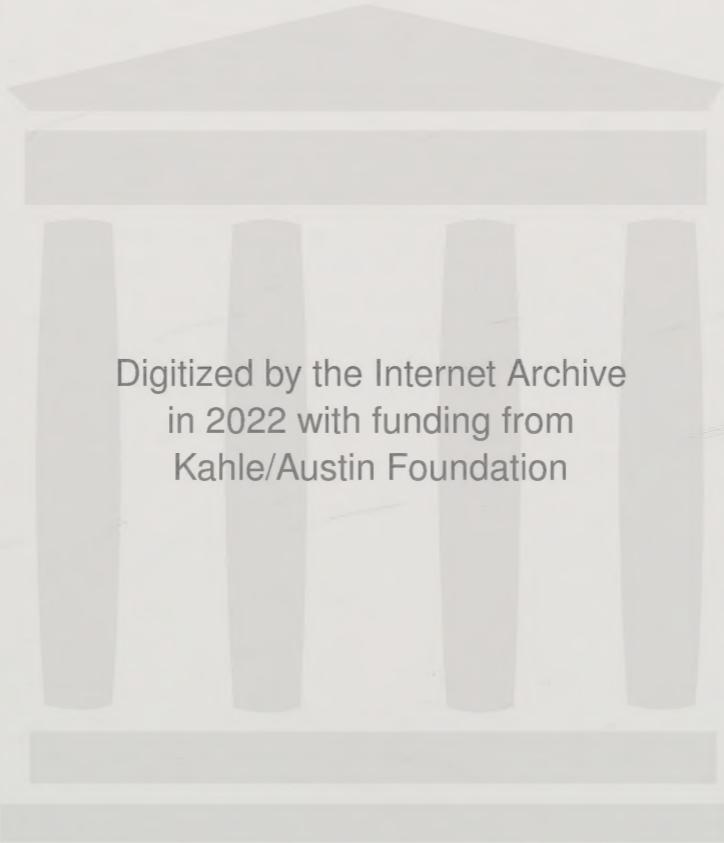


ARTHURIAN ARCHIVES I

Early French  
Tristan Poems I

Edited by NORRIS J. LACY





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Early French Tristan Poems

Volume 1

The strong and enduring appeal of the Arthurian legends shows no signs of abating, yet many medieval Arthurian texts remain unedited or printed in editions no longer available, while comparatively few of them have been translated into English and thus rendered accessible to the scholarly or general audience unable to read them in the original. *Arthurian Archives* addresses these problems, providing authoritative critical editions with parallel translations of essential texts for Arthurian studies; each text is accompanied by a brief introduction, variants and rejected readings, and critical notes.

*Early French Tristan Poems* contains critical editions with facing translations for the French Tristan texts prior to the *Prose Tristan*.

ARTHURIAN ARCHIVES

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General Editor: Norris J. Lacy

# Early French Tristan Poems

Volume 1

Edited by  
Norris J. Lacy

D. S. BREWER

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## CONTENTS

Preface	vii
Béroul's <i>Tristran</i>	
EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY Norris J. Lacy	
Introduction	3
Text and Translation	12
Rejected Readings	201
Notes	203
Les Folies <i>Tristan</i>	
EDITED AND TRANSLATED BY Samuel N. Rosenberg	
Introduction	219
<i>La Folie Tristan</i> (Berne)	222
Rejected Readings and Variants	249
Notes	253
<i>La Folie Tristan</i> (Oxford)	258
Rejected Readings and Variants	303
Notes	309
Select Bibliography	311



## PREFACE

The Arthurian legend continues to appeal strongly to the interests of scholars and the imaginations of general readers alike. Yet, there are still medieval Arthurian texts that remain unedited, whereas many others were printed in editions that are no longer available. Still others are available in the original but have not been translated into English for the use of a public unable to read them in the original.

The new Boydell & Brewer series "Arthurian Archives" (general editor Norris J. Lacy) will address these problems with a set of edited texts and facing translations of medieval French, German, Dutch, Italian, and Scandinavian Arthurian compositions. Many are edited and translated here for the first time; others are previously published texts, now out of print.

The aim is to offer complete and authoritative editions accompanied by facing English translations that can be used either independently of the original or as a reliable guide to it. Texts will be accompanied by introductions, variants and rejected readings, and critical notes.

These first volumes of the series present the Old French verse texts devoted to Tristan and Iseut. The Tristan tradition in medieval France is dominated by two longer poems (by Béroul and Thomas), as well as by the immense *Prose Tristan*, which is not included in this series. We have chosen to republish the editions and translations of Béroul and Thomas that were earlier published by Norris J. Lacy and by Stewart Gregory, respectively. (Lacy has made a number of revisions, mostly minor but nonetheless significant, in his Béroul.) Following Gregory's text, we offer a new edition and translation, prepared by Ian Short, of the recently discovered Carlisle fragment of Thomas's poem. New editions and translations of the two *Folies Tristan* have been made by Samuel N. Rosenberg, and of the *Tristan Rossignol* and *Tristan Menestrel* by Karen Fresco. The volumes include the first edition of Marie de France's *Chevreuille* ever to be based on Manuscript S (Paris, BN, nouv. acq. fr. 1104); that edition and the facing English text are the work of Richard O'Gorman, who also offered, instead of variants, transcriptions of both manuscripts.

For the most part, the introductions and bibliographies are extremely brief, both in these volumes and in later ones. Fuller introductions are given to Béroul and Thomas, however, since they had already been prepared and previously published. The general editor provided the introductions, with the exception of that to Thomas's *Tristran*, which was prepared by its editor, Stewart Gregory. In addition, Samuel Rosenberg wrote a prefatory note to his texts.

We are pleased to acknowledge the kindness of Garland Publishing, who generously permitted us to use the Béroul and Thomas texts published in their Garland Library of Medieval Literature. The general editor also wishes to express his gratitude to Caroline Brewer for her efficient and expert preparation of camera-ready copy.



# Béroul's TRISTRAN

Edited and Translated

by

Norris J. Lacy



## INTRODUCTION

### *Authorship*

Nothing is known of Béroul. He offers his name twice in his romance (in lines 1268 and 1790) but does not tell us about himself, and other authors do not refer to him by name. He wrote in the second half (and almost surely during the last quarter) of the twelfth century, and he wrote in a French that can be traced with some confidence, though not with absolute certainty, to Normandy. Otherwise, we know nothing about Béroul's identity or life and only what a reading of his romance will let us infer about his literary tastes and talents.

A good many scholars have however offered hypotheses about him. The most intriguing suggestion is that he is in fact more than one person, a conjecture based on factual contradictions within the text, on stylistic differences between the earlier and later portions of the poem, and on the fact that the narrative content of the first part closely parallels a related German version of the story, the *Tristrant* of Eilhart von Oberge, while later parts diverge significantly from the German text. If there was indeed a change in authorship, it may have occurred at the point where Tristran returns Iseut to King Mark, or perhaps when Iseut agrees to defend herself by oath, thus somewhere between lines 2900 and 3200. Yet, despite undeniable differences between the earlier and later portions of the text, the questions of Béroul's identity and of dual authorship remain unsettled. In the present state of our knowledge, the theory of multiple authorship can be neither proven nor refuted with confidence.

As noted, Béroul composed his *Tristran* (giving it that spelling, rather than the "Tristan" by which his hero is more commonly known) during the late twelfth century. Many scholars have assumed that he wrote after 1191, a date suggested by the occurrence in line 3849 of the reading *le mal dagres*. If those words are construed as *le mal d'Acre*, the line would refer to the illness that afflicted crusaders at Acre in the winter of 1190–91. Béroul must therefore have written after that date—or so goes the traditional view.

That conclusion has been challenged by Merritt R. Blakeslee and others. Blakeslee points out that the symptoms of the Acre illness do not correspond to those of leprosy. His argument is persuasive, though no alternative interpretation of the line has proved entirely satisfactory. In any event, Blakeslee's objections do not lead him to a radical redating of the poem, which he situates between 1176 and 1202, without rejecting the possibility of a significantly earlier composition.

### *Sources and Influences*

Scholars have proposed a number of theories concerning the origin of the Tristan legend, placing it variously in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, and even Persia. The last

of those notions, concerning an Eastern origin, has not won general acceptance. The suggestion that the story has Celtic roots, although unprovable, is far more credible; in fact, we have some early Irish stories that appear to be related to a primitive *Tristan* tale, while the characters' names are preserved in Welsh triads.

The triads, which were probably a mnemonic device for storytellers, are groupings of three names, with a detail or two about the events in question. The names of Drystan, Essyllt, and March are united in triads, including one that, curiously, has Drystan (*Tristan*) guarding the king's pigs. The problems of dating the triads—some are very early, others are later creations influenced by literary texts, but all are difficult to date—and the paucity of information they offer give tantalizing but frustrating indications that *Tristan* lore may have existed long before it was cast in the form of the romances we still read.

Whatever the source of the legend and its original form, it quickly split into two branches, known as the "common" or primitive version (of which *Béroul*'s romance is a representative) and the courtly version, distinguished by their conception and tone. Scholars have traditionally assumed the existence of a *Tristan* archetype, a composition (now lost) that served as a source for authors developing both branches of the story. The common hypothesis is that the archetype was composed around the middle of the twelfth century, although scholars have occasionally suggested dates of almost a century earlier,

If the theories concerning an archetype are correct, we might expect to draw some conclusions about its content by examining the material offered in common by representatives of both branches. Even there, we encounter problems, however. For example, while both branches include a love potion (which was certainly a part of the archetypal account), the accounts of the potion differ in prominent ways. Specifically, the effectiveness of the potion, permanent in the courtly version, had a time limit in the romances of *Béroul* and *Eilhart von Oberge*. It may well be that their version retains this detail from the archetype, but we cannot rule out the contrary possibility: that these two authors or, more likely, an intermediary text on which they both drew introduced the limit as an innovation. The archetype thus remains a mystery, even if we accept its existence as a logical necessity.

In inspiration and tone, and probably in subject matter as well, the common branch doubtless offers the more accurate reflection of the archetype. Texts belonging to this branch generally present their themes in a direct and frank manner, offering some material (such as Mark's punishing *Iseut* by giving her to a colony of lepers, to satisfy their lust) that some readers may find surprising or shocking in a love story dealing with monarchs and nobles. The courtly version, by contrast, more clearly reflects the medieval court's increasing interest in analyses of emotions; the texts belonging to it are usually more refined compositions that eschew many (but not all) of the "shocking" episodes that may have been part of the original, and they engage in introspective monologues examining love and anguish.

To the same tradition as *Béroul*'s *Tristran* belongs *Eilhart*'s German *Tristrant*, which dates from the late twelfth century, most likely between 1170 and 1190. *Eilhart* probably took his material from the same source as *Béroul*, although it is not impossible that he adapted the French text directly. The German romance is concluded, although it reduces or omits some of the scenes present in *Béroul*; it

thus serves as an important early Tristan text and, in all probability, as an indication of what was included in the lost portions of Béroul's.

Another poem that belongs to the same version is the *Folie Tristan de Berne* ("The Folly of Tristan" or "Tristan as a Fool," from a Bern manuscript). This is a short composition in which Tristan returns to court in disguise and is recognized by no one but Iseut.

In terms of the number of texts representing it, the courtly version has proven to be more popular than the common. The principal French romance belonging to this tradition is the *Tristran* of Thomas of England (second half of the twelfth century, perhaps around 1175), a work that, in spite of being preserved in a number of fragments, gives ample proof of the author's gift for rhetoric and analysis. Thomas served as a source for one of the great poems of the Middle Ages, Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan*, which was composed during the first decade of the thirteenth century. Gottfried's German romance is itself incomplete, lacking about one-sixth of the story; fortunately, the missing portions are precisely those preserved in the Thomas fragments. It is Gottfried's romance that served as the source for Richard Wagner's opera *Tristan und Isolde* (1865), which further contributed to the dissemination of the courtly branch of the legend.

Other representatives of this version are the *Folie Tristan d'Oxford* (late thirteenth century; another story of a return to court in disguise), the 1226 *Tristrams saga* (a Norwegian translation, by a "Brother Robert," of Thomas's romance), the English *Sir Tristrem* (about 1300), and the Italian *La Tavola Ritonda* (second quarter of the fourteenth century). The *Lai du Chevrefueil* ("Honeysuckle") of Marie de France (second half of the twelfth century) offers the account of a brief and passionate encounter between the lovers; the incident is not represented in other texts, but the tone and spirit of her poem clearly ally it to the courtly branch.

The French *Prose Tristan* is a long, complex romance in two versions, dating from the mid-thirteenth century. Attributed (spuriously) to Luce de Gat and Hélie de Borron, the romance is the work of an author or authors who apparently knew Tristan texts belonging to both branches. One of the major innovations of the *Prose Tristan* is the thorough fusion of the Arthurian world and the Tristan tradition. Early Tristan texts had been at best marginally Arthurian; the King Arthur of Béroul's poem, for example, played a prominent role only in the climactic episode of Iseut's trial and oath. In the *Prose Tristan*, on the other hand, Tristan himself is presented as a knight of the Round Table; he is a particular friend of Lancelot (a role he will take frequently in a number of compositions from the late Middle Ages and the sixteenth century), and he participates in the Grail quest. Mark, on the other hand, becomes a villain, and in some accounts he eventually kills Tristan. The *Prose Tristan* was adapted into a number of languages, including the English of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte Darthur*.

### Artistic Achievement

The adjective "primitive," as I noted, indicates that Béroul's poem and related compositions remain closer to the Tristan archetype than do texts of the other branch. The term is technically accurate but otherwise unfortunate, the danger being that some may take it to imply a lack of artistic sophistication or skill.

Fortunately, an attentive reading of Béroul's *Tristral* will dispel any such notion. Neither the fragmentary state in which his work has been preserved nor the obvious deficiencies—indeed, the frequent blunders—of the scribe responsible for the single surviving manuscript can conceal Béroul's artistry.

His style, in the octosyllabic rhymed couplets characteristic of Old French romance, is lively and engaging. Although the romance form was generally intended for reading (as opposed to the recitation from memory that characterized the epic), that reading was generally a public activity. At every turn Béroul's text reveals his unmistakable awareness of his audience and his desire to retain their attention and to underline important events and changes of subject. His direct addresses to "Seigneurs" ("Lords") regularly remind us both of his audience and of his calculated efforts to tell his story in the most effective way possible.

Béroul's self-conscious artistry, his pride in his narrative skills, becomes even more apparent when he comments (lines 1265–68) that those who contend that Tristral drowned a leper are mistaken and do not know the story as well as he, Béroul, does. His text is also punctuated regularly by formulas such as "I believe" or "I know without a doubt that . . .," traditional phrases that may of course serve as fillers to provide the necessary number of syllables in a line but that also remind us that the narrative comes not from a disembodied voice, but from Béroul, a living, breathing, talented, and often calculating storyteller.

But if the *Tristral* is a romance that displays some of the traits of oral performance, it also shares some of the spirit of the French fabliaux, the short comic tales (from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) that often relish accounts of clever deceptions and illicit loves. The irresistible love of Tristral and Iseut requires them of course to meet surreptitiously and occasionally to lie in order to protect themselves. But there is nothing in the nature of their love and their suffering that prepares us for the childlike, almost malicious pleasure that Tristral will take in joking dangerously with King Mark, telling the king that his mistress bore a striking resemblance to Queen Iseut (and further, that his mistress's husband was a leper responsible, at one remove, for infecting him). And even though we know that Iseut has a strategy to exculpate herself, we are surely surprised by her ingenious ruse: riding Tristral, as if horseback, across a ford and then piously swearing (before God, the world's holy relics, and the assembled courts of Mark and King Arthur) that no man other than the leper and her husband had ever been between her thighs.

The text, although fragmentary, gives clear evidence of Béroul's mastery of literary structure. The story is fundamentally cyclical or spiral (as, by the nature of the legend, are most medieval *Tristan* stories): the lovers separate or resolve to reform, thereby setting Mark's suspicions to rest; they find themselves unable to resist their passionate attraction for long; they resume their trysts; their enemies become jealous again and inform Mark; the results of that knowledge require separation or exile—and the cycle begins anew.

Overriding this cyclic repetition, however, is a clear direction and development, as the spirals generally become larger and events are presented in greater detail. The most elaborately prepared and executed scene is that of the equivocal oath Iseut swears to establish her innocence. Béroul lavishes attention and effort on the preparations for the oath. There is a festive spirit of rollicking fun and mock-seriousness, an atmosphere of carnival; after all, the occasion of the queen's exculpation is largely a celebration, a joyous event that will reunite her with Mark and permit her return to

court. Great crowds assemble for feasts and jousting; there are hunting in the forest and music through the night. Tristran, disguised as a leprous beggar, delights in separating the people from their food and money and humiliating his enemies. The carnivalesque tone persists in the image of the elegant queen (beautifully described in lines 3899–3911) astride a stumbling leper and, finally, in her solemn but deceptive oath. This clearly is the climax of the text.

But the story does not end there, and it is not easy to imagine that later events, perhaps even the lovers' deaths, would not appear anticlimactic. Certainly, the deaths of two of Tristran's enemies, recounted rather briefly at the end of the fragmentary text, will strike readers as understated, perhaps even as a minor event, when contrasted to the scope, the detail, and the complexity of the trial scene. But of course, conclusions about Béroul's method here must be very tentative, for unless we make the dangerous assumption that the end of his romance would agree with Eilhart's, we have no way to know what he wrote after line 4485, how he developed and presented his conclusion, or how effective it may have been.

In any event, the text we have reveals beyond any doubt that he was a master at directing his audience's reaction to his story and characters. Not only does he call attention to new or important events ("Lords, now listen well!") and give us specific assurance of his facts and their interpretation ("I know that..."), but he also establishes character and truth by the deceptively simply method of stating them categorically. The proof of his success lies in the fact that most casual readers, and many careful ones, will accept the characterization of Tristran's enemies as felons, traitors, and slanderers without considering the fact that they invariably tell the truth.

Similarly, many readers will choose to ignore the fact that the lovers are hardly examples of virtue; Tristran and Iseut are adulterers and liars, and Tristran betrays the man who is both his uncle and his feudal lord. Yet, Béroul makes the lovers sympathetic by praising their beauty and devotion, lamenting their suffering, and, above all, informing us at every turn that God is on their side and will destroy their enemies.

A traditional explanation for the sympathy they evoke is the love potion, which they drank by mistake. They themselves insist to the hermit Ogrin that they love each other only because of the potion (see lines 1384, 1413–15), and they cannot resist its power. If a potion is responsible for their love, then (the argument would go) they cannot be held responsible for their actions.

However, the events of the story and the lovers' actions undermine that very argument. In texts belonging to the courtly tradition, the potion, often more symbol than literal cause, is of unlimited duration. In Béroul's *Tristran*, on the other hand, the potion was "made to last three years." When its power wanes, both of the lovers (now leading a miserable life in the forest) suffer from profound regrets, and they decide that Iseut must be returned to Mark. But we must read with unusual care at this point, for things are not what they may seem. In fact, it appears that the lovers regret neither their past sin nor the harm they have done Mark, but instead the fact that the potion has deprived them of a life of comfort and luxury. Their concerns are far more material than moral. Furthermore, once the crisis has passed, they promptly revert to their customary behavior, their meetings casting serious doubt on their desire to reform and removing any suspicion that their love may have waned with the potion.

It is not only in this episode that events or characters are deceiving. Throughout the romance, appearances are illusory. Twice Iseut swears oaths that, while literally true, cause others to believe a lie. A church from which "no one could escape" offers Tristran a means of escape. Mark concludes that the adulterers are guiltless because he finds a sword separating the sleeping couple; and when he leaves his sword in its place to indicate his belief in their innocence, they conclude that he thinks them guilty. In this atmosphere of illusion, deception, and ambiguity, Béroul leaves us only one sure guide to interpretation: himself, as narrator. And his text makes it clear that he relishes the role.

It may be thought curious that Béroul had few if any imitators. The obvious explanation, however, is that the tastes of the literary public of the late twelfth century were turning strongly toward the refined and introspective analysis of courtly love. Such analysis was being performed at that time in Thomas's *Tristan* and in the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the greatest romancer of medieval France. In Thomas, Chrétien de Troyes, Marie de France, and others, passion was joined to tenderness, suffering often took the form of pining, and all of it offered characters and authors alike the opportunity both to dissect emotions and to demonstrate their considerable rhetorical skills.

Béroul's characters are by no means lacking in emotion; indeed, the lovers are the victims of relentless passion. But Béroul posits instead of analyzing, and he is a poet of action and irony more than of introspection and rhetorical display. Yet he is adept in the use of concrete detail and in the creation of humor. His style is vigorous, direct, and exuberant, and he has an impressive command of his technical resources. His romance is undeniably worth knowing, and readers who approach it in its own terms, without bringing to it rigid expectations drawn from Thomas or Gottfried—or, for that matter, Wagner—will find it to be an unusually appealing and admirable creation.

#### *Editorial Policy for this Edition and Translation*

The *Tristran* is preserved, as a long fragment of almost 4500 lines, in a single manuscript: f. fr. 2171 of the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The manuscript, which dates from the second half of the thirteenth century, is in relatively poor condition, having suffered not only the loss of leaves from the beginning and end (leaving thirty-two leaves, of two columns per side) but also a good deal of damage from moisture and tearing. Particularly in the first few folios, a good many lines can be deciphered with great difficulty or not at all.

