daz sî unser beider anphanc!'
that be of-us both reception!'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc: der begunde plôdern
A draft: it began to-gurgle

als daz wazzer ûf den flôdern
as the water on the paddles

ûf alten kumpfmülen tuot.
on old tub-mills does.

er sprach 'daz ist ein süeziu fluot,
he spoke 'that is a sweet flood,

diu wäschet mir von dem herzen
which washes to-me from the heart

unfröude und smerzen.
joylessness and pain.

er kan mich leides wol erjeten.'
it can me of-sorrow well weed.'

do begunde er springen unde treten
then began he to-leap and tread

manigen sprunc seltsænen.
many leap strange.

er sprach 'niemen sol des wænen
he spoke 'no-one shall of-it ween

daz er sich mir gelîche.
that he himself to-me likens.

mîn herze ist fröuden rîche!
my heart is in-joys rich!

der wîn der mich dâ machet junc,
the wine which me there makes young,

dem wil ich springen einen sprunc.'
for-it will I leap a leap.'

frôlîche er drîstunt ûf spranc.
gladly he thrice up sprang.

dô huob er ûf unde tranc:
then raised he up and drank:

Der trunc wart maniges trunkes wert.
The draft became of-many draft worth.

er sprach 'ich bin der trinkens gert,
he spoke 'I am who of-drinking desires,

ich bin ein trinkender man,
I am a drinking man,

der alsô sêre trinken kan
who so sorely drink can

daz ich allen trinkern an gesige
that I all drinkers over conquer

und allen trinkern ob gelige.
and all drinkers above lie.

ich wart nie trinkennes sat.
I became never of-drinking sated.

ich kom noch nie an die stat
I came yet never to the place

dâ ich getrunke mir genuoc.
where I drank to-me enough.

wol der muoter diu mich truoc!
well-be the mother who me bore!

sælic sî sî küniginne!
blessed be she queen!

sælic sî diu süeze minne
blessed be the sweet love

und diu wîle dô si mich erranc!'
and the while when she me labored!'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc der wart swære:
A draft which became heavy:

swie vol diu kannel wære,
however full the can were,

si was zeinem trunke niht volgrôz,
it was for-a draft not full-great,

wan man zeiner nôt în gôz.
except one in-a need in poured.

er hiez et vaste în giezen
he bade but fast in pour

und lie daz in sich fliezen
and let that into himself flow

daz dâ noch solhes nie geschach.
that there yet such never happened.

dô saz er nider unde sprach:
then sat he down and spoke:

der wîn ist rehte ein gimme.
the wine is truly a gem.

ich hœre ein süeze stimme
I hear a sweet voice

in mînem houbet singen,
in my head sing,

die hœre ich gerne klingen.
it hear I gladly ring.

ez ist reht daz ich in krœne,
it is right that I it crown,

er singet mêre süezer dœne
it sings more sweet tunes

denn aller seiten klingen
than of-all strings ringing

und aller vogele singen.
and of-all birds singing.

mir wart solhes nie niht bekant.
to-me became such never anything known.

er singet sô wol daz Hôrant
it sings so well that Horand

daz dritteil nie sô wol gesanc.
the third-part never so well sang.

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Daz diu banc begunde krachen.
That the bench began to-crack.

er sprach 'des muoz ich lachen!
he spoke 'at-that must I laugh!

des ist ze lachen harte guot,
of-that is to laugh very good,

daz krachen fröuwet mir den muot.
the cracking gladdens to-me the spirit.

ez machet des wînes güete.
it makes the wine's goodness.

ich hân allez mîn gemüete
I have all my mind

in den fröuden wol getrenket.
in the joys well drenched.

dar in hân ich mich gesenket:
there in have I myself sunk:

ich sanc ie sît der stunde
I sank ever since the hour

daz ich êrste trinken kunde
that I first drink could

und mir der wîn sô wol geviel.
and to-me the wine so well pleased.

ich weiz wol daz dehein kiel
I know well that any keel

in daz mere sô tiefe nie gesanc.'
into the sea so deep never sank.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen vierschrœtigen trunc.
A square-hewn draft.

er sprach 'ich pin worden junc
he spoke 'I am become young

an lîbe unde an muote.
in body and in spirit.

wol mich' sô sprach der guote
well me' so spoke the good-one

'daz ich sô gar ein meister bin
'that I so wholly a master am

an trinken! seht, daz heiz ich sin!
in drinking! see, that call I sense!

ich weiz wol: dâz Parîs,
I know well: there-at Paris,

ze Padouwe und ze Tervîs,
at Padua and at Treviso,

ze Rôme und ze Tuscân
at Rome and at Tuscany

vindet man deheinen man,
finds one no man,

ich ensî sîn meister gewesen,
I unless-be his master been,

daz mir nie gein einer vesen
that to-me never against a fiber

ir deheiner möhte gelîchen.
of-them any might equal.

halt in allen diutschen rîchen
even in all German realms

kom mir nie deheiner zuo
came to-me never any to

der beidiu spâte unde fruo
who both late and early

sô wol an trinken tûre.
so well at drinking dared.

wînes nâchgebûre
of-wine neighbor

wil ich hiute und immer wesen.
will I today and ever be.

mîn sêle muoz mit ime genesen,
my soul must with it be-saved,

im ist mîn sêle immer holt.
to-it is my soul ever loyal.

swenne er schœne als ein golt
whenever it fair as a gold

von dem zapfen schiuzet,
from the tap shoots,

wie wênic mich des verdriuzet
how little me of-it irks

swaz man sîn in mich giuzet!
whatever one of-it into me pours!

vil wol mîn lîp des geniuzet.
very well my body of-it profits.

man saget von turnieren:
one tells of tourneys:

vaste swelhen under vieren,
fast to-swallow among four,

daz kan ich wol, des habe ich danc!'
that can I well, for-that have I thanks!'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc der vil grôz was.
A draft which very great was.

er sprach ‘swaz man ie gelas
he spoke ‘whatever one ever read

von den die minne phlâgen
of those who love tended

und tôt von minne lâgen,
and dead from love lay,

die wârn mir niht gelîche wîs.
they were to-me not equally wise.

wie starp der künic Pârîs,
how died the king Paris,

der durch Helenam wart erslagen!
who for Helen was slain!

des tumpheit sol man immer klagen.
his folly shall one ever lament.

er solde den wîn geminnet hân:
he should the wine loved have:

sô het im niemen niht getân.
so would-have to-him no-one anything done.

vrou Dîdô lac von minne tôt,
lady Dido lay from love dead,

Grâlanden sluoc man unde sôt
Graland slew one and boiled

und gab in den frouwen zezzen,
and gave him to-the ladies to-eat,

want sî sîn niht wolden vergezzen.
for they of-him not would forget.

Piramus und Tispê,
Pyramus and Thisbe,

den wart von minne sô wê
to-them became from love so woe

daz sî sich rigen an ein swert.
that they themselves leaned on a sword.

mîn minne ist bezzers lônes wert
my love is of-better reward worth

denn ir aller minne wære.
than of-them all love were.

mîn minne ist fröudebære!
my love is joy-bearing!

ich bûwe der minne strâze,
I travel the love's road,

mir ist baz denn Curâze
to-me is better than to-Curaz

der von minne in dem sê ertranc.'
who from love in the lake drowned.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Einen trunc mit grôzer île:
A draft with great haste:

der wert unz an die wîle
it lasted until to the while

daz im diu gürtel zebrast.
that to-him the girdle burst.

er sprach 'daz bant ist niht ein bast
he spoke 'that band is not a bast

dâmit ich zallen stunden
there-with I at-all hours

ze dem wîne bin gebunden.
to the wine am bound.