Béroul's text presents his editors and translators with unusual problems, which are both fascinating and daunting. Those problems, detailed in my notes, go well beyond the fragmentary nature of the text and the recurring lacunae. The most troublesome difficulties derive from the practices of the scribe of MS. 2171: he works carelessly, allowing his eye to stray frequently to adjacent lines (where he is likely to pick up words and copy them in contexts where they do not belong); he often repeats lines or inverts the lines of a couplet. There are a number of metrically (or otherwise) defective lines. He also makes capricious and sometimes illogical alterations, whether because he misunderstands his source or because, with misguided good intentions, he wants to clarify it.

Fortunately, an editor who confronts Béroul's *Tristran* also has access to guidance in the form of several lengthy textual commentaries as well as numerous article-length discussions of specific textual problems. Such studies have proven invaluable in solving a great many textual problems, and I have frequently consulted, in particular, the commentaries of Ewert, Reid, and Sandqvist, as well as Muret's fourth edition (revised by "L.M. Defourques") and that of Ewert.

My original 1989 edition was, I believe, the first to take into account Sven Sandqvist's commentary, published in 1984 (Guy Mermier's 1987 edition appears not to have made use of it). Citing parallel constructions from other Old French texts, Sandqvist has suggested that a number of manuscript readings regularly emended by past editors are grammatically or syntactically acceptable and should be kept. He is occasionally too conservative, preferring to retain passages that are only remotely possible, but his study has been a useful addition to the extensive commentary on Béroul, and I have followed him in a number of instances.

The present edition and translation are lightly revised versions of my 1989 publication in the Garland Library of Medieval Literature. The helpful comments of reviewers, as well as the example offered by Stewart Gregory's fine 1992 edition of Béroul, have led me to reconsider my position on a number of textual problems. In some instances that reconsideration has led me to different solutions of those difficulties; in other cases I have evaluated alternatives but have retained my original interpretation.

My approach to editing has remained deliberately conservative and traditional, more than some editors would like, though perhaps not as much as Sandqvist might counsel. In general, if the manuscript reading makes reasonable sense, I retain it; if emendation is required, I seek the reading that disrupts the text the least. My notes most often explain my choices, particularly where stylistic considerations determine the textual treatment.

I include a list of rejected readings from the manuscript. The manuscript also includes large numbers of expunctuated words and phrases; they are not given as rejected readings, but I indicate most of them in the notes to give a thorough account of the condition of the text.

The translation is intended to elucidate the original, but I have also sought to provide a text that can stand alone, without the Old French. My policy has been to remain as close to the original as appropriate English style will permit. Not infrequently, though, the demands of a line-for-line translation place too great a strain on English syntax and require some adjustments; accordingly, I have not hesitated to invert the order of translated lines or to take other small liberties with the text in order to provide an acceptable English text. In particular, I have limited myself to narration in the past, although Béroul, like most Old French narrative poets, freely mixes past and present tenses to recount the action of his story.

I have inserted asterisks in the text to indicate that commentary is provided by notes. Asterisks in the Old French text refer to textual and linguistic matters; in the translation they identify notes that deal with content, technique, cultural matters, and problems of translation.

*Events Lacking from Béroul's Fragment*

From related works we can reconstruct the probable content, though not the specific detail, of the missing portion of Béroul's romance. What has been lost doubtless told the following story:

Tristran was a young knight trained by his tutor and squire Governal. After leaving the Continent for Cornwall, he distinguished himself at the court of King Mark by defeating and killing the Morholt, an Irish giant who had terrorized the land and demanded Cornish youths as tribute. A fragment of Tristran's sword remained embedded in the Morholt's skull, where it was found by the giant's niece Iseut.

Mark later sent Tristran on a mission to find a suitable wife for him. Arriving in Ireland, the young knight killed a dragon but was overcome by its poison. Iseut cared for him, but one day she noticed the notch in Tristran's sword, matched it with the fragment, and knew that he had killed her uncle. She wanted to kill him but did not, preferring to forgo vengeance and leave with him for Mark's court rather than remain and face the unwanted marriage planned for her in her own country.

It was on the voyage back to Cornwall that the two of them accidentally drank a love potion and fell hopelessly in love. Once Iseut and Mark were married, the lady's servant Brangain concealed the bride's loss of virginity by sacrificing her own virginity to Mark in the nuptial bed.

The two lovers continued to meet and indulge their love, but jealous barons and an evil dwarf at court began to plot against them and plant suspicions in Mark's mind. One day, informed by the dwarf that the couple planned to meet beneath a pine tree by a spring, the king concealed himself in the tree to spy on them. Arriving at the fountain, the lovers happened to see Mark's reflection in the water and realized that they were in danger, Iseut spoke first, and it is at that point that Béroul's text begins.



- .....  
 Que nul senblant de rien en face  
 Com ele aprisme son ami.  
 Oiez com el l'a devanci:  
 5        “Sire Tristran, por Deu le roi,  
 Si grant pechié avez de moi,  
 Qui me mandez a itel ore!”  
 Or fait senblant con s'ele plore.  
 ..... mie\*  
 10      ..... mes en vie.  
 ..... ceste asenblee  
 ..... s'espee  
 .....  
 .....  
 15      Conme .....  
 “Par Deu, qui l'air fist et la mer,  
 Ne me mandez nule foiz mais.  
 Je vos di bien, Tristran, a fais,  
 Certes, je n'i vendroie mie.  
 20      Li rois pense que par folie,  
 Sire Tristran, vos aie amé;  
 Mais Dex plevis ma loiauté,  
 Qui sor mon cors mete flaele,  
 S'onques fors cil qui m'ot pucele  
 25      Out m'amistié encor nul jor!  
 Se li felon de cest'enor,  
 Por qui jadis vos combatistes  
 O le Morhout, quant l'oceïstes,  
 Li font acroire, ce me senble,  
 30      Que nos amors jostent ensenble,  
 Sire, vos n'en avez talent;  
 Ne je, par Deu omnipotent,  
 N'ai corage de drüerie  
 Qui tort a nule vilanie.  
 35      Mex voudroie que je fuse arse,  
 Aval le vent la poudre esparse,  
 Jor que je vive que amor  
 Aie o home qu'o mon seignor;  
 Et, Dex! si ne m'en croit il pas.  
 40      Je puis dire: de haut si bas!  
 Sire, molt dist voir Salemon:  
 Qui de forches traient larron,  
 Ja pus nes amerai nul jor.  
 Se li felon de cest'enor  
 45      .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 ..... aise .... parole

not to give any sign of it  
as she approached her friend.  
Listen how she warned him:

"Lord Tristran, for God's sake,  
you are doing me great harm  
by sending for me at such an hour!"  
Then she pretended to weep!

5

10

"In the name of God, who created the air and sea,  
never send for me again!

Tristran, I assure you, regretfully,  
that I would not come.

Lord Tristran, the king thinks  
that I have loved you sinfully;  
but I affirm my fidelity before God,  
and may He punish me  
if anyone except the man who took my virginity  
ever had my love.\*

Even though the slanderous barons of this land,  
for whose sake you once fought  
with the Morholt and killed him,\*  
have obviously convinced the king  
that we are united by love,  
sir, you have no such desire;  
nor, in the name of almighty God, do I  
have a desire for any love  
that leads to sin and shame.

I would rather be burned alive  
and have my ashes scattered in the wind  
than ever in my life to love  
any man except my lord.

Oh, God! But he does not believe me!  
I can truly say: how far I have fallen! 40

Sir, Solomon told the truth:  
those who save a thief from the gallows  
will never be loved by him.

If the traitors of this land

- 1c
- ..... a nos deüsent il celer.  
 50 Molt vos estut mal endurer  
 De la plaie que vos preïstes  
 En la bataille que feïstes  
 O mon oncle. Je vos gari;  
 Se vos m'en eriez ami,  
 55 N'ert pas merveille, par ma foi!  
 Et il ont fait entendre au roi  
 Que vos m'amez d'amor vilaine.  
 Si voient il Deu et son reigne,  
 Ja nul verroient en la face.  
 60 Tristran, gardez en nule place  
 Ne me mandez por nule chose:  
 Je ne seroie pas tant ose  
 Que je i osase venir.  
 Trop demor ci, n'en quier mentir:  
 65 S'or en savoit li rois un mot,  
 Mon cors seret desmenbré tot,  
 Et si seroit a molt grant tort;  
 Bien sai qu'il me dorroit la mort!  
 Tristran, certes, li rois ne set  
 70 Que por lui par vos aie ameit:  
 Por ce qu'eres du parenté  
 Vos avoie je en cherté.  
 Je quidai jadis que ma mere  
 Amast molt les parenz mon pere;  
 75 Et disoit ce, que la mollier\*  
 N'en avroit ja son seignor chier  
 Qui les parenz n'en amereit.  
 Certes, bien sai que voir diset.  
 Sire, molt t'ai por lui amé  
 80 E j'en ai tot perdu son gré.”  
 “Certes, et il n'en .....,  
 Porqoi seroit tot suen li .....,  
 Si home li ont fait acroire  
 De nos tel chose qui n'est voire.”  
 85 “Sire Tristran, que volez dire?  
 Molt est cortois li rois, mi sire;  
 Ja nu pensast nul jor par lui  
 Q'en cest pensé fuson andui.  
 Mais l'en puet home desveier,  
 90 Faire le mal et bien laisier.\*  
 Si a l'on fait de mon seignor.  
 Tristran, vois m'en, trop i demor.”  
 “Dame, por amor Deu, merci!  
 Mandai toi, et or es ici:  
 95 Entent un poi a ma proiere.  
 Ja t'ai je tant tenue chiere!”

..... they should hide it from us.	
You had to endure great pain from the wound you received in your battle with my uncle. I healed you, and if you became my friend as a result, I find that hardly surprising, I swear.	50
Yet they have made the king believe that you love me sinfully. Let them come before God and His kingdom: they would not look upon His face!*	55
Tristran, take care not to send for me again in any place or for any reason.	60
I would not be so bold that I would dare come to you. To tell the truth, I have stayed here too long: if the king even suspected it,	65
I would be drawn and quartered at once, and it would be such a terrible injustice! I'm sure that he would have me killed! Tristran, surely the king does not know	
that he himself is the reason I have loved you: because you were his relative, I held you very dear.	70
I recall that in the past my mother loved my father's family a great deal, and she said that a wife does not truly love her husband if she does not also love his relatives.	75
Indeed, I know she was telling the truth. Sir, I loved you for his sake, and I have thereby lost his favor."	80
"Surely he did not .....	
How could this be all his ....? His men made him believe something untrue about us."	
"Lord Tristran, what do you mean?	85
The king, my husband, is very honorable. He would never, of his own accord, have suspected that we might share such a thought.	
But a man can be misled and made to do wrong and abandon good.	90
That is what they have done to my husband. Tristran, I am leaving now; I have stayed too long."	
"My lady, for God's sake, have mercy! · I sent for you, and you are here: at least listen a bit to my entreaty.	95
I have held you in such high esteem!"	

- 1d
- Qant out oï parler sa drue,  
 Sout que s'estoit aperceüe.  
 Deu en rent graces et merci,  
 100 Or set que bien istront de ci.  
 "Ahi! Yseut, fille de roi,  
 Franche, cortoise, bone foi  
 Par plusors foiz vos ai mandee  
 Puis que chanbre me fu veee;\*  
 105 Ne puis ne poi a vos parler.  
 Dame, or vos vuel merci crier,  
 Qu'il vos menbre de cest chaitif  
 Qui a traval et a duel vif;  
 Qar j'ai tel duel c'onques le roi  
 110 Out mal pensé de vos vers moi  
 Qu'il n'i a el fors que je meure.  
 Fort m'est a cuer que je ...  
 Dame, granz .....
- .....
- 115 .....  
 ..... ne fai  
 ..... mon corage  
 ..... qu'il fust si sage  
 Qu'il n'en creüst pas losengier  
 120 Moi desor lui a esloignier.  
 Li fel covert Corneualeis  
 Or en sont lié et font gabois.  
 Or voi je bien, si con je quit,  
 Qu'il ne voudroient que o lui  
 125 Eüst home de son linage.  
 Molt m'a pené son mariage.  
 Dex! porquoи est li rois si fol?  
 Ainz me lairoie par le col  
 Pendre a un arbre q'en ma vie  
 130 O vos preïse drüerie.  
 Il ne me lait sol escondire.  
 Por ses felons vers moi s'aire,  
 Trop par fait mal qu'il les en croit:  
 Deceü l'ont, gote ne voit!  
 135 Molt les vi ja taisant et muz,  
 Qant li Morhot fu ça venuz,  
 Ou nen i out uns d'eus tot sous  
 Qui osast prendre ses adous.  
 Molt vi mon oncle iluec pensis:  
 140 Mex vosist estre mort que vis.  
 Por s'onor croistre m'en armai,  
 Conbatи m'en, si l'en chaçai.  
 Ne deüst pas mis oncles chiers  
 De moi croire ses losengiers—
- 2a

- When he heard his mistress speak,  
he realized that she understood.  
He gave praise and thanks to God;  
now he knew they would escape without harm. 100
- "Oh, Iseut, daughter of a king,  
noble, honorable, and faithful woman,  
I have often sent for you,  
since I am not permitted in your chamber;\*  
but I have not been able to speak with you. 105
- Lady, I now implore you mercy  
and ask that you remember this unhappy man  
who suffers pain and bitter sorrow;  
for I am so saddened to think that the king  
ever thought badly of you on account of me,  
that there is nothing left for me to do but die! 110
- My only desire is to .....  
Lady, .....  
..... 115  
.....  
.....
- ..... that he were wise enough  
not to believe the liars\*  
who urged him to banish me from his presence! 120
- The traitors from Cornwall  
laugh and joke about it.  
Now I see clearly and understand that  
they do not want him  
to have any of his kinsmen with him. 125
- His marriage has caused me a great deal of pain.  
God! Why is the king so foolish?  
I would let myself be hanged  
from a tree before I would ever  
become your lover! 130
- But he does not even permit me to defend myself.\*  
Because of his traitors he is angry with me.  
He is completely wrong to believe them:  
they have deceived him, and he cannot see that!  
I noticed that they said not a word 135
- when the Morholt came here,  
nor was there a single one of them  
who dared take up arms.  
I saw that my uncle was very concerned then:  
he would rather have been dead than alive. 140
- But I armed myself in order to defend his honor;  
I did battle, and I drove away the Morholt.  
My dear uncle should not have believed  
what his informers have said about me!

- 145 Sovent en ai mon cuer irié!  
 Pensé il que n'en ait pechié?\*  
 Certes, oil, n'i faudra mie.  
 Por Deu, le fiz Sainte Marie,  
 Dame, ore li dites errant  
 150 Qu'il face faire un feu ardant;  
 E je m'en entrerai el ré.  
 Se ja un poil en ai bruslé  
 De la haire qu'avrai vestu,  
 Si me laist tot ardoir u feu;  
 155 Qar je sai bien n'a de sa cort  
 Qui a bataille o moi s'en tort.  
 Dame, por vostre grant franchise,  
 Donc ne vos en est pitié prise?  
 Dame, je vos en cri merci:  
 160 Tenez moi bien a mon ami.  
 Quant je vinc ça a lui par mer,\*  
 Com a seignor i vol torner."  
     "Par foi, sire, grant tort avez,  
 Qui de tel chose a moi parlez  
 165 Que de vos le mete a raison  
 Et de s'ire face pardon.  
 Je ne vuel pas encor morir  
 Ne moi du tot en tot perir.  
 Il vos mescroit de moi forment,  
 170 Et j'en tendrai le parlement?  
 Donc seroie je trop hardie.  
 Par foi, Tristran, n'en ferai mie,  
 Ne vos nu me devez requerre.  
 Tote sui sole en ceste terre.  
 175 Il vos a fait chanbres veer  
 Por moi: s'il or m'en ot parler,  
 Bien me porroit tenir por fole.  
 Par foi, ja n'en dirai parole;  
 Et si vos dirai une rien,  
 180 Si vuel que vos le saciés bien:  
 Se il vos pardounot, beau sire,  
 Par Deu, son matalent et s'ire,  
 J'en seroie joiouse et lie.  
 S'or savoit ceste chevauchie,  
 185 Cel sai je bien que ja resort,  
 Tristran, n'avreie contre la mort.  
 Vois m'en, imais ne prendrai some.  
 Grant poor ai que aucun home  
 Ne nos ait ci veü venir.  
 190 S'un mot en puet li rois oïr  
 Que nos fuson ça asenblé,  
 Il me feroit ardoir en ré.

2b

- I am constantly enraged by it!145  
 Does he think he is not harmed by this?  
 Yes, surely, he cannot fail to be!  
 In the name of God, the son of the Virgin Mary,  
 lady, tell him immediately  
 to have a hot fire made,150  
 and I will enter the pyre.  
 If even a single hair is singed  
 on the hair-shirt I will be wearing,  
 then let him have me consumed by the fire;  
 for I know that there is no one at court155  
 who will dare do battle with me.  
 Lady, in your generosity,  
 do you not take pity?  
 Lady, I implore your mercy:  
 reconcile me with my friend.160  
 When I came to him here, from across the sea,  
 I did so in order to serve him as my lord."  
 "By my faith, sir, it is wrong of you  
 to speak to me of such a thing,165  
 asking me to talk with him about you  
 and calm his anger:  
 I am not ready to die  
 or kill myself!  
 He strongly suspects your intentions toward me—170  
 and yet I should speak on your behalf?  
 That would be far too rash!  
 On my word, Tristran, I will not do it,  
 and you should not ask me to!  
 I am all alone in this land.  
 He has denied you admission to the bed chamber175  
 on my account; if he now heard me speak about this,  
 he would surely consider me guilty.  
 Indeed, I will not say a word about it;  
 but I will tell you something,180  
 and I want you to know it truly:  
 good sir, if he did pardon you  
 for provoking his displeasure and wrath,  
 I would be most pleased and happy.  
 But if he knew of this meeting,  
 I am sure there is no way, Tristran,185  
 that I could escape death.  
 I am leaving, but I will not sleep:  
 I greatly fear that someone  
 may have seen us come here.  
 If the king heard even a hint190  
 that we were together here,  
 he would have me burned on a pyre,

- Ne seret pas merveille grant.  
 Mis cors tremble, poor ai grant.  
 195 De la poor qui or me prent  
 Vois m'en, trop sui ci longuement."  
     Iseut s'en torne, il la rapele:  
 "Dame, por Deu, qui en pucele  
 Prist por le pueple umanité,  
 200 Conselliez moi, par charité.  
 Bien sai, n'i osez mais remaindre.  
 Fors a vos ne sai a qui plaindre;  
 Bien sai que molt me het li rois.  
 Engagiez est tot mon hernois.  
 205 Car le me faites delivrer:  
 Si m'en fuirai, n'i os ester.  
 Bien sai que j'ai si grant prooise,\*  
 Par tote terre ou sol adoise  
 Bien sai que u monde n'a cort,  
 210 S'i vois, li sires ne m'avot;  
 Et se onques point du suen oi,\*                  2c  
 Yseut, par cest mien chief le bloi,  
 Nel se voudroit avoir pensé  
 Mes oncles, ainz un an passé,  
 215 Por si grant d'or com il est toz.  
 Ne vos en qier mentir deus moz.  
 Yseut, por Deu, de moi pensez,  
 Envers mon oste m'aquitez."  
     "Par Deu, Tristran, molt me mervel,  
 220 Qui me donez itel conseil.  
 Vos m'alez porchaçant mon mal.  
 Icest conseil n'est pas loial.  
 Vos savez bien la mescreance,  
 Ou soit a voir ou set enfance.  
 225 Par Deu, li sire glorios,  
 Qui forma ciel et terre et nos,  
 Se il en ot un mot parler  
 Que vos gages face aquiter,  
 Trop par seroit aperte chose.  
 230 Certes, je ne sui pas si osse,\*  
 Ne nel vos di por averté,  
 Ce saciés vos de verité."  
     Atant s'en est Iseut tornee,  
 Tristran l'a plorant salüee.  
 235 Sor le perron de marbre bis  
 Tristran s'apuie, ce m'est vis;  
 Demente soi a lui tot sol:  
 "Ha, Dex! Beau sire Saint Evrol,\*  
 Je ne pensai faire tel perte  
 240 Ne foïr m'en a tel poverte!

and that would come as no surprise.

I am trembling; I am terribly afraid.

Because I am so frightened, I am leaving;

I have stayed here too long."

195

Iseut turned away, and he called her back:

"Lady, in the name of God who, in the Virgin,

took human form to save the world,

have compassion and advise me!"

200

I know that you dare not stay any longer,

but you are the only one to whom I can address my plea;

I know very well that the king hates me.

My equipment has been confiscated;

have it returned to me,

205

and I will flee; I dare not stay.

I know my prowess is so great

that in any land in the world where I might set foot,

there is surely no court

where, if I went there, the lord would not welcome me;

210

then, even if I did have something of my uncle's,\*

Iseut, I swear upon my fair head

that before the year is out,

he would wish he had never had such a thought,

even for his own weight in gold.

215

Every word I am telling you is true.

Iseut, in God's name, think of me

and settle my debt to my host."

"In God's name, Tristran, I am astonished

that you should make such a request!

220

You are trying to ruin me!

This is not the advice of a loyal friend.

You know very well what suspicion can do,

whether it be truth or folly.

In the name of God, our glorious Lord,

225

who created heaven and earth and us,

if Mark heard even a hint

that I had settled your debts,

he would take that as proof positive.

I certainly do not dare do it!

230

And I am not refusing out of avarice;

you can be confident of that!"

Then Iseut left,

and Tristran, weeping, waved farewell.

He then, I believe,

235

leaned against the dark marble stone

and lamented to himself,

"Oh, God! Dear lord Saint Ebrulfus,

I never thought I would suffer such a loss

or have to flee in such poverty!"

240

- N'en merré armes ne cheval,  
Ne compaignon fors Governal.  
Ha, Dex! D'ome desatorné,  
Petit fait om de lui cherté!
- 245      Qant je serai en autre terre  
S'oi chevalier parler de gerre,      2d  
Ge ne'n oserai mot soner:  
Hom nu n'a nul leu de parler.  
Or m'estovra sofrir fortune,  
Trop m'avra fait mal et rancune!  
Beaus oncles, poi me deconnut  
Qui de ta feme me mescrut:  
Onques n'oi talent de tel rage.  
Petit savroit a mon corage.
- 255      .....  
.....  
....."
- Li rois qui sus en l'arbre estoit  
Out l'asenblee bien veüe  
Et la raison tote entendue.  
De la pitié q'au cor li prist,  
Qu'il ne plorast ne s'en tenist  
Por nul avoir; molt a grant duel,\*  
Molt het le nain de Tintaguel.
- 260      "Las!" fait li rois, "or ai veü  
Que li nains m'a trop deceü.  
En cest arbre me fist monter,  
Il ne me pout plus ahonter;  
De mon nevo me fist entendre  
Mençonge, porqoi ferai pendre.  
Por ce me fist metre en aïr,  
De ma mollier faire haïr.  
Ge l'en crui et si fis que fous.
- 265      Li gerredon l'en sera sous:  
Se je le puis as poinz tenir,  
Par feu ferai son cors fenir.  
Par moi avra plus dure fin  
Que ne fist faire Costentin  
A Segocon, qu'il escolla
- 270      Qant o sa feme le trova.  
Il l'avoit coroné a Rome.      3a  
Et la servoient maint prodome.  
Il la tint chiere et honora:  
En lié mesfist, puis en plora."
- 275      Tristran s'en ert pieça alez.  
Li rois de l'arbre est devalez;  
En son cuer dit or croit sa feme  
Et mescroit les barons du reigne,

I will take with me neither arms nor a horse,  
nor any companion except Gouvernal.

Oh, God! A poor man  
is held in esteem by no one!

When I am in another country,  
if I hear a knight talking of war,  
I will not dare to say a word:  
an unarmed man has no right to speak of that.

Now I will have to bear what fate brings me,  
and it will surely bring great misfortune and grief.

Dear uncle, whoever suspected my conduct  
with your wife did not know me well:

I had no desire to commit such folly!

He would know nothing of what is in my heart!"

245

250

255

The king, who was up in the tree,  
had witnessed the meeting first hand  
and had heard the whole conversation.

He was so overcome by pity  
that he could not help crying.

His sorrow was great,  
and he hated the dwarf of Tintagel.

"Alas," cried the king, "now I have seen  
that the dwarf thoroughly deceived me!

He made me climb this tree  
and could not have disgraced me more completely.

He made me believe a lie  
about my nephew, and for that I will have him hanged,  
for he stirred up my anger  
and made my wife hate me.

I believed him and thus acted the fool.

He will get what is due him:

If I get my hands on him, 275  
I will have him burned to death!

He will meet a worse fate at my hands  
than that inflicted by Constantine  
on Segoncin, whom he had castrated  
when he found him with his wife.\*

(He had crowned her in Rome,  
and many good men served her;  
he first cherished and honored her,  
but then mistreated her and eventually regretted it.)"

260

265

270

275

280

Tristran had left earlier. 285

The king came down from the tree.

He told himself that he now believed his wife  
and doubted the barons of his land,

- Qui li faisoient chose acroire  
 290 Que il set bien que n'est pas voire  
 Et qu'il a prové a mençonge.  
 Or ne laira qu'au nain ne donge  
 O s'espee si sa merite  
 Par lui n'iert mais traïson dite.
- Ne jamais jor ne mescroira  
 295 Tristran d'Iseut, ainz lor laira  
 La chanbre tot a lor voloir:  
 "Or puis je bien enfin savoir.  
 Se feüst voir, ceste asenblee  
 300 Ne feüst pas issi finee.  
 S'il s'amaserent de fol'amor,  
 Ci avoient asez leislor,  
 Bien les veïse entrebaisier.  
 Ges ai oï si gramoier,
- 305 Or sai je bien n'en ont corage.  
 Porqoi cro je si fort outrage?  
 Ce poise moi, si m'en repent:  
 Molt est fous qui croit tote gent.  
 Bien deüse ainz avoir prové
- 310 De ces deus genz la verité  
 Que je eüse fol espoir.  
 Buen virent aprimier cest soir.  
 Au parlement ai tant apris  
 Jamais jor n'en serai pensis.
- 315 Par matinet sera paiez  
 Tristran o moi, s'avra congiez  
 D'estre a ma chanbre a son plesir.\*
- 320 Oiez du nain boçu Frocin.  
 Fors estoit, si gardoit en l'er,  
 Vit Orient et Lucifer.  
 Des estoiles le cors savoit,  
 Les set planestres devisoit;
- 325 Il savoit bien que ert a estre:  
 Quant il oiet un enfant nestre,  
 Les poinz contot toz de sa vie.  
 Li nains Frocins, plains de voisdie,  
 Molt se penout de cel deçoivre\*
- 330 Qui de l'ame le feroit soivre.  
 As estoiles choisist l'asente,  
 De mautalent rogist et enfle,  
 Bien set li rois fort le menace,  
 Ne laira pas qu'il nu desface.
- 335 Molt est li nain nerci et pales,  
 Molt tost s'en vet fuiant vers Gales.

3b

for they had made him believe something  
 that he realized was untrue,  
 something he now knew to be a lie.  
 Now, with his sword, he will not fail  
 to give the dwarf his due,  
 so that never again would he speak evil!

290

And never again would Mark suspect  
 Tristran's intentions concerning Iseut. Instead,  
 he would let them meet at will in the bed chamber.

295

"Now I finally know the truth.  
 If the rumors were true, this meeting  
 would not have ended this way.  
 If they were lovers,  
 they had enough time here:  
 I would have seen them kiss each other.  
 But I heard them lamenting  
 and know they have no improper desires.  
 Why did I believe such outrageous rumors?  
 I regret it now and I repent:  
 he is a fool who believes everyone.

300

I should have established  
 the truth about these two  
 before accepting this foolish notion.  
 This evening was auspicious for them:  
 hearing them speak taught me enough  
 that I will never again be worried about them.  
 Tomorrow morning, Tristran will be reconciled  
 with me, and he will have permission  
 to be in my chamber whenever he wishes.  
 Now his departure,  
 which he had planned for the morning, is postponed."

310

Now hear about the hunchbacked dwarf Frocin.\*  
 He was outdoors, he looked up at the sky,  
 and he was Orion and Venus.\*  
 He knew the course of the stars  
 and observed the seven planets.  
 He knew the future,  
 and when he heard a newborn's cry,  
 he could foretell its entire life.  
 The malicious dwarf Frocin  
 had taken great pains to deceive  
 the man who one day would kill him.\*  
 He observed the ascent of the stars  
 and flushed and bristled with rage;  
 he knew that the king was threatening him  
 and would not give up until he had killed him.  
 The dwarf's face became livid;  
 he fled as quickly as he could to Wales.

315

320

325

330

335

- Li rois vait molt le nain querant,  
 Nu peut trover, s'en a duel grant.  
 Yseut est en sa chanbre entreer.
- 340    Brengain la vit descoloree,  
 Bien sout que ele avoit oï  
 Tel rien dont out le cuer marri,  
 Qui si muoit et palisoit;
- \*
- 345    Ele respont, "Bele magistre,  
 Bien doi estre pensive et tristre.  
 Brengain, ne vos vel pa mentir:  
 Ne sai qui hui nos vont traïr,  
 Mais li rois Marc estoit en l'arbre,
- 350    Ou li perrons estait de marbre.  
 Je vi son onbre en la fontaine.  
 Dex me fist parler premeraine.                  3c  
 Onques de ce que je i quis  
 N'i out mot dit, ce vos plevis,
- 355    Mais mervellos complaignement  
 Et mervellos gemissement.  
 Gel blasme que il me mandot,  
 Et il autretant me priout  
 Que l'acordase a mon seignor,
- 360    Qui, a grant tort, ert a error  
 Vers lui de moi; et je li dis  
 Que grant folie avoit requis,  
 Que je a lui mais ne vendroie  
 Ne ja au roi ne parleroie.
- 365    Ne sai que je plus racontasse.  
 Conplainz i out une grant masse;  
 Onques li rois ne s'aperçut,  
 Ne mon estre ne desconnut.  
 Partie me sui du tripot."
- 370    Quant l'ot Brengain, molt s'en esjot:  
 "Iseut, ma dame, grant merci  
 Nos a Dex fait, qui ne menti,  
 Qant il vos a fait desevrer  
 Du parlement sanz plus outrer,
- 375    Que li rois n'a chose veüe  
 Qui ne puise estr'en bien tenue.  
 Granz miracles vos a fait Dex,  
 Il est verais peres et tex  
 Qu'il n'a cure de faire mal
- 380    A ceus qui sont buen et loial."  
 Tristran ravoit tot raconté  
 A son mestre com out ouvré.  
 Qant conter l'ot, Deu en mercie  
 Que plus n'i out fait o s'amie.

The king looked everywhere for the dwarf  
but, to his great sorrow, could not find him.

Iseut entered her room.

Brangain saw that she was pale  
and knew that she had heard  
something that distressed her  
so that her color changed and she became pale.

340

Iseut answered, "Dear mistress,\*  
I have good reason to be pensive and sad.  
Brangain, I will not lie to you:  
I do not know who tried to betray us today,  
but King Mark was in the tree  
near the marble stone.  
I saw his shadow in the fountain.  
God led me to speak first.  
No word was said  
about what brought me there, I assure you—  
only great laments  
and prodigious sighs!"

345

I condemned Tristran for sending for me,  
and he, on the other hand, begged me  
to reconcile him with my lord,  
who so unjustly was mistaken  
about his relationship with me; and I told him  
that his request was foolish,  
that I would never meet him again  
and that I would not speak to the king.  
I do not know what more I could have said.

355

There were a great many laments.  
the king was not aware of anything,  
nor did he suspect my real feelings,  
and I escaped from the trap."

360

When Brangain heard this, she was overjoyed:  
"Iseut my lady, God, who never fails us,  
had mercy on us  
when He let you conclude  
the conversation without going further,  
for the king witnessed nothing  
that could not be seen in a favorable light.  
God has performed a great miracle for you!  
He is our true Father,  
and has no desire to harm  
those who are good and true."

370

375

Tristran, too, told his master\*  
how he had managed the situation.  
When he heard this, he thanked God  
that he and Iseut had not done more.

380

- 385      Ne pout son nain trover li rois.  
 Dex! tant ert a Tristran sordois!  
 A sa chanbre li rois en vient.  
 Iseut le voit, qui molt le crient:  
 "Sire, por Deu, dont venez vos?  
 390      Avez besoin, qui venez sous?"  
           "Roïne, ainz vien a vos parler  
           Et une chose demander.  
           Si ne me celez pas le voir,  
           Qar la verté en vuel savoir."  
 395      "Sire, onques jor ne vos menti.  
           Se la mort doi recevoir ci,  
           S'en dirai je le voir du tot:  
           Ja n'i avra menti d'un mot."  
           "Dame, veïs puis mon nevo?"  
 400      "Sire, le voir vos en desno.  
           Ne croiras pas que voir en die.  
           Mais jel dirai sanz tricherie:  
           Gel vi et pus parlai a lui;  
           O ton nevo soz cel pin fui.  
 405      Or m'en oci, roi, se tu veus!  
           Certes, gel vi: ce est grant deus;  
           Qar tu penses que j'aim Tristran  
           Par puterie et par anjen;  
 410      Si ai tel duel que moi n'en chaut  
           Se tu me fais prendre un mal saut.  
           Sire, merci a celle foiz!  
           Je t'ai voir dit, si ne m'en croiz,\*  
           Einz croiz parole fole et vainc;\*  
           Ma bone foi me fera saine.  
 415      Tristran, tes niés, vint soz cel pin  
           Qui est laienz en cel jardin,  
           Si me manda qu'alasse a lui.  
           Ne me dist rien, mais je li dui\*  
           Anor faire non trop frarine.  
 420      Par lui sui je de vos roïne.  
           Certes, ne furent li cuvert  
           Qui vos diënt ce qui ja n'iert,  
           Volantiers li feise anor.  
 425      Sire, jos tien por mon seignor,  
           Et il est vostre niés, ç'oi dire.  
           Por vos l'ai je tant amé, sire.  
           Mais li felon, li losengier,  
           Quil vuelent de cort esloignier,  
           Te font acroire la mençonge.  
 430      Tristran s'en vet: Dex lor en donge  
           Male vergoigne recevoir!  
           A ton nevo parlai ersoir:

3d

4a

The king was unable to find his dwarf.  
(God! That bodes ill for Tristran!)  
He returned to his chamber.  
Iseut, who feared him greatly, saw him:  
"Sir, in god's name, where have you been?  
What makes you come here alone?"

385

"Queen, I have come to speak with you  
and to ask you a question.  
Do not conceal the facts,  
for I want to know the truth."

390

"Sir, I have never lied to you.  
Even if my life were at stake,  
I would tell the complete truth;  
I will not lie about anything."

395

"My lady, have you seen my nephew?"  
"Sir, I will tell you the truth.  
you will not believe me,  
but I will tell you without deceit.  
I saw him, and I spoke with him:  
I was under the pine tree with your nephew.  
Now kill me, King, if you wish.

400

Yes, I saw him. It is a great pity  
that you think I love Tristran  
sinfully and deceitfully,  
and that grieves me so much that I do not care  
if you put me to death!"

405

But, sir, have mercy on me now!  
I told you the truth, and you do not believe me;  
instead, you believe foolish and vain lies.  
But my faith will protect me.

410

Tristran, your nephew, came to the pine  
there in the garden  
and asked me to meet him there.  
He said nothing more, but I owed it to him  
Not to treat him dishonorably:  
It is because of him that I am your queen.  
Certainly, were it not for the slanderers  
who tell you lies,  
I would willingly show him proper respect.

415

Sir, you are my lord,  
and he is of course your nephew;  
for your sake I have loved him, sir.  
But those who are evil and jealous,  
who want him gone from the court,  
make you believe lies.  
So Tristran is going away:  
may God cover them with shame!  
I spoke with your nephew yesterday evening.

420

425

430

- Molt se complaint com angoisos,  
 Sire, que l'acordasse a vos,  
 435 Ge li dis ce, qu'il s'en alast,  
 Nule foiz mais ne me mandast;  
 Qar je a lui mais ne vendroie  
 Ne ja a vos n'en parleroie.  
 Sire, de rien ne m'en creirez:<sup>\*</sup>
- Il n'i ot plus. Se vos volez,  
 Ociez moi; mes c'iert a tort.  
 Tristran s'en vet por le descort,  
 Bien sai que outre la mer passe.  
 Dist moi que l'ostel l'aquitasse;
- Nel vol de rien nule aquiter  
 Ne longuement a lui parler.  
 Sire, or t'ai dit le voir sanz falle:  
 Se je te ment, le chief me talle.  
 Ce saciez, sire, sanz doutance,
- 450 Je li feise l'aquittance,  
 Se je osase, volentiers;  
 Ne sol quatre besanz entiers  
 Ne li vol metre en s'aumosniere,  
 Por ta mesnie noveliere.
- Povre s'en vet, Dex le conduie!  
 Par grant pechié li donez fuie.  
 Il n'ira ja en cel païs,  
 Dex ne li soit verais amis."
- 4b
- Li rois sout bien qu'el ot voir dit,  
 460 Les paroles totes oït.  
 Acole la, cent foiz la besse.  
 El plore, il dit qu'ele se tese:  
 Ja nes mescrerra mais nul jor  
 Por dit de nul losengeor;
- 465 Allent et viengent a lor buens.  
 Li avoirs Tristran ert mes suens  
 Et li suens avoirs ert Tristrans.  
 N'en crerra mais Corneualans.  
 Or dit li rois a la roïne
- 470 Conme le felon main Frocine\*  
 Out anoncié le parlement  
 Et com el pin plus hautement  
 Le fist monter por eus voier  
 A lor asenblement, le soir.
- 475 "Sire, estiez vos donc el pin?"  
 "Oil, dame, par Saint Martin.  
 Onques n'i ot parole dite  
 Ge n'oïse, grant ne petite.  
 Quant j'oï a Tristran retraire
- 480 La bataille que li fis faire,

- He desperately implored me  
to reconcile him with you, sir.  
I told him to leave  
and never to send for me again;  
for I would never again come to him,  
and I would not speak to you on his behalf.  
Sir, you will not believe me,  
but there was nothing more. If you wish,  
kill me, but that would be unjust. 435
- Tristran is going away because of this dissension;  
I know he is leaving the country.  
He asked me to pay for his lodging;  
I did not want to settle anything for him  
or even to speak with him at length. 440
- Sir, now I have told you the whole truth.  
If I am lying to you, you can cut off my head.  
Sir, you can be sure, beyond a doubt,  
that I would have paid his debt  
willingly, had I dared; 450
- but I did not even want to slip  
four besants into his purse,  
for fear of your gossipy entourage.  
He is going away poor; may God guide him! 455
- You are wrong to make him flee.  
In any country he goes to,  
God will be his true friend."
- The king knew she was telling the truth:  
He had overheard their conversation. 460
- He embraced her and kissed her a hundred times.  
She wept, and he quieted her:  
never again would he doubt them  
because of what a slanderer might say;  
and they could come and go at will. 465
- What was Tristran's would be his,  
and what was his would belong to Tristran.  
Never again would he believe Cornishmen!  
Then the king told the queen  
how the evil dwarf Frocin  
had informed him of the meeting, 470
- and how he had made him climb  
the tree to spy on them  
during their meeting that evening.
- "What! You were in the tree, sir?" 475
- "Yes, my lady, by Saint Martin!  
Not a single word was spoken  
that I did not hear.  
When I heard Tristran tell  
of the battle I had him fight, 480

- Pitié en oi, petit falli  
 Que de l'arbre jus ne chai.  
 Et qant je li oï retraire\*  
 Le mal q'en mer li estut traire  
 485 De la serpent dont le garistes,  
 Et les grans biens que li feïstes,  
 Et quant il vos requist quittance  
 De ses gages, si oi pesance  
 (Ne li vosistes aquiter  
 490 Ne l'un de vos l'autre abiter),  
 Pitié m'en prist a l'arbre sus.  
 Souef m'en ris, si n'en fis plus.”                          4c  
 “Sire, ce m'est molt buen forment.  
 Or savez bien certainement  
 495 Molt avion bele loisor:  
 Se il m'amast de fole amor,  
 Asez en veïsiez senblant.  
 Ainz, par ma foi, ne tant ne quant  
 Ne veïstes qu'il m'aprismast  
 500 Ne mespreïst ne me baisast.  
 Bien senble ce chose certaine:  
 Ne m'amot pas d'amor vilaine.  
 Sire, s'or ne nos veïsiez,  
 Certes ne nos en creïssiez.”  
 505 “Par Deu, je non,” li rois respont.  
 “Brengain (que Dex anor te donst!),  
 Por mon nevo va a l'ostel;  
 Et se il dit ou un ou el  
 Ou n'i velle venir por toi,  
 510 Di je li mant qu'il vienge a moi.”  
 Brengain li dit, “Sire, il me het:  
 Si est a grant tort, Dex le set.  
 Dit par moi est meslez o vos,  
 La mort me veut tot a estros.  
 515 G'irai; por vos le laisera  
 Bien tost que ne me tochera.  
 Sire, por Deu, acordez m'i,  
 Quant il sera venu ici.”  
 Oiez que dit la tricherresse!  
 520 Molt fist que bone lecherresse;  
 Lores gaboit a esscïent  
 Et se plaignoit de mal talent.  
 “Rois, por li vois,” ce dist Brengain.  
 “Acordez m'i, si ferez bien.”  
 525 Li rois respont, “G'i metrai paine.  
 Va tost poroc et ça l'amaine.”  
 Yseut s'en rist, et li rois plus.  
 Brengain s'en ist les sauz par l'us.                          4d

- I felt great pity,  
and I almost fell out of the tree!  
And when I heard him recount  
the suffering he endured at sea  
from the dragon's wound of which you cured him,                                  485  
and the kind deeds you did for him,  
and when he asked you to pay  
his debts, I was so grief-stricken—  
you did not wish to settle his debts,  
and neither of you approached the other—                                  490  
I felt great pity up there in the tree.  
I smiled to myself, but did nothing else."
- "Sir, I am very happy about this.  
Now you know beyond any doubt  
that we had enough time:    495  
if he felt a sinful passion for me,  
you would have seen evidence of it.  
But on my word, in no way  
did you see him approach me  
or make improper advances or kiss me.    500  
I think that proves beyond a doubt  
that he does not love me improperly.  
Sir, if you had not seen us for yourself,  
you would surely not believe us."
- "In God's name, that is true," replied the king.                                  505  
"Brangain (and may God grant you honor!),  
go seek my nephew at his lodgings;  
and if he hesitates,  
or if he does not want to come at your request,  
tell him I command him to come to me."    510
- Brangain told him, "Sir, he hates me!  
God knows he is wrong to do so!  
He says that it is my fault that he quarreled with you.  
He desperately wants to see me dead.  
I will go; and perhaps,    515  
for your sake, he will not harm me.  
Sir, for God's sake, reconcile me with him  
when he arrives!"
- Listen to the cunning woman!  
She was the perfect deceiver.    520  
She intentionally lied  
and complained about his resentment.  
"King, I am going for him," said Brangain.  
"Reconcile me with him, and you will do a noble deed."
- The king answered, "I will do my best.    525  
Go now and bring him back."
- Iseut laughed at this, and the king even more.  
Brangain left quickly.