daz ist mîn sælde und mîn heil,
that is my fortune and my salvation,

und sint ouch driu vil starkiu seil:
and are also three very strong ropes:

daz eine ist des wînes güete,
the one is the wine's goodness,

daz ander mîn stæte gemüete,
the other my steadfast mind,

daz dritte ist diu gwonheit.
the third is the habit.

er mac mir nimmer werden leit,
it may to-me never become sorrowful,

ich muoz in immer minnen.
I must it ever love.

ich mac im niht entrinnen:
I may it not escape:

wie zebræche ich ein sô starken stranc?'
how would-break I a so strong cord?'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Sô sêre daz si alle jâhen,
So sorely that they all avowed,

die sîn trinken rehte ersâhen,
who his drinking rightly saw,

swaz er getrunken het unz dar,
whatever he drunk had until there,

des solde man vergezzen gar:
of-that should one forget wholly:

der trunc behielte gar den prîs.
the draft kept wholly the prize.

er sprach 'diu werlt ist unwîs
he spoke 'the world is unwise

daz sî niht ze wîne gât,
that it not to wine goes,

sô sî deheinen gebresten hât,
when it any lack has,

und trunke dâ für allez leit,
and drank there for all sorrow,

für angest und für arbeit,
for fear and for hardship,

für alter unde für den tôt,
for age and for the death,

für siechtuom und für alle nôt,
for sickness and for all distress,

für schaden und für schanden slac,
for harm and for disgrace's blow,

und für swaz der werlt gewerren mac,
and for whatever the world trouble may,

für nebel und für bœsen stanc.'
for fog and for wicked stench.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Sô sêre daz sich diu kannel bouc:
So sorely that itself the can bent:

'swaz ie geflôz ode geflouc,
'whatever ever flowed or flew,

daz sol billîche erkennen mich;
that shall rightly recognize me;

die liute solten alle sich
the people should all themselves

ze mînem gebote neigen.
to my command bow.

diu werlt ist gar mîn eigen.
the world is wholly my own.

ich hân gewaltes sô vil
I have of-power so much

daz ich mac tuon swaz ich wil;
that I may do whatever I will;

swaz ich wil daz ist getân.
whatever I will that is done.

daz ich allen mînen willen hân,
that I all my will have,

dâvon heiz ich Ungenôz.
there-from am-called I Peerless.

mîne tugende sint sô grôz:
my virtues are so great:

wære der werlde sô vil mê
were of-the world so much more

daz daz mer und ieslîch sê
that the sea and every lake

als guot wær als daz beste lant,
as good were as the best land,

daz müese stân ze mîner hant
that must stand at my hand

und müese mir dienen âne wanc.'
and must to-me serve without wavering.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank

Sô lange und sô sêre,
So long and so sorely,

sô vil und dannoch mêre,
so much and yet more,

sô vaste und sô harte,
so fast and so hard,

daz sich daz hemde zarte.
that itself the shirt tore.

er sprach 'des wirt guot rât:
he spoke 'for-that becomes good remedy:

ich weiz wol waz derwider stât,
I know well what there-against stands,

ich kan wol wâfenen mich.'
I can well arm myself.'

er zôch einen hirzhals an sich,
he drew a hart's-neck-collar on himself,

den hiez er vaste brîsen;
it bade he fast lace;

darzuo von guotem îsen
thereto of good iron

ein vestez banzier enge.
a firm cuirass narrow.

er sprach 'des wînes gedrenge
he spoke 'the wine's pressing

lât mich nu ungezerret.
leave me now untorn.

ich hân mich sô versperret:
I have myself so locked:

er enmac mich niht entsliezen.
it may me not unlock.

des sol ich wol geniezen
of-that shall I well profit

daz ich ze fröuden mînen lîp
that I to joys my body

getwungen hân, daz man noch wîp
constrained have, that man nor woman

sînen lîp sô sêre nie getwanc.'
his body so sorely never constrained.'

dô huob er ûf unde tranc
then raised he up and drank