- 530      Tristran estoit a la paroi,  
           Bien les oiet parler au roi.  
           Brengain a par les braz saisie,  
           Acole la, Deu en mercie:  
                \*
- D'estre o Yseut a son plaisir.
- 535      Brengain mist Tristran a raison:  
           "Sire, laienz en sa maison  
           A li rois grant raison tenue  
           De toi et de ta chiere drue.  
           Pardoné t'a son mautalent,  
           Or het ceus qui te vont meslant.  
           Proie m'a que vienge a toi;  
           Ge ai dit que ire as vers moi.  
           Fai grant senblant de toi proier,  
           N'i venir mie de legier.
- 540      Se li rois fait de moi proiere,  
           Fai par senblant mauvese chiere."  
           Tristran l'acole, si la beise.  
           Liez est que ore ra son esse.  
           A la chanbre painte s'en vont,  
           La ou li rois et Yseut sont.  
           Tristran est en la chanbre entrez.  
           "Niés," fait li rois, "avant venez.  
           Ton mautalent quite a Brengain,  
           Et je te pardorrai le mien."
- 545      "Oncle, chiers sire, or m'entendez:  
           Legirement vos defendez  
           Vers moi, qui ce m'avez mis sure  
           Dont li mien cor el ventre pleure:  
           Dannez seroie et el honie.\*
- 550      Si grant desroi, tel felonie,  
           Ainz nu pensames, Dex le set.  
           Or savez bien que cil vos het  
           Qui te fait croire tel merveille:  
           D'or en avant meux te conselle.
- 555      Ne portë ire a la roïne  
           N'a moi, qui sui de vostre orine."  
           "Non ferai je, beaus niés, par foi."  
           Acordez est Tristran au roi.
- 560      Li rois li a doné congé  
           D'estre a la chanbre: es le vos lié.  
           Tristran vait a la chanbre et vient;  
           Nule cure li rois n'en tient.
- 565      Ha, Dex! Qui puet amor tenir  
           Un an ou deus sanz descovrir?  
           Car amors ne se puet celer:  
           Sovent cline l'un vers son per,
- 5a
- 570      Tristran vait a la chanbre et vient;  
           Nule cure li rois n'en tient.
- 575      Ha, Dex! Qui puet amor tenir  
           Un an ou deus sanz descovrir?  
           Car amors ne se puet celer:  
           Sovent cline l'un vers son per,

Tristran was waiting by the wall  
and had heard them talking with the king.  
He seized Brangain by the arm,  
embraced her, and gave thanks to God:

530

to be with Iseut whenever he wished.

Brangain said to Tristran, 535

"Sir, there in his palace  
the king spoke at length  
about you and your beloved.  
He is no longer angry with you,  
and now he hates those who oppose you.

540

He asked me to come to you;

I told him you were angry with me.

Pretend that you had to be begged  
and that you were reluctant to come.

If the king makes any request concerning me, 545  
make it obvious that you are angry."

Tristran embraced and kissed her,  
happy that he could again do as he wished.

They then went to the muraled room  
where the king and Iseut were. 550

Tristran entered the room.

The king said, "Nephew, come in!  
Forget your anger with Brangain,  
and I will forget mine."

"Uncle, dear sir, listen to me: 555  
you are taking this all very lightly,

for you have brought this upon me,  
and my heart is breaking as a result!  
I would have been condemned, and she disgraced.

God knows, we never even thought 560  
of improper and sinful acts!

Now you surely know that the person hates you  
who made you believe such an incredible idea.  
From now on, you should get better advice.

Do not be angry with the queen 565  
or with me, your own relative."

"I will not, dear nephew, on my word."

Tristran was reconciled with the king.

The king gave him permission 570  
to be in the royal chamber: now he was happy!

Tristran was free to come and go there at will,  
and the king was not concerned about it.

Oh, God! Who could love  
for a year or two and still keep it secret?  
For love cannot be hidden:  
often one lover nods to the other;

575

- Sovent viennent a parlement,  
Et a celé et voiant gent.  
Par tot ne püent aise atendre,  
580 Maint parlement lor estuet prendre.
- A la cort avoit trois barons,  
Ainz ne veïstes plus felons.  
Par soirement s'estoient pris  
Que, se li rois de son païs  
585 N'en faisot son nevo partir,  
Il nu voudroient mais soufrir:  
A lor chasteaus sus s'en trairoient  
Et au roi Marc gerre feroient.  
Qar, en un gardin, soz une ente,  
590 Virent l'autrier Yseut la gente  
Ovoc Tristran en tel endroit  
Que nus hon consentir ne doit;  
Et plusors foiz les ont veüz  
El lit roi Marc gesir toz nus;  
595 Quar, quant li rois en vet el bois,  
Et Tristran dit, "Sire, g'en vois,"  
Puis se remaint, entre en la chanbre,  
Iluec grant piece sont ensenble.  
"Nos li diromes nos meïmes."      5b
- 600 Alon au ro et si li dime,  
Ou il nos aint ou il nos hast,  
Nos volon son nevo en chast."  
Tuit ensenble ont ce conseil pris,  
Li roi Marc ont a raison mis.\*  
605 A une part ont le roi trait.  
"Sire," font il, "malement vet.  
Tes niés s'entraiment et Yseut,  
Savoir le puet qui c'onques veut;  
Et nos nu volon mais sofrir."
- 610 Li rois l'entent, fist un sospir,  
Son chief abesse vers la terre,  
Ne set qu'il die, sovent erre.  
"Rois," ce dient li troi felon,  
"Par foi, mais nu consentiron;  
615 Qar bien savon de verité  
Que tu consenz lor cruauté,  
Et tu sez bien ceste merveille.  
Q'en feras tu? Or t'en conselle!  
Se ton nevo n'ostes de cort,  
620 Si que jamais il ne retort,  
Ne nos tenron a vos jamez,  
Si ne vos tendron nule pez.  
De nos voisins feront partir  
De cort, que nel poon soufrir.

they often meet to speak together,  
both in private and in public.

They cannot expect to meet freely just anywhere;  
they must arrange frequent trysts.

There were at the court three barons,  
and never have you seen such evil men!

They had taken an oath  
that, if the king did not banish  
his nephew from his land,  
they would tolerate it no longer;  
rather, they would withdraw to their castles  
and wage war against King Mark.

For the other day they had seen the fair Iseut  
with Tristran, in a garden, under a grafted tree,  
in a situation  
that no one should tolerate.

And several times they had seen them  
lying completely naked in King Mark's bed.  
For whenever the king went into the forest,  
Tristran would say, "Sir, I am leaving."

But then he would stay behind and enter the chamber,  
and they would remain together a long time.

"We will tell him ourselves.

Let us go to the king and tell him  
that whatever he may think of us,  
we want him to banish his nephew."  
Together they decided on this course,  
and they presented it to King Mark.

They drew the king aside: 605

"Sir," they said, "there is trouble.  
Your nephew and Iseut love each other.  
It is obvious to anyone who cares to look,  
and we will no longer tolerate it!"

The king heard them, sighed, 610  
and bowed his head.

He paced back and forth, not knowing what to say.

"King," said the three traitors,  
"by our faith, we will not permit this any longer,  
because we know for a fact 615  
that you are fully aware of their crime  
and that you condone it.

What will you do about it? Consider it carefully:  
if you do not banish your nephew from court  
so that he never returns, 620  
you will never have our allegiance,  
and we will never leave you in peace.  
We will also have others leave the court,  
for we cannot tolerate this.

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- 625      Or t'aron tost cest geu parti:  
           Tote ta volenté nos di."  
           "Seignor, vos estes mi fael.  
           Si m'aît Dex, molt me mervel  
           Que mes niés ma vergonde ait quise;  
 630      Mais servi m'a d'estrange guise.  
           Conseliez m'en, gel vos requier.  
           Vos me devez bien consellier,  
           Que servise perdre ne vuel.  
           Vos savez bien, n'ai son d'orguel."         5c
- 635      "Sire, or mandez le nain devin:  
           Certes, il set de maint latin,  
           Si en soit ja li conseil pris.  
           Mandez le nain, puis soit asis."  
           Et il i est molt tost venuz;
- 640      Dehez ait il conme boçuz!  
           Li un des barons l'en acole,  
           Li rois li mostre sa parole.  
           Ha! or oiez qel traïson  
           Et confaite seducion
- 645      A dit au roi cil nain Frocin!  
           Dehé aient tuit cil devin!  
           Qui porpensa tel felonie  
           Con fist cist nain, qui Dex maudie?  
           "Di ton nevo q'au roi Artur,
- 650      A Carduel, qui est clos de mur,  
           Covient qu'il alle par matin;\*  
           Un brief escrit an parchemin  
           Port a Artur toz les galoz,  
           Bien seelé, a cire aclox.
- 655      Rois, Tristran gist devant ton lit.  
           Anevoies, en ceste nuit,  
           Sai que voudra a lui parler,  
           Por ceu que devra la aler.\*  
           Rois, de la chanbre is a prinsome.
- 660      Deu te jur et la loi de Rome,  
           Se Tristran l'aime folement,  
           A lui vendra a parlement;  
           Et s'il i vient, et ge nul sai,  
           Se tu nu voiz, si me desfai.
- 665      Et tuit si homë autrement\*  
           Prové seront sanz soirement.  
           Rois, or m'en laisse covenir  
           Et a ma volenté sortir,  
           Et se li çole l'envoyer         5d
- 670      Desi qu'a l'ore du cochier."  
           Li rois respont, "Amis, c'ert fait."  
           Departent soi, chascun s'en vait.

Now we have offered you a choice;  
tell us what you plan to do."

625

"Sirs, you are my vassals.  
May God help me, I am astonished  
that my nephew has tried to shame me;  
he certainly has a strange way of serving me!  
Advise me, I pray you;  
you must give me good counsel,  
for I do not want to lose your service.  
You know that I am not proud!"

630

"Sir, send for the conjuring dwarf;  
he is very accomplished in many arts.  
Let his advice be heard.  
Summon the dwarf, and let this matter be settled."

635

He came very quickly—  
cursed be that hunchback!  
One of the barons embraced him,  
and the king explained the situation to him.  
Alas! Now listen to the evil  
and deceitful advice  
the dwarf Frocin gave the king!

640

May all such sorcerers be damned!  
Who could imagine such villainy  
as the cursed dwarf conceived?

645

"Tell you nephew that, tomorrow morning,  
he must go to King Arthur,  
in the fortified city of Carlisle.  
Have him take to Arthur, at full speed,  
a letter written on parchment,  
closed and sealed with wax.

650

King, Tristran sleeps near your bed.  
Before long, during the night,  
he will surely want to speak with her,  
since he will soon have to leave.  
King, leave the room early.

655

I swear by God and the Church of Rome  
that if Tristran is her lover,  
he will come to speak with her.  
And if he comes to her without my knowing it  
and without your witnessing it, then kill me.

660

And in addition, all his men  
will be condemned without need for a trial.  
King, now let me take care of this  
and make all the necessary arrangements;  
but conceal his mission  
until bedtime."

665

The king answered, "Friend, it shall be done."  
Then they separated, and each went his own way.

670

- Molt fu li nain de grant voidie,  
 Molt par fist rede felonie.
- 675 Cil en entra chiés un pestor;  
 Quatre derees prist de flor,  
 Puis la lia a son gueron.  
 Qui pensast mais tel traïson?  
 La nuit, qant ot li rois mengié,  
 Par la sale furent couchié.  
 Tristran ala le roi couchier.  
 "Beaus niés," fait il, "je vos requier,  
 Ma volenté faites, gel vuel.  
 Au roi Artus, jusqu'a Carduel,  
 Vos covendra a chevauchier.  
 Cel brief li faites desploier.  
 Niés, de ma part le salüez,  
 O lui c'un jor ne sejornez."
- Du mesage ot Tristran parler,  
 690 Au roi respont de lui porter:  
 "Rois, ge irai bien par matin."  
 "O vos, ainz que la nuit ait fin."  
 Tristran fu mis en grant esfroi.  
 Entre son lit et cel au roi  
 695 Avoit bien le lonc d'une lance.  
 Trop out Tristran fole atenance:  
 En son cuer dist qu'il parleroit  
 A la roïne, s'il pooit,  
 Quant ses oncles ert endormiz.  
 700 Dex, quel pechié! trop ert hardiz!  
 Li nains la nuit en la chanbre ert:  
 Oiez comment cele nuit sert.  
 Entre deus liez la flor respant,  
 Que li pas allent paraissant,  
 705 Se l'un a l'autre la nuit vient:  
 La flor la forme des pas tient.  
 Tristran vit le nain besuchier  
 Et la farine esparcellier.  
 Porpensa soi que ce devoit,  
 710 Qar si servir pas ne soloit;  
 Pus dist, "Bien tost a ceste place  
 Espandroit flor por nostre trace  
 Veer, se l'un a l'autre iroit.\*  
 Qui iroit or, que \*ous feroit;  
 715 Bien verra mais se or i vois."  
 Le jor devant, Tristran, el bois,  
 En la janbe nafrez estoit  
 D'un grant sengler, molt se doloit.  
 La plaie molt avoit saignié.\*  
 Desliez ert, par son pechié.

6a

The dwarf was very crafty,  
and he did a terrible thing.

He went to a bakery  
and bought four deniers' worth of flour,  
which he attached to his belt.\*

Who could have imagined such treachery!

That night, when the king had eaten  
and others in the hall had gone to bed,  
Tristran was in the room when the king retired.

"Dear nephew," said Mark, "I ask you  
to do my will:

you must ride  
to King Arthur at Carlisle  
and have him open this letter.

Nephew, give him my greetings,  
but stay only one day with him."

Tristran listened to this talk about the message

and told the king that he would deliver it:

"King, I will leave early in the morning."

"Indeed, you will go before the night is through."

Tristran was very distressed.

His bed was a lance's length  
away from the king's.

Tristran had a foolish scheme:

he told himself that he would speak  
to the queen, if he could,  
after the king had fallen asleep.

God, what a disaster! He was far too foolhardy!

The dwarf was in the room that night.

Listen to what he did during the night:

he sprinkled flour between the two beds,  
so that footprints would be visible  
if one of them joined the other that night:  
the flour would preserve the form of the prints.

Tristran saw the dwarf busying himself  
and spreading the flour.

He wondered what was happening,  
for that was most unusual behavior.

Then he said, "Perhaps he is spreading flour  
there in order to see our tracks  
if one of us should go to the other.

Anyone would be a fool who went now;  
he will certainly see if I go to her."

The day before, in the forest, Tristran  
had been wounded in the leg  
by a large boar, and it was very painful.  
The wound had bled heavily.  
Unfortunately, it was unbandaged.

675

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715

720

- Tristran ne dormoit pas, ce quit;  
 Et li rois live a mie nuit,  
 Fors de la chanbre en est issuz;  
 O lui ala li nain boçuz.
- 725      Dedenz la chanbre n'out clartez,  
 Cirge ne lanpë alumez.  
 Tristran se fu sus piez levez.  
 Dex! porqoi fist? Or escoutez!  
 Les piez a joinz, esme, si saut,  
 730      El lit le roi chaï de haut.  
 Sa plaie escribe, forment saine;  
 Le sanc en ist, les dras ensaigne.  
 La plaie saigne; ne la sent,  
 Qar trop a son delit entent.  
 735      En plusors leus li sanc aüne.  
 Li nains defors est. A la lune  
 Bien vit josté erent ensenble  
 Li dui amant. De joie en tremble,  
 Et dist au roi, "Se nes puez prendre  
 740      Ensenble, va, si me fai pendre."  
 Iluec furent li troi felon  
 Par qui fu ceste traïson  
 Porpensee priveement.  
 Li rois s'en vient. Tristran l'entent,  
 745      Live du lit, tot esfroïz,  
 Errant s'en rest molt tost salliz.  
 Au tresallir que Tristran fait,  
 Li sans decent (malement vait!)  
 De la plaie sor la farine.  
 750      Ha, Dex! Qel duel que la roïne  
 N'avot les dras du lit ostez!  
 Ne fust la nuit nus d'eus provez.  
 Se ele s'en fust apensee,  
 Molt eüst bien s'anor tensée.  
 755      Molt grant miracle Deus i out,  
 Quis garanti, si con li plot.  
 Li ros a sa chanbre revient;  
 Li nain, que la chandele tient,  
 Vient avoc lui. Tristran faisoit  
 760      Senblant comme se il dormoit;  
 Quar il ronfloit forment du nes.  
 Seus en la chanbre fu remés,  
 Fors tant que a ses piés gesoit  
 Pirinis, qui ne s'esmovoit,  
 765      Et la roïne a son lit jut.  
 Sor la flor, chauz, li sanc parut.  
 Li rois choisi el lit le sanc:  
 Vermel en furent li drap blanc,

6b

I am sure that Tristran was not sleeping.

The king arose at midnight

and left the bed chamber;

the hunchbacked dwarf went with him.

There was no light in the room,

no lit candle or lamp.

Tristran stood up.

God! Why did he do this? Now listen:

He put his feet together, estimated the distance,

jumped, and landed on the king's bed.

725

His wound opened and bled freely;

and the blood flowing from it stained the sheets.

Although the wound was bleeding, he did not feel it,

for he thought only of his pleasure.

And the blood accumulated in several places.

730

The dwarf was outside. By the moonlight

he clearly saw that the two lovers

were together. He trembled with joy

and told the king, "If you cannot catch them

together now, you can have me hanged!"

735

The three evil barons

who had conceived this plot

were there.

The king returned to the room. Tristran heard him;

he got up, frightened,

and quickly jumped back into his bed.

740

But Tristran's jump

made the blood drip, tragically,

from his wound into the flour.

Oh, God! What a pity that the queen

745

did not remove the sheets;

then nothing could have been proved against them.

If she had thought of that,

she could have preserved her honor.

God performed a great miracle,

750

which saved them according to His will.

The king returned to the room;

the dwarf, holding the candle,

came with him. Tristran

was pretending to be asleep

755

and was snoring loudly.

He was alone in the room

except that at his feet

was Perinis, who was not moving,

and the queen lay in her bed.

760

The warm blood could be seen in the flour.

The king noticed the blood on the bed;

the white sheets were red,

765

- 770      Et sor la flor en pert la trace  
           Du saut. li rois Tristran menace.  
           Li troi baron sont en la chanbre,\*  
           Tristran par ire a son lit prenent.  
           Cuelli l'orent cil en haïne,  
           Por sa prooise, et la roïne.\*                 6c  
 775      Laidisent la, molt la menacent,  
           Ne lairont justise n'en facent.  
           Voient la janbe qui li saine.  
           "Trop par a ci veraie enseigne:  
           Provez estes," ce dist li rois,  
 780      "Vostre escondit n'i vaut un pois.  
           Certes, Tristran, demain, ce quit,  
           Soiez certains d'estre destruit."  
           Il li crie, "Sire, merci!  
           Por Deu, qui pasion soufri,  
 785      Sire, de nos pitié vos prenge!"  
           Li fel diënt, "Sire, or te venge."  
           "Beaus oncles, de moi ne me chaut:  
           Bien sai, venuz sui a mon saut.  
           Ne fust por vos acorocier,  
 790      Cist plez fust ja venduz molt chier;  
           Ja, por lor eulz, ne le pensasent  
           Que ja de lor mains m'atochasent;  
           Mais envers vos n'en ai je rien. . .  
           Or, tort a mal ou tort a bien,  
 795      De moi ferez vostre plesir,  
           Et je sui prest de vos soufrir.  
           Sire, por Deu, de la roïne  
           Aiez pitié!" Tristan l'encline.  
           "Qar il n'ahome en ta meson,  
 800      Se disoit ceste traïson  
           Que pris eüse drérie  
           O la roïne par folie,  
           Ne m'en trovast en champ, armé.  
           Sire, merci de li, por Dé!"  
 805      Li troi qui a la chanbre sont  
           Tristran ont pris et lié l'ont,  
           Et liee ront la roïne.  
           Molt est torné a grant haïne.  
           Ja, se Tristran ice seüst  
 810      Que escondire nul leüst,  
           Mex se laisast vif depecier  
           Que lui ne lié soufrist lier.  
           Mais en Deu tant fort se fiot  
           Que bien savoit et bien quidoit,  
 815      S'a escondit peüst venir,  
           Nus nen osast armes saisir                 6d

and in the flour could be seen the evidence  
of the leap. The king threatened Tristran.  
The three barons were now in the room;  
they angrily seized Tristran in his bed.  
They detested him  
for his great prowess, and because of the queen.  
They vilified and threatened her;

770

they would not fail to see justice done.  
They saw his bleeding leg.

"This is conclusive evidence;\*  
you are proven guilty," said the king.

775

"Your denial is worthless.

780

Tristran, tomorrow  
you will certainly be put to death!"

Tristran cried out, "Sir, have mercy!  
In the name of God, who was crucified,  
sir, take pity on us!"

785

The villains said, "Sir, avenge yourself!"

"Dear uncle, I do not care about myself;  
I know I am doomed.

If I were not afraid of angering you,  
this condemnation would be paid dearly:  
never in their lives would they have dared  
lay a hand on me.

790

But I bear you no ill will.

Now, for better or for worse,  
do what you will with me;

795

I am ready to accept it.

But sir, in God's name, take pity  
on the queen!" Tristran bowed to him.

"For there is no one at your court  
who, if he slanderously claimed  
that I had a sinful relationship  
with the queen,  
would not have to meet me in armed combat.  
Sir, have mercy on her, for God's sake!"

800

The three barons who were in the room

805

Seized and bound Tristran  
and bound the queen as well:  
hatred had triumphed.

If Tristran had known  
that he would not be permitted to defend himself,  
he would have preferred to be torn limb from limb  
rather than allow either of them to be bound.

810

But he trusted so completely in God  
that he was fully convinced  
that if he were allowed to defend himself,  
no one would dare take up arms

815

- Encontre lui, lever ne prendre.  
 Bien se quidoit par champ defendre;  
 Por ce ne vout envers le roi  
 820 Mesfaire soi por nul desroi;  
 Qar, s'il seüst ce que en fut  
 Et ce qui avenir lor dut,  
 Il les eüst tüez toz trois,  
 Ja ne les en gardast li rois.  
 825 Ha, Dex! Porqoi ne les ocist?  
 A mellor plait asez venist.  
 Li criz live par la cité  
 Qu'endui sont ensenble trové  
 Tristran et la roïne Iseut  
 830 Et que li rois destruire eus veut.  
 Pleurent li grant e li petit,  
 Sovent l'un d'eus a l'autre dit,  
 "A, las! Tant avon a plorer!  
 Ahi! Tristran, tant par es ber!  
 835 Qel damage qu'en traïson  
 Vos ont fait prendre cil gloton!  
 Ha! Roïne franche, honoree,  
 En qel terre sera mais nee  
 Fille de roi qui ton cors valle?  
 840 Ha! Nains, ç'a fait ta devinalle!  
 Ja ne voie Deu en la face,  
 Qui trovera le nain en place,  
 Qui nu ferra d'un glaive el cors!  
 Ahi! Tristran, si grant dolors  
 845 Sera de vos, beaus chiers amis,  
 Quant si seroiz a destroit mis!  
 Ha, las! Quel duel de vostre mort!  
 Quant le Morhout prist ja ci port,  
 Qui ça venoit por nos enfanz,  
 850 Nos barons fist si tost taisanz  
 Que onques n'ot un si hardi  
 Qui s'en osast armer vers lui.  
 Vos enpreïstes la bataille  
 Por nos trestoz de Cornoualle  
 855 Et oceïstes le Morhout.  
 Il vos navra d'un javelot,  
 Sire, dont tu deüs morir.  
 Ja ne devrion consentir  
 Que vostre cors fust ci destruit."  
 860 Live la noisë et li bruit;  
 Tuit en corent droit au palés.  
 Li rois fu molt fel et engrés;  
 N'i ot baron tant fort ne fier  
 Qui ost le roi mot araisnier

7a

against him.

He expected to defend himself on the battlefield;  
therefore, he did not want to show disrespect  
for the king by taking action now.

820

But if he had known the truth  
and had known what was to become of them,  
he would have killed all three of them,  
and the king could not have saved them.

Oh, God! Why did he not kill them?

825

Justice would have been better served.

News spread throughout the city  
that Tristran and the queen Iseut  
had been found together  
and that the king wanted them put to death.

830

All the people wept  
and said repeatedly to one another,

"Alas, we have good reason to weep!

Oh, Tristran, you are such a worthy knight!

What a pity that these villains  
treacherously trapped you!

835

Oh, noble and honored queen,  
in what land will there ever be born  
a princess who is your equal?

Ah, dwarf, what your sorcery has wrought!

840

May no one who finds the dwarf  
and does not run him through with his sword  
ever look upon the face of God!

Oh, Tristran, there will be bitter mourning  
for you, dear friend,

845

when you meet your punishment!

Alas, what grief your death will bring!

When the Morholt, who was coming for our children,  
landed here,

he immediately reduced our barons to silence,  
for not one of them was courageous enough  
to take up arms against him.

850

You undertook the battle  
for us, the people of Cornwall,  
and you killed the Morholt.

855

He wounded you with a lance,  
sir, and you nearly died from it.

We should not allow you  
to be put to death now."

The noise and confusion increased,  
and everyone came running to the palace.  
The king was in a cruel and violent humor;  
there was no baron so strong or courageous  
that he dared urge the king

860

- 865 Qu'i li pardonast cel mesfait.  
       Or vient li jor, la nuit s'en vait.  
       Li rois commande espines querre  
       Et une fosse faire en terre.  
       Li rois, tranchanz, demaintenant
- 870 Par tot fait querre les sarmenz  
       Et assenbler o les espines  
       Aubes et noires o racines.  
       Ja estoit bien prime de jor.  
       Li banz crièrent par l'enor,
- 875 Que tuit en allent a la cort.  
       Cil qui plus puet plus tost acort.  
       Asenblé sont Corneualeis.  
       Grant fu la noise et li taboisi:  
       N'i a celui ne face duel,
- 880 Fors que li nains de Tintajol.                      7b  
       Li rois lor a dit et monstré  
       Qu'il veut faire dedenz un ré  
       Ardoir son nevo et sa feme.  
       Tuit s'escrïent la gent du reigne:
- 885 "Rois, trop feriez lai pechié,  
       S'il n'estoient primes jugié.  
       Puis les destrui. Sire, merci!"  
       Li rois par ire respondi,  
       "Par cel seignor qui fist le mont,
- 890 Totes les choses qui i sont,  
       Por estre moi desherité  
       Ne lairoie nes arde en ré.  
       Se j'en sui araisnié jamais,  
       Laisiez m'en tot ester en pais."
- 895 Le feu commande a alumer  
       Et son nevo a amener,  
       Ardoir le veut premierement.  
       Or vont por lui, li rois l'atent.  
       Lors l'en ameinent par les mains:
- 900 Par Deu, trop firent que vilains!  
       Tant ploroit, mais rien ne li monte,  
       Fors l'en ameinent a grant honte.  
       Yseut plore, par poi n'enrage:  
       "Tristran," fait ele, "quel damage
- 905 Qu'a si grant honte estes liez!  
       Qui m'oceïst, si garisiez,  
       Ce fust grant joie, beaus amis;  
       Encore en fust vengement pris."  
       Oez, seignors, de Damledé,
- 910 Comment il est plains de pité;  
       Ne vieat pas mort de pecheor.  
       Receuï out le cri, le plor

to pardon him for this crime.

865

The night passed, and day broke.

The king gave orders for thorny bushes to be gathered  
and a trench to be dug.

Then he brusquely commanded

that vine-shoots be immediately sought

870

and piled up with the hawthorns

and blackthorns that had been pulled up by the roots.

It was already early morning.\*

A proclamation was announced throughout the land  
summoning everyone to court.

875

People came as quickly as they could;

the people of Cornwall gathered there.

There was great noise and commotion,

and there was no one there who did not grieve—

except the dwarf of Tintagel.

880

The king announced and proclaimed

that he intended to have his nephew and wife

burned on a pyre.

All the people of the kingdom cried,

"King, you would be committing a terrible injustice

885

if they were not tried first;

wait until afterwards to kill them. Sir, have mercy!"

The king responded angrily,

"Even if I should be disowned

by the Lord who created the world

890

and everything that is in it,

I will not fail to have them burned on a pyre.

Maybe I will be held accountable for it later,  
but leave me in peace now."

He commanded that the fire be lit

895

and that his nephew be brought there:

he wanted to burn him first.

They went to get him, and the king waited.

They brought him back, leading him by the hands—

God, their conduct was contemptible!

900

He wept, but to no avail;

they took him away shamefully.

Iseut wept, almost beside herself with despair.

"Tristran," she said, "what a pity

for you to be shamefully bound!

905

If I could trade my life for yours,

that would be a joyful occasion;

this act could still be avenged."

Lords, now hear about God,

and how great is His mercy;

910

He does not want a sinner to die.

he heard the poor citizens'

- Que failoquent la povere gent  
 Por ceus qui eirent a torment.
- 915 Sor la voie par ont il vont,  
 Une chapele a sor un mont,\*  
 U coin d'une roche est asise.  
 Sor mer ert faite, devers bise.  
 La part que l'en claime chancel
- 920 Fu asise sor un moncel;  
 Outre n'out rien fors la faloise.\*  
 Cil mont est plain de pierre atoise.  
 S'uns escureus de lui sausist,  
 Si fust il mort, ja n'en garist.
- 925 En la dube out une verrine,  
 Que un sainz i fist, porperine.  
 Tristran ses meneors apele:  
 "Seignors, vez ci une chapele:  
 Por Deu, quar m'i laisiez entrer.
- 930 Pres est mes termes de finer:  
 Preerau Deu qu'il merci ait  
 De moi, quar trop li ai forfait.  
 Seignors, n'i a que ceste entree;  
 A chascun voi tenir s'espee.
- 935 Vos savez bien ne pus issir,  
 Par vos m'en estuet revertir;  
 Et quant je Dé proié avrai,  
 A vos eisinc lors revendrai."  
 Or l'a l'un d'eus dit a son per,
- 940 "Bien le poon laisier aler."  
 Les lians sachent, il entre enz.  
 Tristran ne vait pas comme lenz,  
 Triés l'autel vint a la fenestre,  
 A soi l'en traist a sa main destre,
- 945 Par l'ouverture s'en saut hors.  
 Mex veut sallir que ja ses cors  
 Soit ars, voiant tel aünee!  
 Seignors, une grant pierre lee  
 Out u mileu de cel rochier:
- 950 Tristran i saut molt de legier.      7d  
 Li vens le fiert entre les dras.  
 Quil defent qu'il ne chie a tas.  
 Encor claiment Corneualan  
 Cele pierre le Saut Tristran.
- 955 La chapele ert plaine de pueple;\*  
 Tristran saut jus: l'araine ert moble,  
 Toz a genoz font en la glise.  
 Cil l'atendent defors l'iglise,  
 Mais por noient: Tristran s'en vet,
- 960 Bele merci Dex li a fait!

- cries and pleas  
for those who were in distress.  
On the road they were taking,  
there was a chapel on a hill,  
built on the edge of a cliff.  
it stood beside the sea, facing north.  
The part that is called the chancel  
was on the edge of the rock;  
there was nothing beyond, except the cliff.  
The hill was of slaty stone.  
If a squirrel jumped from it,  
it would surely be killed; it could not survive.  
In the apse was a red window,  
which a pious man had made.
- 915
- Tristran spoke to his guards:  
“Lords, here is a chapel;  
in God’s name, let me go in.  
My life is about to end;  
I will pray to God that He have mercy  
on me, for I have sinned greatly.  
Lords, there is only this one door,  
and I see that each of you has a sword.  
It is obvious that I cannot escape,  
for I have to pass by you.  
But after I have prayed to God,  
I will return to you immediately.”
- 920
- They said to one another,  
“We can surely permit him to go in.”  
They untied him, and he entered.  
Tristran wasted no time,  
but went past the altar to the window.  
He pulled it open with his right hand  
and jumped out through the opening.
- 925
- It was better to jump  
than to be burned alive in public!  
Lords, there was a large flat rock  
halfway down the cliff.  
Tristran landed lightly on it:
- 930
- The wind had caught in his clothes  
and had broken his fall.  
The people of Cornwall still call  
this stone “Tristran’s Leap.”
- 935
- The chapel was filled with people.  
Tristran jumped down; the sand was soft,  
and he fell to his knees on it.  
The guards were waiting in front of the church,  
but in vain: Tristran was gone,
- 940
- and God had generously granted him mercy.
- 945
- 950
- 955
- 960

- La riviere granz sauz s'en fuit.  
 Molt par ot bien le feu qui bruit,  
 N'a corage que il retort,  
 Ne puet plus corre que il cort.
- 965      Mais or oiez de Gouvernal:  
 Espee çainte, sor cheval,  
 De la cité s'en est issuz.  
 Bien set, se il fust conseüz,  
 Li rois l'arsist por son seignor;
- 970      Fuiant s'en vait por la poor.  
 Molt ot li mestre Tristran chier,  
 Quant il son brant ne vout laisier,  
 Ançois le prist la ou estoit;  
 Avoc le suen l'en aportoit.
- 975      Tristran son mestré aperceut,  
 Ahucha le, bien le connut,  
 Et il i est venuz a hait;  
 Quant il le vit, grant joie en fait.
- 980      "Maistre, ja m'a Dex fait merci:  
 Eschapé sui, et or sui ci.  
 Ha, las! Dolent! Et moi que chaut?  
 Quant n'ai Yseut, rien ne me vaut.  
 Dolent! Le saut que orainz fis,
- 985      Que dut ice que ne m'ocis?  
 Ce me peüst estre molt tart  
 Eschapé sui! Yseut, l'en t'art!  
 Certes, por noient eschapai.  
 En l'art por moi, por li morrai."
- 990      Dist Gouvernal, "Por Deu, beau sire,  
 Confortez vos, n'acueillez ire.  
 Veez ci un espés buison,  
 Clos a fossé tot environ.  
 Sire, meton nos la dedenz.
- 995      Par ci trespassé maintes genz:  
 Asez orras d'Iseut novele.  
 Et se en l'art, jamais en cele  
 Ne montez vos, se vos briment  
 N'en prenez enprés vengement!
- 1000     Vos en avrez molt bone aïe.  
 Ja, par Jesu, le fiz Marie,  
 Ne gerrai mais dedenz maison  
 Tresque li troi felon larron  
 Par quoi'st destruite Yseut ta drue
- 1005     En avront la mort receüe.  
 S'or estiez, beau sire, ocis,  
 Que vengement n'en fust ainz pris,  
 Jamais nul jor n'avroie joie."
- Tristran respont, "Trop vos anoie:

8a

He fled along the shore.  
 He could hear the fire crackling,  
 and he had no desire to go back;  
 he ran as fast as he could.

But now you will hear about Gevernal.

965

Armed with his sword, on horseback,  
 he left the city.

He knew that if he were caught,  
 the king would burn him in place of Tristran;  
 fear made him flee.

970

He did Tristran a great service  
 by not leaving his sword behind;  
 he picked it up from where it lay  
 and brought it, along with his own.

Tristran saw his master 975

and called to him; Gevernal recognized him  
 and came quickly to him.

He was overjoyed to see him:

“Master, God had mercy on me!

I escaped, and now here I am.

980

But what good is that? Alas! Woe is me!

Since I do not have Iseut, nothing matters to me.

What grief! Why was I not killed  
 when I made that jump?

I truly have reason to regret 985

having survived! Iseut, they are going to burn you!

I escaped in vain: they are burning her  
 on my account, and I will die because of her!”

Gevernal said, “Good sir, in God’s name,

take comfort; do not despair.

990

Here is a thicket

surrounded by a trench.

Sir, let us conceal ourselves in there.

Many people pass by here,  
 so you will hear news of Iseut.

995

And if they burn her,  
 you should take vengeance immediately—

or never again take to your saddle.

You will have ample help.

Never, in the name of Jesus, the son of Mary,  
 will I rest in any house

1000

until the three villainous criminals

who destroyed your lady Iseut

have met their deaths.

And if you should be killed, sir,  
 before vengeance is taken,

1005

I could never be happy again!”

Tristran answered, “You are making too much of this,

- Beau mestre, n'ai point de m'espee."
- 1010      "Si as, que je l'ai aportee."
- Dist Tristran, "Maistre, donc est bien.  
Or ne crier, fors Deu, imais rien."
- "Encor ai je soz ma gonele  
Tel rien qui vos ert bone et bele,  
1015      Un hauberjon fort et legier,  
Qui vos porra avoir mestier."
- "Dex!" dist Tristran, "balliez le moi.  
Par icel Deu en qui je croi,  
Mex vuel estre tot depeciez,  
1020      Se je a tens i vien, au rez,                  8b  
Ainz que getee i soit m'amie,  
Ceus qui la tienent nen ocie."
- Governal dist, "Ne te haster.  
Tel chose te puet Dex doner  
1025      Que te porras molt mex venger;  
N'i avras pas tel destorbier  
Con tu porroies or avoir.  
N'i voi or point de ton pooir,  
Quar vers toi est iriez li rois;  
1030      Avoc lui sont tuit li borjois  
Et trestuit cil de la cité.  
Sor lor eulz a toz commandé  
Que cil qui ainz te porra prendre,  
S'il ne te prent, fera le pendre.  
1035      Chascun aime mex soi qu'autrui:  
Se l'en levout sor toi le hui,  
Tex te voudroit bien delivrer,  
Ne l'oseret neis porpenser."
- Plore Tristran, molt fait grant duel.
- 1040      Ja, por toz ceus de Tintajol,  
S'en le deüst tot depecier,  
Qu'il n'en tenist piece a sa per,  
Ne laisast il qu'il n'i alast,  
Se son mestre ne li veiast.  
1045      En la chanbrë un mes acort,  
Qui dist yseut qu'ele ne plort,  
Que ses amis est eschapez.  
    "Dex," fait elë, "en ait bien grez!  
Or ne me chaut se il m'ocient  
1050      Ou il me lient ou deslient."  
    Si l'avoit fait lier li rois,  
Par le commandement as trois,  
Qu'il li out si les poinz estroiz  
Li sanc li est par toz les doiz.  
1055      "Par Deu!" fait el, "se je mes jor ...\*                  8c  
Qant li felon losengeor

good master, for I do not even have a sword."

"Yes, you do, for I brought it."

1010

Tristran said, "Master, that is good.

From now on, I fear nothing except God."

"Beneath my tunic I also have

something else that you will find good and pleasing:

a strong and light hauberk

which will prove useful to you."

1015

"God!" said Tristran. "Give it to me!

In the name of God, in whom I believe,

if I arrive at the pyre

before my lady is thrown into the flames,

1020

I would rather be torn limb from limb

than fail to kill her captors!"

Governal said, "Do not hurry.

God can give you

a much better means of avenging yourself;

1025

then you will not have the obstacles

that you might face this way.

I see nothing you can do now,

for the king is angry with you,

and all the townspeople

1030

and the citizens are with him.

He has solemnly sworn

that if anyone has a chance to capture you

and does not do so, he will have him hanged.

People look out for themselves first.

1035

If you were denounced,

there are those who would like to save you

but would be afraid even to consider it."

Tristran wept bitterly.

In spite of the people of Tintagel,

1040

and even at the risk of being torn limb from limb

so that no part of him remained intact,

he would not have failed to return

if his master had not urged him to wait.

A messenger ran into Iseut's room

1045

and told her not to cry,

for her friend had escaped.

"Thanks be to God!" she said;

"now I do not care if they kill me,

or whether I am bound or free."

1050

The king had had her bound

at the urging of the three barons,

and had tied her wrists so tightly

that blood was flowing down her fingers.\*

She said, "In God's name, if I ever ...\*

1055

since those evil slanderers

- Qui garder durent mon ami  
 L'ont deperdu, la Deu merci,  
 Ne me devroit l'on mes prisier.
- 1060 Bien sai que li nains losengier  
 Et li felons, li plain d'envie,  
 Par qui conseil j'ere perie,  
 En avront encor lor deserte.  
 Torner lor puise a male perte!"
- 1065 Seigneur, au roi vient la novele  
 Q'eschapez est par la chapele  
 Ses niés, qui il devoit ardoir.  
 De mautalent en devint noir,  
 De duel ne set con se contienge;
- 1070 Par ire rove que Yseut vienge.\*  
 Yseut est de la sale issue.  
 La noise live par la rue.  
 Quant la dame liee virent  
 (A laidor ert), molt s'esfroïrent.
- 1075 Qui ot le duel qu'il font por li,  
 Com il crient a Deu merci!  
 "Ha! Roïne franche, honoree,  
 Qel duel ont mis en la contre  
 Par qui cest novele est sorse!
- 1080 Certes, en asez poi de borse  
 En porront metre le gaain.  
 Avoir en puisent mal mehain!"  
 Amenee fu la roïne  
 Jusque au ré ardant d'espine.
- 1085 Dinas, li sire de Dinan,  
 Qui a merveille amoit Tristran,  
 Se lait choier au pié le roi:  
 "Sire," fait il, "entent a moi.  
 Je t'ai servi molt longuement
- 1090 Sanz vilanie, loiaument.                           8d  
 Ja n'avras home en tot cest reigne,  
 Povre orfelin ne vielle feme,  
 Qui por vostre seneschaucie,  
 Que j'ai eü tote ma vie,
- 1095 Me donast une beauveisine.  
 Sire, merci de la roïne!  
 Vos la volez sanz jugement  
 Ardoir en feu: ce n'est pas gent,  
 Qar cest mesfait ne connoist pas.
- 1100 Duel ert, se tu le suen cors ars.  
 Sire, Tristran est eschapez;  
 Les plains, les bois, les pas, les guez  
 Set forment bien, et molt est fiers.  
 Vos estes oncle et il tes niés:

who were to guard my friend  
 have lost him (thanks be to God!),  
 I would not be deserving of respect.  
 I know that the evil dwarf  
 and the barons who are full of jealousy,  
 on whose advice I will be put to death,  
 will some day get what they deserve.  
 May they be damned!" 1060

Lords, the news came to the king  
 that his nephew, whom he was to burn,  
 had escaped through the chapel.  
 His face darkened with rage;  
 he could hardly contain his anguish.  
 He angrily commanded that Iseut be brought to him.  
 Iseut left the hall,  
 and the clamor increased in the street.  
 When they saw the queen bound—what a terrible sight!—  
 the people were shocked.  
 You should have heard how they grieved for her  
 and how they implored God's mercy! 1070

"Oh, noble and honorable queen,  
 what grief has been spread throughout the land  
 by those who are responsible for this scandal!  
 Surely a very small purse  
 would hold all the profit they have gained.  
 May they be cruelly punished!" 1080

The queen was led up  
 to the blazing fire of thorns.  
 Dinas, the lord of Dinan,  
 who loved Tristran dearly,  
 fell at the king's feet. 1085

"Sir," he said, "listen to me!  
 For a long time I have served you  
 honestly and loyally;  
 you will not find anyone in this entire kingdom,  
 not even a poor orphan or an old woman,  
 who, because of my position as seneschal,\*  
 which I have held my whole life,  
 has ever given me a cent.\* 1090

Sir, have mercy on the queen!  
 You want to have her burned  
 without a trial; that is not honorable,  
 since she has not confessed the crime.  
 It will be a tragedy if you have her burned.  
 Sir, Tristran has escaped. 1100

The plains, the forests, the trails, and the fords—  
 he knows them all well, and he is to be feared.  
 You are his uncle, he your nephew.

- 1105 A vos ne mesferoit il mie.  
 Mais vos barons, en sa ballie  
 S'il les trovout, nes vilonast,  
 Encor en ert ta terre en gast.  
 Sire, certes, ne quier noier,  
 Qui avroit sol un escuier  
 Por moi destruit ne a feu mis,  
 Se iere roi de set païs,  
 Ses me metroit il en balance  
 Ainz que n'en fust prise venjance.
- 1110 1115 Pensez que de si franche feme,  
 Qu'il amena de lointain reigne,  
 Que lui ne poist s'ele est destruite?  
 Ainz en avra encor grant luite.  
 Roi, rent la moi, par la merite  
 Que servi t'ai tote ma vite."
- 1120 Li troi par qui cest' ovre sort  
 Sont devenu taisant et sort;  
 Qar bien sevent Tristran s'en vet,  
 Molt grant dote ont qu'il nes aget.
- 1125 1130 1135 1140 1145 1150 Li rois prist par la main Dinas,  
 Par ire a juré Saint Thomas  
 Ne laira n'en face justise  
 Et qu'en ce fu ne soit la mise,  
 Dinas l'entent, molt a grant duel.  
 Ce poise li: ja par son vuel  
 Nen iert destruite la roïne.  
 En piez se live o chiere encline:  
 "Rois, je m'en vois jusqu'a Dinan.  
 Par cel seignor qui fist Adan,  
 Je ne la verroië ardoir  
 Por tot l'or ne por tot l'avoir  
 C'onques ourent li plus riche home  
 Qui furent des le bruit de Rome."  
 Puis monte el destrier, si s'en torne,  
 Chiere encline, marriz et morne.  
 Iseut fu au feu amenee,  
 De gent fu tote avironee,  
 Qui trestuit braient et tuit criënt,  
 Les traiîtors le roi maudient.  
 L'eve li file aval le vis.  
 En un bliaut de paile bis  
 Estoit la dame estroit vestue  
 E d'un fil d'or menu cosue.  
 Si chevel hurtent a ses piez,  
 D'un filet d'or les ot trechiez.  
 Qui voit son cors et sa fachon,  
 Trop par avroit le cuer felon

9a

He would never harm you;  
 but if he had your barons  
 in his power, or if he assaulted them,  
 your land would be ravaged.  
 Sir, I can assure you:  
 if someone had a single squire  
 of mine killed or burned,  
 even if he were the ruler of seven kingdoms,  
 would put those lands at risk  
 Before I failed to take vengeance.  
 Do you think that if such a noble woman,  
 whom he brought here from a distant kingdom,  
 were put to death, he would not be distraught?  
 No, there will be serious trouble.  
 King, entrust her to me as a reward  
 for my having served you all my life."

1105

1110

1115

1120

The three who had arranged all this  
 had become deaf and mute;  
 they knew that Tristran was free  
 and were afraid he was lying in wait for them.  
 The king took Dinas by the hand;  
 angrily he swore by Saint Thomas  
 that he would not fail to see justice done  
 and have the queen thrown into the flames.  
 Dinas heard that and was very sad.  
 It distressed him; he did not want  
 the queen to die.  
 He stood up, with his head bowed:

1125

1130

"King, I am going to Dinan.  
 In the name of the Lord who created Adam,  
 I would not watch her be burned  
 for all the gold or wealth  
 of all the richest men  
 who have lived since the glory of Rome."  
 Then he mounted his horse and left,  
 sad and bereaved, with his head bowed.

1135

1140

Iseut was brought up to the fire;  
 she was surrounded by people  
 who screamed, cried,  
 and cursed the traitors of the king.  
 Tears flowed down her face.  
 The lady was dressed in a fitted tunic  
 of dark silk,  
 finely stitched with gold thread.  
 Her hair reached to her feet  
 and was held by a gold net.  
 Anyone who saw her face and figure  
 would have to have a very cruel heart

1145

1150

- Qui n'en avroit de lié pitié.  
 Molt sont li braz estroit lié.
- 1155 Un malade out en Lancien,  
 Par non fu apelé Itein;\*  
 A merveille par fu desfait.  
 Acoru fu voier cel plait,  
 Bien out o lui cent compaignons
- 1160 O lor puioz, o lor bastons:  
 Ainz ne veïstes tant si lait  
 Ne si boçu ne si desfait;  
 Chascun tenoit sa tartarie.  
 Crïe au roi a voiz serie:\*
- 1165 "Sire, tu veus faire justise,  
 Ta feme ardoir en ceste gise.  
 Granz est; mes se je ainz rien soi,  
 Ceste justise durra poi.  
 Molt l'avra tost cil grant feu arse
- 1170 Et la poudre cist venz esparse.  
 Cest feu charra: en cest brese  
 Ceste justise ert tost remese.  
 Mais, se vos croire me volez,\*  
 Tel justise de li ferez
- 1175 Qu'ele vivroit, et sanz valoir,  
 Et que voudroit mex mort avoir,  
 Et que nus n'en orroit parler  
 Qui plus ne t'en tenist por ber.  
 Rois, voudroies le faire issi?"
- 1180 Li rois l'entent, si respondi,  
 "Se tu m'enseignes cest, sanz falle,  
 Qu'ele vivë et que ne valle,  
 Gré t'en savrai, ce saches bien,\*  
 Et se tu veus, si pren du mien:
- 1185 Onques ne fu dit tel maniere,  
 Tant doleroise ne tant fire.  
 Qui orendroit tote la pire  
 Seüst, por Deu le roi, eslire,  
 Que il n'eüst m'amor tot tens."
- 1190 Ivains respont, "Si con je pens  
 Je te dirai, assez briment.  
 Veez, j'ai ci compaignons cent:  
 Yseut nos done, s'ert commune.  
 Paior fin dame n'ot mais une:
- 1195 Sire, en nos a si grant ardor!  
 Soz ciel n'a dame qui un jor  
 Peüst souffrir nostre convers.  
 Li drap nos sont au cors aers;  
 O toi soloit estre a honor,
- 9b
- 1200 O vair, o gris et o baudor;

not to feel pity for her.

Her arms were tied very tightly.

There was a leper in Lantyan;  
his name was Yvain,\*  
and he was horribly deformed.

he had come to witness the punishment.

With him were a good hundred of his companions,  
with their crutches and their staffs:  
never have you seen people so ugly,  
tumorous, and deformed!

Each one carried his clapper.\*

He cried out to the king in a shrill voice,

"Sir, you want to see justice done  
and have your wife burned this way.

That is a cruel punishment, but I also know  
that it will not last long.

The hot fire will quickly consume her,  
and the wind will scatter her ashes.

The fire will die out, and the punishment  
will not outlast the embers.

But if you will take my advice,

you can punish her in such a way

that she will live on in disgrace  
and will wish she were dead,

and everyone who hears about it  
will respect you all the more.

King, would you like to do that?"

The king heard him and answered,

"If you can tell me this in truth—

how she can live and yet want to die—

I assure you I will be grateful to you,  
and you can have anything of mine you want.

No one ever heard

of such a painful and harsh fate!

Now he who can describe the worst punishment,  
in the name of God the King,  
will have my undying friendship."

Yvain answered, "I will tell you  
briefly what I think.

You see that I have a hundred companions here;  
give us Iseut to be our common property.

No lady ever had a worse fate:

sir, our lust is so strong!

No lady in the world could tolerate  
a single day of relations with us!

Our ragged clothes stick to our bodies;  
with you she was accustomed to luxury,  
to beautiful furs and pleasures;

1155

1160

1165

1170

1175

1180

1185

1190

1195

1200

- Les buens vins i avoit apris  
 Et granz soliers de marbre bis.  
 Se la donez a nos meseaus,  
 Quant el verra nos bas bordeaux  
 1205   Et eslira l'escouellier  
 Et l'estovra a nos coucher,  
 Sire, en leu de tes beaus mengiers  
 Avra de pieces, de quartiers  
 Que l'en nos envoi'a ces hus—  
 1210   Por cel seignor qui maint lassus,  
 Quant or verra la nostre cort,  
 Adonc verra si desconfort.  
 Donc voudroit miex morir que vivre;  
 Donc savra bien Yseut la givre  
 1215   Que malement avra ovré;  
 Mex voudroit estre arse en un ré.”  
      Li rois l'entent, en piez estut  
 Ne de grant pice ne se mut.  
 Bien entendi que dit Ivain,  
 1220   Cort a Yseut, prist la la main.\*  
 Ele crie: “Sire, merci!  
 Ainz que m'i doignes, art moi ci.”  
 Li rois le done, et cil la prent.  
 Des malades i ot bien cent,  
 1225   Qui s'aünent tot entor li.  
 Qui ot le brait, qui ot le cri,  
 A tote gent en prent pitiez.  
 Qui q'en ait duel, Yvains est liez,  
 Vait s'en Yseut, Yvains l'en meine  
 1230   Tot droit aval, par sus l'araine.              9d  
 Des autres meseaus li conplot  
 (N'i a celui n'ait son puiot)  
 Tot droit vont vers l'enbuschement  
 Ou ert Tristran, qui le atent.  
 1235   A haute voiz Gouvernal crie:  
 “Filz, que fera? Ves ci t'amie.”  
      “Dex!” dist Tristran, “quel aventure!  
 Ahi! Yseut, bele figure,  
 Con deüstes por moi morir  
 1240   Et je redui por vos perir,  
 Tel gent vos tienent entre mains,  
 De ce soient il toz certains,  
 Se il n'os laisent en present,  
 Tel i ara ferai dolent.”  
 1245   Fiert le destrier, du buison saut,  
 A qant qu'il puet s'escrie en haut:  
 “Ivain, avez lavez menee.  
 Laisiez la tost, qu'a cest' espee

she was used to fine wines  
and great halls of dark marble.  
If you give her to us lepers,  
when she sees our squalid hovels  
and shares our dishes  
and has to sleep with us,  
and when, instead of your fine food, sir,  
she has only the scraps and crumbs  
that are given to us at the gates—  
by the Lord in heaven, 1205  
when she sees our "court"  
and all its discomforts,  
she will rather be dead than alive.  
Then that viper Iseut will know  
that she has sinned, 1210  
and she will wish she had been burned to death."

The king listened to him and stood there  
a long time without moving;  
he had understood what Yvain had said.  
He ran to Iseut and took her by the hand. 1220  
She cried, "Sir, have mercy!  
have me burned here instead of giving me to them!"  
The king gave her to him, and he took her.  
There were fully a hundred lepers,  
and they all crowded around her. 1225  
Everyone who heard their wails and cries  
was filled with pity.  
But if others were sad, Yvain was delighted!  
Iseut left, with Yvain leading her  
down the hill by the sandy path.

The crowd of lepers,  
each one with his crutch,  
headed directly toward the place  
where Tristran was lying in wait.

Governal cried loudly, 1235  
"My son, what will you do? There is your lady!"

"God," said Tristran, "what good fortune!  
Oh, beautiful Iseut!  
Just as you were to die for me,  
then I was going to perish for you!" 1240

Those who hold you captive  
can be very sure  
that if they do not release you immediately,  
I will make many of them regret it!"  
He spurred his horse and sprang from the thicket. 1245  
He cried at the top of his voice,  
"Yvain, you have taken her far enough!  
Let her go immediately,

- Ne vos face le chief voler."
- 1250      Ivain s'aqeut a desfubler,  
 En haut s'escrie: "Or as puioz!  
 Or i parra qui ert des noz."  
 Qui ces meseaus veïst soffler,  
 Oster chapes et desfubler!
- 1255      Chascun li croille sa potence,  
 Li uns menace et l'autre tence.  
 Tristran n'en vost rien atochier  
 Ne entester ne laidengier.  
 Governal est venuz au cri,
- 1260      En sa main tint un vert jarri  
 Et fiert Yvain, qui Yseut tient.  
 Li sans li chiet, au pié li vient.  
 Bien aide a Tristran son mestre,  
 Yseut saisist par la main destre.
- 1265      Li contor dïent que Yvain                  10a  
 Firent nïer, qui sont vilain;  
 N'en sevent mie bien l'estoire,  
 Berox l'a mex en sen memoire,  
 Trop ert Tristran preuz et cortois
- 1270      A ocirre gent de tes lois.  
 Tristran s'en voit a la roïne;  
 Lasent la plain, et la gaudine  
 S'en vet Tristran et Governal.  
 Yseut s'esjot, or ne sent mal.
- 1275      En la forest de Morrois sont,  
 La nuit jurent desor un mont.  
 Or est Tistran si a seür  
 Con s'il fust en chastel o mur.
- 1280      En Tristran out molt buen archier,  
 Molt se sout bien de l'arc aidier.  
 Governal en ot un toloit  
 A un forestier quil tenoit,  
 Et deus seetes empenees,  
 Barbelees, ot l'en menees.
- 1285      Tristran prist l'arc, par le bois vait,  
 Vit un chevrel, ancoche et trait,  
 El costé destre fiert forment.  
 Brait, saut en haut et jus decent.  
 Tristran l'a pris, atot s'en vient.
- 1290      Sa loge fait: au brant qu'il tient  
 Les rains trenche, fait la fullie;  
 Yseut l'a bien espés jonchie.  
 Tristran s'asist o la roïne.  
 Governal sot de la cuisine,
- 1295      De seche busche fait buen feu.  
 Molt avoient a faire queu!

or I will cut off your head with this sword!"

Yvain began to take off his cloak 1250  
and cried loudly, "Attack with your crutches!

Now we will see who is on our side!"

You should have seen the lepers panting  
and tearing off their cloaks!

They all brandished their crutches; 1255  
some were shouting threats, others were cursing.

Tristran had no desire to lay a hand on any of them  
or strike or hurt them.

Governal came running when he heard the shouts;  
in his hand he had a green oak limb, 1260

and he struck Yvain, who was holding Iseut.

That brought blood, which flowed down to his feet.

Tristran's master served him well:

he seized Iseut by the hand.

Some common storytellers 1265  
say that they drowned Yvain,

but they do not know the true story,

and Béroul remembers it better than they.

Tristran was too valiant and courtly  
to kill such people! 1270

Tristran went away with the queen.

They left the plain, and Tristran and Governal  
passed through the forest.

Iseut rejoiced; she no longer felt any pain.

They were in the forest of Morrois, 1275  
and that night they slept on a hill.

Now Tristran felt as safe  
as he would have in a fortified castle.

Tristran was an excellent archer,  
skilled in the use of the bow. 1280

Governal had taken one  
from a forester who owned it,  
and he had brought along  
two feathered and barbed arrows.

Tristran took the bow and set out through the woods. 1285

He saw a roe, aimed an arrow, and shot;  
he struck the animal powerfully in the right side.  
It cried out, leapt up, and fell back to the ground.

Tristran took it and returned immediately.

He prepared his shelter; with his sword 1290  
he cut branches and made a bower.

Iseut spread leaves around thickly;  
Tristran and the queen settled into it.

Governal knew how to cook;  
he made a good fire of dry wood. 1295

They were certainly well-equipped for cooking!

- Il n'avoient ne lait ne sel  
 A cele foiz a lor ostel.  
 La roïne ert forment lassee  
 1300 Por la poor qu'el ot passee;  
 Someil li prist, dormir se vot,  
 Sor son ami dormir se vot.  
 Seignors, eisi font longuement  
 En la forest parfondement,  
 1305 Longuement sont en cel desert.  
 Oiez du nain com au roi sert.  
 Un conseil sot li nains du roi,  
 Ne sot que il. Par grant desroi  
 Le descovri: il fist que beste,  
 1310 Qar puis an prist li rois la teste.  
 Li nain ert ivres, li baron  
 Un jor le mistrent a raison  
 Que ce devoit que tant parloient,  
 Il et li rois, et conselloient.  
 1315 "A celer bien un suen conseil  
 Molt m'a trové toz jors feel.  
 Bien voi que le volez oïr,  
 Et je ne vuel ma foi mentir.  
 Mais je merrai les trois de vos  
 1320 Devant le Gué Aventuros.  
 Et iluec a une aube espine,  
 Une fosse a soz la racine:  
 Mon chief porai dedenz boter  
 Et vos m'orrez defors parler.  
 1325 Ce que dirai, c'ert del segroi  
 Dont je sui vers le roi par foi."  
 Li baron viennent a l'espine.  
 Devant eus vient li nains Frocine.  
 Li nains fu cort, la teste ot grose,  
 1330 Delivrement out fait la fosse,  
 Jusq'as spaules l'i ont mis.  
 "Or escoutez, seignor marchis!  
 Espine, a vos, non a vasal:  
 Marc a oreilles de cheval."  
 1335 Bien ont oï le nain parler. 10c  
 S'en vint un jor, après disner,  
 Parlout a ses barons roi Marc,  
 En sa main tint d'auborc un arc.  
 Atant i sont venu li troi  
 1340 A qui li nains dist le secroi,  
 Au roi dient priveement,  
 "Rois, nos savon ton clement."  
 Li rois s'en rist et dist, "Ce mal  
 Que j'ai oreilles de cheval,

- They had neither milk nor salt  
in their lodging!  
The queen was exhausted  
from the fear she had experienced. 1300  
She became drowsy and wanted to sleep;  
she wished to go to sleep beside her friend.  
Lords, they long lived that way,  
deep in the forest;  
they remained in the wilderness for a long time. 1305
- Now hear how the dwarf served the king!  
The dwarf knew a secret about the king,\*  
and no one else knew it.  
He wrongly revealed it; he acted foolishly,  
for as a result the king cut off his head. 1310  
The dwarf was drunk one day,  
and the barons asked him  
why it was that he and the king  
talked together so often in private.
- "He has always found me faithful  
in concealing one of his secrets.  
I see that you want to know it,  
but I don't want to betray my word.  
I will take the three of you  
to the Perilous Ford. 1315  
There is a hawthorn there,  
with a hollowed-out trench beneath the roots.  
I can put my head in there,  
and you can overhear me from outside.  
What I say will be about the secret  
that I have sworn to the king to keep." 1320
- The barons came to the hawthorn,  
with the dwarf leading them.  
The dwarf was short, but he had a large head;  
so he enlarged the hole, 1325  
and they stuck him into it to his shoulders.  
"Now listen, lords!  
Hawthorn, I am talking to you, not to the barons:  
Mark has the ears of a horse!"  
They clearly heard what the dwarf said. 1330
- It happened that, one day after dinner,  
King Mark was talking with his barons,  
and in his hand he had a bow of laburnum.  
Then the three barons  
to whom the dwarf had told the secret  
came and said to the king in private, 1340  
"King, we know your secret."  
The king laughed and said, "This curse,  
that I have the ears of a horse,

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1345 | M'est avenu par cest devin:<br>Certes, ja ert fait de lui fin."<br>Traist l'espee, le chief en prent.<br>Molt en fu bel a mainte gent,<br>Que haoient le nain Frocine<br>Por Tristran et por la roïne.<br>Seignors, molt avez bien oï<br>Conment Tristran avoit salli<br>Tot contreval, par le rochier,<br>Et Governal sor le destrier |
| 1350 | S'en fu issuz, quar il cremoit<br>Qu'il fust ars, se Marc le tenoit.<br>Or sont ensenble en la forest,<br>Tristran de veneison les pest.<br>Longuement sont en cel boschage.   |
| 1355 | La ou la nuit ont herberjage,<br>Si s'en trestornent au matin.<br>En l'ermitage frere Ogrin<br>Vindrent un jor, par aventure.<br>Aspre vie meinent et dure:  |
| 1360 | Tant s'entraiment de bone amor<br>L'un por l'autre ne sent dolor.<br>Li hermite Tristran connut;<br>Sor sa potence apoié fu,<br>Aresne le, oiez comment:   |
| 1365 | "Sire Tristran, grant soirement<br>A l'en juré par Cornoualle,<br>Qui vos rendroit au roi, sanz falle<br>Cent mars avroit a gerredon.<br>En ceste terre n'a baron  |
| 1370 | Au roi ne l'ait plevi en main,<br>Vos rendre a lui o mort ou sain."<br>Ogrins li dit molt bonement:<br>"Par foi! Tristran, qui se repent<br>Deu du pechié li fait pardon   |
| 1375 | Par foi et par confession."  |
| 1380 | Tristran li dit, "Sire, par foi,<br>Que ele m'aime en bone foi,<br>Vos n'entendez pas la raison:<br>Q'ele m'aime, c'est par la poison.<br>Ge ne me pus de lié partir,  |
| 1385 | N'ele de moi, n'en quier mentir."  |
| 1390 | Ogrins li dist, "Et quel confort<br>Puet on doner a home mort?<br>Assez est mort qui longuement<br>Gist en pechié, s'il ne repent.<br>Doner ne puet nus penitance  |

- is the fault of that sorcerer.  
 Believe me, this will be the end of him!"  
 He drew his sword and cut off the dwarf's head.  
 That pleased many people,  
 who hated the dwarf Frocin  
 for what he had done to Tristran and the queen. 1345
- Lords, you have heard  
 how Tristran had jumped  
 down onto the rocky ledge,  
 and how Gevernal had fled  
 on horseback, because he feared  
 that he would be burned if Mark captured him. 1355
- Now they were together in the forest,  
 and Tristran fed them with venison.  
 They remained a long time in the forest.  
 But every morning they left the place  
 where they had spent the night. 1360
- One day, by chance, they came  
 to the hermitage of Brother Ogrin.  
 They were leading a hard and painful life,  
 but they loved each other so truly  
 that they were oblivious to their suffering. 1365
- The hermit, who was leaning on his staff,  
 recognized Tristran.  
 Listen to what he told him:
- "Sir Tristran, it has been sworn  
 throughout Cornwall  
 that whoever delivers you to the king  
 will without fail receive a reward of a hundred marks.  
 There is not a baron in this land  
 who has not pledged  
 to turn you over to him dead or alive."  
 Ogrin told him kindly,  
 "By my faith! Tristran, whoever repents  
 in faith and through confession  
 will have his sin forgiven by God." 1375
- Tristran answered him: "Sir, by faith,  
 you do not understand the cause  
 of her love for me.  
 If she loves me, it is because of the potion.  
 I cannot leave her,  
 nor can she leave me; that is the truth." 1385
- Ogrin said to him, "And what comfort  
 can be given to a dead man?  
 For anyone is dead who lives for a long time  
 in sin, if he does not repent.  
 Absolution cannot be given  
 to a sinner who does not repent." 1390

- L'ermite Ogrins molt les sarmone,  
Du repentir conseil lor done.
- 1395 Li hermites sovent lor dit  
Les profecies de l'escrit,  
Et molt lor amentoit sovent  
L'ermite lor delungement.
- A Tristran dist par grant desroi,  
"Que feras tu? Conselle toi."  
"Sire, j'am Yseut a merveille,  
Si que n'en dor ne ne somelle.  
De tot an est li conseil pris:  
Mex aim o li estre mendis
- 1405 Et vivre d'erbes et de glan  
Q'avoir le reigne au roi Otran.  
De lié laisier parler ne ruis,  
Certes, quar faire ne le puis."  
Iseut au pié l'ermite plore,
- 1410 Mainte color mue en poi d'ore,  
Molt li crie merci sovent:  
"Sire, por Deu omnipotent,  
Il ne m'aime pas, ne je lui,  
Fors par un herbé dont je bui
- 1415 Et il en but. Ce fu pechiez:  
Por ce nos a li rois chaciez."  
Li hermites tost li respont:  
"Diva! Cil Dex qui fist le mont,  
Il vos donst voire repentance!"
- 1420 Et saciez de voir, sanz dotance,  
Cele nuit jurent chiés l'ermite;  
Por eus esforça molt sa vite.  
Au matinet s'en part Tristrans.  
Au bois se tient, let les plains chans.
- 1425 Li pain lor faut, ce est grant deus.  
De cers, de biches, de chevreus  
Ocist asez par le bosrage.  
La ou prenent lor herbergage,  
Font lor cuisine e lor beau feu.
- 1430 Sol une nuit sont en un leu.  
Siegnors, oiez con por Tristran  
Out fait li rois crier son ban—  
En Cornoualle n'a parroise  
Ou la novelle n'en angoise—
- 1435 Que, qui porroit Tristran trover,  
Qu'il en feüst le cri lever.  
Qui veut oïr une aventure,  
Con grant chose a an noretur,  
Si m'escoute un sol petitet!
- 1440 Parler m'orez d'un buen brachet:

11a

11b

- The hermit Ogrin preached to them at length  
and urged them to repent.
- He explained to them in detail  
the prophecies of scripture  
and spoke to them at length  
of their isolation.
- He said fervently to Tristran,  
"What will you do? Think about it carefully!"
- "Sir, I love Iseut so much  
that I cannot sleep!  
My mind is made up:  
I would rather be a beggar with her  
and live on herbs and acorns  
than to have the kingdom of King Otrant.\*  
There is no point in even talking about leaving her,  
because I simply cannot do it."
- Iseut wept at Ogrin's feet.  
The color drained from her face,  
and she repeatedly implored him to grant them mercy:  
"Sir, by omnipotent God,  
he loves me, and I him,  
only because of a potion  
we both drank. That was tragic:  
for that the king drove us away."
- The hermit answered her:  
"Oh, may the God who created the world  
lead you to sincere contrition."
- Now you should know  
that they spent the night at the hermit's;  
for their sake he relinquished his solitude.  
In the morning, Tristran left.  
He kept to the woods and avoided the open fields.  
They were lacking bread; that was a hardship.  
but he killed a good many stags,  
does, and bucks in the woods.  
Wherever they found shelter for the night,  
they made a good fire and cooked.  
They spent only a single night at each place.
- Lords, hear how the king  
issued his proclamation concerning Tristran  
(there was no corner of Cornwall  
where the news did not cause grief),  
saying that whoever found Tristran  
had to turn him in.
- Anyone who would like to hear a story  
that illustrates the benefits of training  
should listen to me a moment.  
You will hear me tell about a good hunting dog;

1395

1400

1405

1415

1420

1425

1430

1435

1440

- Qens ne rois n'out tel bersetet,  
 Il ert isneaus et toz tens prez,  
 Quar il ert bauz, isneaus, non lenz,  
 Et si avoit a non Husdanz.
- 1445      Liez estoit en un landon.  
 Li chiens gardoit par le donjon;  
 Qar mis estoit a grant freor,  
 Quant il ne voiet son seignor.  
 Ne vout mengier ne pain ne past
- 1450      Ne nule rien q'en li donast;  
 Guignout et si feroit du pié,  
 Des uiz lermant. Dex! Qel pitié  
 Faisoit a mainte gent li chiens!
- Chascun disoit: "S'il estoit miens,  
 Gel metroie du landon fors  
 Quar, s'il enrage, ce ert deus.  
 Ahi! Husdent, ja tex brachetz  
 N'ert mais trové, qui tant set prez  
 Ne tel duel face por seignor;  
 Beste ne fu de tel amor.
- 1460      Salemon dit que droituriers  
 Que ses amis, c'ert ses levriers.  
 A vos le poon nos prover:  
 Vos ne volez de rien goster,  
 Pus que vostre sire fu pris.  
 Rois, quar soit fors du landon mis!"
- Li rois a dit, a son corage  
 (Por son seignor croit qu'il enrage):  
 "Certes, molt a li chiens grant sens:  
 1470      Je ne quit mais q'en nostre tens,  
 En la terre de Cornoualle,  
 Ait chevalier qui Tristran valle."  
 De Cornoualle baron troi  
 En ont araisoné li roi:  
 1475      "Sire, quar desliez Husdant!  
 Si verron bien certainement  
 Se il meine cest dolor  
 Por la pitié de son seignor;  
 Quar ja si tost n'ert desliez  
 1480      Qu'il ne morde, s'est enragiez,  
 Ou autre rien ou beste ou gent:  
 S'avra la langue overte au vent."
- Li rois apele un escuier  
 Por Husdan faire deslier.  
 1485      Sor bans, sor seles puient haut,  
 Quar li chien criement de prin saut.  
 Tuit disoient: "Husdent enrage!"  
 De tot ce n'avoit il corage.

11c

no count or king ever had such a dog.

He was fast and alert;

he was spirited and swift

and his name was Husdent.

He was leashed to a clog.\*

1445

The dog looked out from the keep

and was very frightened

when he could not see his master.

He would not eat bread or mash

or any food they gave him.

1450

He whined and pawed the ground,

tears in his eyes. What pity

the dog inspired in many people!

They all said, "If he were mine,

I would let him go,

1455

because it would be a shame if he went mad.

Oh, Husdent, there will never be another hunting dog

who is so swift

and who grieves so much for his master;

no animal ever loved anyone so much.

1460

Solomon correctly said

that his dog was his best friend.

You are proof of that:

you have refused to eat anything

since your master was captured.

1465

King, let him be released from his clog!"

The king said to himself,

thinking the dog was going mad for his master,

"This dog is surely most discerning:

I do not think that in our time

1470

in the land of Cornwall

there is a knight to equal Tristran."

The three barons of Cornwall

urged the king,

"Sir, unleash Husdent.

1475

Then we will surely see

if he is grieving this way

for his master;

for if he is mad,

no sooner will he be freed than he will bite

1480

something, an animal or person,

and his tongue will hang out of his mouth."

The king called a squire

to have Husdent released.

Everyone jumped up on benches or stools,

1485

for they feared what the dog might do first.

They all said, "Husdent is mad!"

But he paid no attention to them.

- 1490      Tantost com il fu desliez,  
           Par mié les renz cort, esvelliez,  
           Que onques n'i demora plus.  
           De la sale s'en ist par l'us,  
           Vint a l'ostel ou il soloit  
           Trover Tristran. Li rois le voit,  
 1495      Et li autre qui aprés vont.  
           Li chiens escrie, sovent gront,  
           Molt par demeine grant dolor.  
           Encontré a de son seignor:  
           Onques Tristran ne fist un pas  
 1500      Qant il fu pris, qu'il dut estre ars,  
           Que li brachez nen aut aprés;  
           Et dit chascun de venir mes.\*  
           Husdant an la chanbré est mis  
           O Tristran fu traît et pris;  
 1505      Si part, fait saut et voiz clarele,  
           Criant s'en vet vers la chapele;  
           Li pueple vait aprés le chien.  
           Ainz, puis qu'il fu fors du lién,  
           Ne fina, si fu au moutier  
 1510      Fondé en haut sor le rochier.                  11d  
           Husdent li bauz, qui ne voit lenz,  
           Par l'us en la chapele entre enz,  
           Saut sor l'autel, ne vit son mestre.  
           Fors s'en issi par la fenestre.  
 1515      Aval la roche est avalez,  
           En la janbe s'est esgenez,  
           A terre met le nes, si crie.  
           A la silve du bois florie,  
           Ou Tristran fist l'enbuschement,  
 1520      Un petit s'arestut Husdent;  
           Fors s'en issi, par le bois vet.  
           Nus ne le voit qui pitié n'ait.  
           Au roi dient li chevalier,  
           "Laison a seurre cest trallier:  
 1525      En tel leu nos porroit mener  
           Dont griés seroit le retorner."  
           Laisent le chien, torment arire.  
           Husdent aqeut une chariere,  
           De la rote molt s'esbaudist.  
 1530      Du cri au chien li bois tentist.  
           Tristran estoit el bois aval  
           O la reîne et Governal.  
           La noise oient, Tristran l'entent:  
           "Par foi," fait il, "je oi Husdent."  
 1535      Trop se criement, sont esfroï.  
           Tristran saut sus, son arc tendi.

- As soon as he was released,  
he ran quickly through the crowd,  
wasting no time. 1490
- He raced out the door  
and ran to the house where he used to  
meet Tristran. The king saw him,  
as did the others who followed. 1495
- The dog barked and whined often  
and appeared to be very sad.  
Then he picked up his master's trail;  
not a step had Tristran taken  
when he was captured and was to be burned  
that the dog did not follow. 1500
- Everyone urged the dog on.  
Husdent entered the room  
where Tristran had been betrayed and arrested;  
then he left, bounding out of the room and barking; 1505  
he ran toward the chapel.
- The people followed close behind the dog.  
Now that he was free,  
he did not stop until he reached the church  
built at the top of the cliff. 1510
- The spirited and swift Husdent  
ran into the chapel,  
jumped onto the altar, but did not see his master.  
He jumped out the window.  
He fell down the cliff 1515  
and injured his leg.  
He put his nose to the ground and barked.  
At the edge of the flowering woods  
where Tristran had lain in ambush,  
Husdent paused briefly; 1520  
then he plunged into the forest.  
Everyone who saw him felt pity for him.
- The knights said to the king,  
"Let us stop following him.  
He might lead us to a place  
from which we could not easily get back." 1525
- They left the dog and turned back.  
Husdent found a trail  
and was overjoyed at it.  
The woods resounded with the dog's barking. 1530  
Tristran was deep in the forest  
with the queen and Gevernal.  
They heard the sound; Tristran listened to it.  
"My word," he said, "I hear Husdent!"  
They were frightened and alarmed. 1535  
Tristran jumped up and grabbed his bow,

- En un' espoise aval s'en traient:  
 Crime ont du roi, si s'en esmaient,  
 Dient qu'il vient o le brachet.
- 1540    Ne demora c'un petitet  
 Li brachet, qui la rote sut.  
 Quant son seignor vit et connut,  
 Le chief hoque, la queue crole.  
 Qui voit con de joie se molle
- 1545    Dire puet que ainz ne vit tel joie.                  12a  
 A Yseut a la crine bloie  
 Acort, et pus a Governal;  
 Toz fait joie, nis au cheval.  
 Du chien out Tristran grant pitié.
- 1550    "Ha, Dex!" fait il, "par quel pe chié  
 Nos a cist berseret seu?"  
 Chien q̄ en bois ne se tient mu  
 N'a mestier a home bani.  
 El bois somes, du roi haï;
- 1555    Par plain, par bois, par tote terre,  
 Dame, nos fait li rois Marc quere!  
 S'il nos trovout ne pooit prendre,  
 Il nos feroit ardoir ou pendre,  
 Nos n'avon nul mestier de chien.
- 1560    Une chose sachiez vos bien:  
 Se Husdens avé nos remaint,  
 Poor nos fera et duel maint.  
 Asez est mex qu'il soit ocis  
 Que nos soion par son cri pris.
- 1565    Et poise m'en, por sa franchise,  
 Que il la mort a ici quise.  
 Grant nature li faisoit fere;  
 Mais conment m'en pus je retraire?  
 Certes, ce poise moi molt fort
- 1570    Que je li doie doner mort.  
 Or m'en aidiez a conseillier:  
 De nos garder avon mestier."
- Yseut li dist, "Sire, merci!  
 Li chiens sa beste prent au cri,  
 Que par nature, que par us.  
 J'oï ja dire que un seüs  
 Avoit un forestier galois,  
 Puis que Artus en fu fait rois,  
 Que il avoit si afaitié:
- 1580    Quant il avoit son cerf sagnié  
 De la seete berserce,  
 Puis ne fuist par cele trace  
 Que le chiens ne suist le saut;  
 Por crier n'estonast le faut
- 12b

and they hid in a thicket.

They were afraid of the king and were dismayed,  
saying that he might be coming with the dog.

Husdent, who was following the trail,  
wasted no time.

1540

When he saw his master and recognized him,  
he raised his head and wagged his tail.

Anyone who saw him weep with joy  
could say that never had he witnessed such joy.

1545

Husdent ran to the blond Iseut,  
and then to Gouvernal;

he was happy to see all of them—even the horse.

Tristran felt pity for the dog.

"Oh, God," he said, "what a shame  
that this dog followed us!"

1550

People in hiding have no need  
for a dog that will not remain silent in the forest.

We are banished to the woods, hated by the king.  
Lady, King Mark has people searching for us

1555

on the plains, in the forest, everywhere!

If he found us and captured us,  
he would have us burned or hanged.

We have no need for a dog.

You can be certain

1560

that if Husdent stays with us,  
he will bring us anxiety and grief.

It is better that he be killed

than that we be captured because of his barking.

It pains me, since he is a fine animal,

1565

that he came here only to die;

it was his noble nature that made him do it,

but what else can I do?

To be sure, it pains me greatly

1570

that I have to kill him.

Help me make the decision;

we have to protect ourselves!"

Iseut told him, "Sir, have mercy!

A dog barks when taking his prey,  
whether by instinct or by habit.

1575

I once heard that,

after Arthur became king,

a Welsh forester had a hound

which he had trained this way:

when he wounded a stag

1580

with an arrow,

wherever the stag went

the dog would follow by leaps and bounds;

he never lost his quarry by barking,

- 1585 Ne ja n'atainsist tant sa beste  
 Ja criast ne feïst moleste.  
 Amis Tristran, grant joie fust,  
 Por metre peine qui peüst  
 Faire Hudent le cri laisier,  
 Sa beste ataindré et cacier."
- 1590                   Tristran s'estut et escouta.  
 Pitié l'en prist; un poi pensa,  
 Puis dist itant, "Si je pooie  
 Husdent par paine metre en voie  
 1595 Que il laisast cri por silence,  
 Molt l'avroie a grant reverence.  
 Et a ce metrai je ma paine  
 Ainz que ja past ceste semaine.  
 Pesera moi se je l'oci,
- 1600 Et je criem molt du chien le cri;  
 Quar je porroie en tel leu estre,  
 O vos ou Gouvernal mon mestre,  
 Se il criout, feroit nos prendre,  
 Or vuel peine metre et entendre  
 1605 A beste prendre sanz criér."
- Or voit Tristran en bois berser.  
 Afaitiez fu, a un dain trait:  
 Li sans en chiet, li brachet brait,  
 Li dains navrez s'en fuit le saut.
- 1610 Husdent li bauz en crie en haut,  
 Li bois du cri au chien resone.  
 Tristran le fier, grant cop li done.  
 Li chien a son seignor s'arreste,  
 Lait le criér, gerpist la beste;
- 1615 Haut l'esgarde, ne set qu'il face,  
 N'ose criér, gerpist la trace.  
 Tristran le chien desoz lui bote;  
 O l'estortore bat la rote.  
 Et Husdent en revot criér;
- 1620 Tristran l'aqeut a doutriner.  
 Ainz que li premier mois pasast,  
 Fu si le chien dontez u gast  
 Que sanz criér suiet sa trace.  
 Sor noif, sor herbe ne sor glace
- 1625 N'ira sa beste ja laschant,  
 Tant n'iert isnele et remuant.  
 Or lor a grant mestier li chiens,  
 A merveilles lor fait grans biens.  
 S'il prent el bois chevrel ne dains,
- 1630 Bien l'enbusche, cuevre de rains;  
 Et s'il enmi lande l'ataint,  
 Com il s'avient en i prent maint,

12c

nor, when he took his prey,  
did he bark or cause any other disturbance.  
Dear Tristran, it would be wonderful  
if it were possible  
to train Husdent not to bark  
when he is hunting his prey."

1585

Tristran stood and listened.  
he felt pity; he thought a moment  
and then said, "If I could  
train Husdent  
to give up barking in favor of silence,  
I would value him greatly.

1590

I will try to do this  
before this week is out.  
It would pain me to kill him;  
but I am afraid of the dog's barking  
because I might be in some place,  
either with you or with my master,  
where, if he barked, he might cause us to be captured.  
So I will do my best to train him  
to hunt without barking.

1595

Then Tristran went hunting in the forest.  
He was a skilled hunter, and he shot a buck.  
The blood flowed; the dog barked,  
and the wounded buck bounded away.  
Husdent barked loudly,  
and his barking echoed through the forest.  
Tristran struck him a strong blow.  
The dog stopped by his master's side;

1600

he ceased barking and stopped tracking the animal.  
He looked up at Tristran, not knowing what to do.

1605

He did not dare bark, and he abandoned the trail.

1615

Tristran forced the dog to heel;  
with a stick he cleared the path.  
Husdent wanted to bark again,  
but Tristran continued to train him.

1620

Before the month was up,  
the dog was so well trained on the moor  
that he followed trails without a sound.  
Whether on snow, on grass, or on ice,  
he never abandoned his prey,

1625

however fleet or agile it might be.

Now the dog was a great help to them,  
and he served them wonderfully.  
If he caught a deer or buck in the woods,  
he would hide it carefully, covering it with branches.  
And if he caught it in the open,

1630

as he often did, in fact,

- De l'erbe gete asez desor,  
 Arire torne a son seignor,  
 1635 La le maine ou sa beste a prise.  
 Molt sont li chien de grant servise!  
 Seignors, molt fu el bois Tristrans,  
 Molt i out paines et ahans.  
 En un leu n'ose remanoir;  
 1640 Dont lieve au main ne gist au soir.  
 Bien set que li rois le fait querre  
 Et que li bans est en sa terre  
 Por lui prendre, quil troveroit.  
 Molt sont el bois del pain destroit,  
 1645 De char vivent, el ne mengüent.  
 Que püent il, se color müent?  
 Lor dras ronpent, rains les decirent  
 Longuement par Morrois fuïrent.  
 Chascun d'eus soffre paine elgal,  
 1650 Mais l'un por l'autre ne sent mal.\*  
 Grant poor a Yseut la gente  
 Tristran por lié ne se repente;  
 E a Tristran repoise fort,  
 Que Yseut a por lui descort,  
 1655 Qu'el repente de la folie.  
 Un de ces trois (que Dex maudie!)  
 Par qui il furent descovert,  
 Oiez conment par un jor sert!  
 Riches hom ert et de grand bruit,  
 1660 Li chiens amoit par son deduit.  
 De Cornoualle du païs  
 De Morrois erent si eschis  
 Qu'il n'i osout un sol entrer.  
 Bien lor faisoit a redouter;  
 1665 Qar, se Tristran les peüst prendre,  
 Il les feïst as arbres pendre:  
 Bien devoient doncques laisier.  
 Un jor estoit o son destrier  
 Gouvernal sol a un doitil  
 1670 Qui decendoit d'un fontenil.  
 Au cheval out osté la sele:  
 De l'erbete paison novele.  
 Tristran gesoit en sa fullie,  
 Estroitement ot embrachie  
 1675 La roïne, por qu'il estoit  
 Mis en tel paine, en tel destroit;  
 Endormi erent amedoi.  
 Gouvernal ert en un esquoi,  
 Oï les chiens par aventure:  
 1680 Le cerf chacent grant aleüre.

12d

he would throw grass over it;  
 he would then return to his master  
 and lead him to where he had killed the animal. 1635  
 Dogs are indeed very useful!

Lords, Tristran remained in the forest a long time,  
 and there he suffered much pain and tribulation.  
 He dared not remain long in one place,  
 and never went to bed where he had arisen that morning. 1640  
 He knew that the king was having him sought  
 and that a proclamation throughout the land  
 ordered anyone who found him to capture him.

They had no bread;  
 they lived on meat and ate nothing else. 1645  
 Is it any wonder that they became pale?

They had torn clothes, made ragged by the branches.  
 For a long time they fled through Morrois.\*

They both suffered equally,  
 but because of the other's presence, neither felt pain. 1650  
 The fair Iseut greatly feared  
 that Tristran would repent because of her;  
 and Tristran was very worried,  
 since Iseut was disgraced on his account,  
 that she would repent their illicit love.\* 1655

Listen now to what happened to one of the three  
 (may God curse them!)  
 who had betrayed the lovers.

he was a powerful man who was highly esteemed,  
 and he was very much interested in dogs. 1660

The people of Cornwall  
 were so afraid of the forest of Morrois  
 that none of them dared to enter it.  
 They had good reason to be afraid,  
 for if Tristran could capture them, 1665  
 he would hang them from the trees.  
 They were right to avoid it!

One day, along with his horse,  
 Gouvernal was alone beside a stream  
 that flowed out of a little spring. 1670  
 He had unsaddled his horse,  
 and it was grazing on the tender grass.  
 Tristran was lying in his bower;  
 he had his arms tightly  
 around the queen, for whom he had  
 suffered such hardship and torment; 1675  
 they were both asleep.  
 Gouvernal was hidden,  
 and it happened that he heard dogs;  
 they were pursuing a stag at full speed. 1680

- |      |   |     |
|------|---|-----|
|      | C'erent li chien a un des trois<br>Por qui conseil estoit li rois<br>Meslez ensenble la roïne.  | 13a |
| 1685 | Li chien chacent, li cerf ravine.<br>Governal vint une charire<br>En une lande; luin arire<br>Vit cel venir que il bien set<br>Que ses sires onques plus het,<br>Tot solement sanz escuier. |     |
| 1690 | Des esperons a son destrier<br>A tant doné que il eschace,<br>Sovent el col fier o sa mache<br>Li chevaus ceste sor un marbre.<br>Governal s'acoste a un arbre,                             |     |
| 1695 | Enbuschiez est, celui atent<br>Qui trop vient tost et fuita lent.<br>Nus retornez ne puet fortune<br>Ne se gaitoit de la rancune<br>Que il avoit a Tristran fait.                           |     |
| 1700 | Cil qui desoz l'arbre s'estait<br>Vit le venir, hardi l'atent;<br>Dit mex veut estre mis au vent<br>Que il de lui n'ait la venjance;<br>Qar par lui et par sa faisance                      |     |
| 1705 | Durent il estre tuit destruit.<br>Li chien li cerf sivent, qui fuit;<br>Li vasaus aprés les chiens vait.<br>Governal saut de sen agait;<br>Du mal que cil ot fait li menbre.                |     |
| 1710 | A s'espee tot le desmenbre,<br>Li chief en prent, atot s'en vet.<br>Li veneor, qui l'ont parfait,<br>Sivoient le cerf esmeü.<br>De lor seignor virent le bu,                                |     |
| 1715 | Sanz la teste, soz l'arbre jus.<br>Qui plus tost cort, cil s'en fuit plus:<br>Bien quident ce ait fait Tristran<br>Dont li rois fist faire le ban.  |     |
| 1720 | Par Cornoualle ont entendu<br>L'un des trois a le chief perdu<br>Qui meslot Tristran o le roi.<br>Poor en ont tuit et esfroi,<br>Puis ont en pes le bois laisié;                            | 13b |
| 1725 | N'ont pus el bois sovent chacié.<br>Des cel' ore que u bois entroit,<br>Fust por chacier, chascuns dotoit<br>Que Tristran li preuz l'encontrast.<br>Crient fu u plain et plus u gast.       |     |

They were the dogs of one of the three  
on whose advice the king  
had quarreled with the queen.

The dogs ran; the stag fled.

Governal followed a path 1685

through a heath; far behind

he saw coming the man whom he knew  
his lord hated more than anything,  
and he was alone, without a squire.

He spurred his horse sharply 1690

so that is sprang forward,

and he struck it on the neck with his stick.

The horse stumbled on a stone.

Governal stopped by a tree.

He was hidden, and he lay in wait for the man, 1695

who was approaching rapidly but would be slow to flee!

No one can escape his fate.

He was not on his guard against the anger  
he had inspired in Tristran.

The man waiting beneath the tree 1700

saw him coming and waited resolutely,  
saying that he would rather have his ashes scattered  
in the wind than fail to take revenge;  
for it was because of that man and his actions  
that all of them nearly perished.

1705

The dogs were following the fleeing stag;  
the man came after the dogs.

Governal jumped out of his ambush;  
he remembered all the evil the man had done,  
and he cut him to pieces with his sword.\* 1710

He took the head and rode away.

The hunters were pursuing the frightened stag  
that they had flushed out.

Seeing the headless body of their lord 1715  
lying under the tree,  
they fled as fast as they could.

They were sure that this had been done by Tristran,  
the subject of the king's proclamation.

Throughout Cornwall it was heard  
that one of the three who had caused trouble 1720  
between Tristran and the king had had his head cut off.

All the people were concerned and afraid,  
and they avoided the forest,  
rarely hunting in the woods thereafter.

The instant anyone did enter the forest 1725  
to hunt, he was afraid  
that he would be found by the valiant Tristran,  
who was feared on the plain and even more on the heath.

- Tristran se jut a la fullie.  
 1730 Chau tens faisoit, si fu jonchie.  
     Endormiz est, ne savoit mie  
     Que cil eüst perdu la vie  
     Par qui il dut mort recevoir:  
     Liez ert, quant en savra le voir.
- 1735 Gouvernal a la loge vient,  
     La teste au mort a sa main tient;  
     A la forche de sa ramee  
     L'a cil par les cheveus nouee.  
     Tristran s'esvelle, vit la teste,
- 1740 Saut esfreez, sor piez s'arreste.  
     A haute voiz crie son mestre,  
     “Ne vos movez, seiûrs puez estre:  
     A ceste espee l'ai ocis.  
     Saciez, cist ert vostre anemis.”
- 1745 Liez est Tristran de ce qu'il ot:  
     Cil est ocis qu'il plus dotot.  
     Poor ont tuit par la contree.  
     La forest est si esfreee  
     Que nus n'i ose ester dedenz.
- 1750 Or ont le bois a lor talent.  
     La ou il erent en cel gaut,  
     Trova Tristran l'Arc Qui ne Faut.  
     En tel maniere el bois le fist  
     Riens ne trove qu'il n'oceïst.
- 1755 Se par le bois vait cerf ne dains,  
     Se il atouché a ces rains  
     Ou cil arc est mis et tenduz,  
     Se haut hurte, haut est feruz,  
     Et se il hurte a l'arc an bas,
- 1760 Bas est feruz eneslepas.  
     Tristran, par droit et par raison,  
     Qant ot fait l'arc, li mist cel non.  
     Molt a buen non l'arc, qui ne faut  
     Riens qui l'en fire, bas ne haut;
- 1765 Et molt lor out pus grant mestier,  
     De maint grant cerf lor fist mengier.  
     Mestier ert que la sauvagine  
     Lor aïdast en la gaudine;  
     Qar falliz lor estoit li pains,
- 1770 N'il n'osoient issir as plains.  
     Longuement fu en tel dechaz.\*  
     Merveilles fu de buen porchaz:  
     De venoison ont grant plenté.  
     Seignor, ce fu un jor d'esté,
- 1775 En icel tens que l'en aoste,  
     Un poi aprés la Pentecoste.

13c

- Tristran lay in his bower;  
it was hot, and the ground was covered with leaves. 1730  
He was asleep and did not know  
that the man who had nearly cost him his life  
had been killed.  
He would be happy when he learned the truth.  
Governal approached the hut,  
holding the dead man's head in his hand. 1735  
He tied it to a forked limb  
by the hair.  
Tristran awoke, saw the head,  
and jumped to his feet, frightened. 1740  
His master cried out,  
"Do not move; you are safe!  
I killed him with this sword.  
You see that it was your enemy."  
Tristran was happy at what he heard: 1745  
The man he feared most was dead.  
Everyone in the country was terrified.  
The forest was so feared  
that no one dared enter it.  
Now the lovers had the woods to themselves. 1750  
While they were in the forest,  
Tristran invented the Unfailing Bow.  
He set it up in the woods in such a way  
that it killed everything that came in contact with it.  
If a stag or deer came through the woods 1755  
and touched the branches  
where the bow was set up and drawn,  
it shot him high if the animal touched it high,  
and if he touched it near the ground  
it shot him low. 1760  
Tristran rightly and justifiably  
gave the bow this name when he made it.  
The bow was well named, for it never failed  
to strike anything, low or high.  
It served them very well thereafter 1765  
and enabled them to eat a good many stags.  
They had to depend on wild game  
in the forest,  
since they had no bread,  
and they did not dare show themselves on the plains. 1770  
The bow hunted this way a long time,\*  
and it was an excellent provider:  
they had an abundance of venison.  
My lords, it was a summer day  
during the harvest season, 1775  
soon after Pentecost.

- Par un matin, a la rousee,  
 Li oisel chantent l'ainzjornee.  
 Tristran de la loge ou il gist,  
 1780 Çaint s'espee, tot sol s'en ist,  
 L'Arc Qui ne Faut vet regarder;  
 Parmi le bois ala berset.  
 Ainz qu'il venist, fu en tel paine,  
 Fu ainz maiss gent tant eüst paine?  
 1785 Mais l'un por l'autre ne le sent,  
 Bien oreint lor aaisement.  
 Ainz, puis le tens que le bois furent,  
 Deus genz itant de tel ne burent;                            13d  
 Ne, si comme l'estoire dit,  
 1790 La ou Berrox le vit escrit,  
 Nule gent tant ne s'entramerent  
 Ne si griment nu conpererent.  
 La roïne contre lui live.  
 Li chauz fu granz, qui molt les grive.  
 1795 Tristran l'acole et il dit ce:  
 "....."\*
- “Amis, ou avez vos esté?”  
 “Aprés un cerf, qui m'a lassé.  
 Tant l'ai chachié que tot m'en duel.  
 1800 Somel m'est pris, dormir me vel.”  
 La loge fu de vers rains faite,  
 De leus en leus ot fuelle atraite,  
 Et par terre fu bien jonchie.  
 Yseut fu premire couchie;  
 1805 Tristran se couche et trait s'espee,  
 Entre les deux chars l'a posee.  
 Sa chemise out Yseut vestue  
 (Se ele fust icel jor nue,  
 Merveilles lor fust meschoiet)
- E Tristran ses braies ravoit.  
 La roïne avoit en son doi  
 L'anel d'or des noces le roi,  
 O esmeraudes planteiz.  
 1810 Merveilles fu li doiz gresliz,  
 A poi que li aneaus n'en chiet.  
 Oez com il se sont couchiez:  
 Desoz le col Tristran a mis  
 Son braz, et l'autre, ce m'est vis,  
 Li out par dedesus geté;  
 1815 Estroitement l'ot acolé,  
 Et il la rot de ses braz çainte.  
 Lor amistié ne fu pas fainte.  
 Les bouches furent pres asises,  
 Et neporquant si ot devises                                    14a

it was very early in the morning,  
and the birds were greeting the dawn.  
Tristran, wearing his sword and unaccompanied,  
left the bower where he had lain,  
and went off to examine the Unfailing Bow.

1780

He went hunting through the woods.  
Before going, he was in great distress—  
did anyone else ever suffer so much?  
But because of each other, neither felt the pain,  
and both had great solace.

1785

Never, since they came to the forest,  
had two people ever tasted such sorrow;  
nor, according to the story  
as Béroul saw it in writing,  
two people ever love each other so much  
or pay for it so dearly.

1790

The queen came to meet him.  
The heat was severe and afflicted them greatly.

1795

Tristran kissed her and said,  
“.....”

“My love, where have you been?”

“Hunting a stag, which has exhausted me.  
I chased it until I was tired.  
I am sleepy; I want to rest.”

1800

The bower was made of green branches,  
with foliage added here and there,  
and the floor was spread with leaves.  
Iseut lay down first.

Then Tristran lay down, drew his sword,  
and placed it between their bodies.

1805

Iseut was wearing a chemise—  
if she had been naked that day,  
tragedy would have befallen them—  
and Tristran had his trousers on.

1810

The queen had on her finger  
the wedding ring, set with emeralds,  
that the king had given her.

Her finger was now so very thin  
that the ring almost fell off.

1815

Notice how they were lying:  
she put one arm under Tristran's neck,  
and had thrown the other one, I believe,  
across his body;

she was embracing him closely,  
and he also had his arms tightly around her.

1820

Their love was not feigned!

Their mouths were close together,  
and yet they were lying in such a way

- 1825 Que n'asenbloient pas ensenble.  
 Vent ne cort ne fuelle ne tremble.  
 Uns rais decent desor la face  
 Yseut, que plus reluist que glace.  
 Eisi s'endorment li amant,
- 1830 Ne pensent mal ne tant ne quant.  
 N'avoit que eus deus en cel païs;  
 Quar Governal, ce m'est avis,  
 S'en ert alez o le destrier  
 Aval el bois au forestier.\*
- 1835 Oez, seignors, quel aventure:  
 Tant lor dut estre pesme et dure!  
 Par le bois vint uns forestiers,  
 Qui avoit trové lor fulliers  
 Ou il erent el bois geü.
- 1840 Tant a par le fuellier seü  
 Qu'il fu venuz a la ramee  
 Ou Tristran out fait s'aünee.  
 Vit les dormanz, bien les connut:  
 Li sans li fuit, esmarriz fut.
- 1845 Molt s'en vet tost, quar se doutoit;  
 Bien sor, se Tristran s'esvellot,  
 Que ja n'i metroit autre ostage,  
 Fors la teste lairoit en gage.  
 Se il s'en fuit, n'est pas merveille;
- 1850 Du bois s'en ist, cort a merveille.  
 Tristran avoc s'amie dort:  
 Par poi qu'il ne reçurent mort.  
 D'iluec endroit ou il dormoient,  
 Qui, deus bones liues estoient
- 1855 La ou li rois tenet sa cort.  
 Li forestier grant erre acort;  
 Qar bien avoit oï le ban  
 Que l'en avoit fait de Tristran:  
 Cil qui au roi en diroit voir
- 1860 Assez arroit de son avoir.  
 Li forestier bien le savoit,  
 Por ç'acort il a tel esplot.  
 Et li rois Marc en son Palais  
 O ses barons tenoit ses plaiz;
- 1865 Des barons ert plaine la sale.  
 Li forestier du mont avale  
 Et s'en est entré, molt vait tost.  
 Pensez que onc arester s'ost  
 De si que il vint as degrez
- 1870 De la sale? Sus est montez.  
 Li rois le voit venir grant erre,  
 Son forestier apele en erre:

14b

- that their bodies were not touching. 1825  
 No breeze was blowing, nor any leaf stirring.  
 A ray of sunshine fell on Iseut's face,  
 which shone more brightly than glass.  
 Thus were the lovers sleeping  
 and expecting no trouble.
- There were only the two of them there,  
 for Gouvernal, I believe,  
 had gone on horseback  
 down into the woods to see the forester. 1830
- Now, lords, listen to what happened:  
 it could have been disastrous and terrible for them! 1835
- Through the woods came a forester  
 who had found the bowers  
 where they had stayed,  
 and now he followed their trail  
 until he came to the thicket  
 where Tristran had made his shelter. 1840
- He saw the sleeping couple and recognized them.  
 He turned pale and was frightened;  
 he left quickly because of his fear. 1845
- He knew that if Tristran should wake up,  
 he could offer no other hostage,  
 but would have to leave his head there!  
 It is no wonder that he fled!
- He ran out of the woods at full speed. 1850
- Tristran slept on with his love;  
 they barely escaped death!  
 The place where they were sleeping  
 was two full leagues, I think,  
 from where the king was holding court. 1855
- The forester ran there quickly  
 because he had heard the proclamation  
 that had been published about Tristran:  
 whoever gave the king accurate news of him  
 would be handsomely rewarded.
- The forester knew it,  
 and that is why he ran so swiftly. 1860
- King Mark was holding court  
 in his palace with his barons;  
 the hall was filled with his men. 1865
- The forester ran down the hill  
 and rushed into the hall.  
 Do you think he dared even pause  
 before coming to the steps  
 of the room? He ran up the stairs.
- The king saw him coming quickly  
 and called to the forester:

- “Soiz noveles, qui si toz viens?  
 Ome senbles que core a chiens,  
 Qui chast sa beste por ataindre.  
 Veus tu a cort de nullui plaindre?  
 Tu senbles hom qui ait besoin,  
 Qui ça me soit tramis de loin.  
 Se tu veus rien, di ton mesage.
- 1875      A toi nus hon veé son gage  
 Ou chacié vos de ma forest?”  
               “Escoute moi, roi, se toi plest,  
 Et si m'entent un sol petit.  
 Par cest païs a l'on banit,  
 Qui ton nevo porroit trover,  
 Qu'ançois s'osast laisier crever  
 Qu'il nu preïst, ou venist dire.  
 Ge l'ai trové, s'en criem vostre ire:  
 Se nel t'ensein, dorras moi mort.
- 1880      Je te merrai la ou il dort,  
 Et la roïne ensenble o lui.  
 Gel vi, poi a, ensenble o lui,  
 Fermement erent endormi.  
 Grant poor oi, quant la les vi.”
- 1885      Li rois l'entent, boufe et sospire,  
 Esfreez est, forment s'aïre;  
 Au forestier dist et conselle  
 Priveement, dedenz l'orelle,  
 “En qel endroit sont il? Di moi!”
- 1890      “En une loge de Morroi  
 Dorment estroit et embrachiez.  
 Vien tost, ja seron d'eus vengiez.  
 Rois, s'or n'en prens aspre venjance,  
 N'as droit en terre, sanz doutance.”
- 1895      Li roi li dist, “Is t'en la fors.\*  
 Si chier comme tu as ton cors,  
 Ne dire a nul ce que tu sez,  
 Tant soit estrange ne privez.  
 A la Croiz Roge, au chemin fors,
- 1900      La on enfuet sovent les cors,  
 Ne te movoir, iluec m'atent.  
 Tant te dorrai or et argent  
 Con tu voudras, je l'afi toi.”
- 1905      Li forestier se part du roi,  
 A la Croiz vient, iluec s'asiet.  
 Male gote les eulz li criet,  
 Qui tant voloit Tristran destruire!  
 Mex li venist son cors conduire,
- 1910      Qar puis morut a si grant honte  
 Con vos orrez avant el conte.
- 14c

"Do you have news, you who are in such a hurry?  
 You are like a man running with dogs  
 in pursuit of an animal.

1875

Do you have a complaint against someone at court?  
 You seem like a man in trouble  
 who has come a long way.

If you want something, tell me what it is.

Did someone refuse to pay a debt  
 or drive you out of my forest?"

1880

"King, please listen to me,  
 and hear me out for a moment!

Throughout the land it has been announced  
 that whoever finds your nephew  
 should risk his life

1885

to capture him or come and inform you.  
 I have found him, and I am afraid of angering you:  
 if I do not tell you, you will kill me!

I will lead you to the place where he is sleeping,  
 with the queen beside him.

1890

I saw her with him, just now,  
 and they were fast asleep.

I was terrified when I saw them."

The king listened to him and sighed deeply;  
 he became agitated and very angry.  
 he asked the forester  
 privately, whispering in his ear,  
 "Where are they? Tell me."

1895

"They are sleeping together in a bower in Morrois,  
 in each other's embrace.

1900

Come quickly, and we will have our revenge on them.  
 King, if you do not now take cruel vengeance,  
 you have no rightful claim on this land."

The king told him, "Leave this place.

1905

If you value your life,  
 tell no one what you know,  
 whether he be a stranger or a friend.  
 Go to the Red Cross, at the fork in the road  
 where bodies are often buried,  
 and do not leave there; wait there for me.

1910

I will give you all the gold and silver  
 you want, I swear it."

The forester left the king,  
 went to the Cross, and remained there.

1915

May he be damned,\*  
 since he so desperately wanted to destroy Tristran!  
 He would have been better off leaving,  
 for afterward he would die a miserable death,  
 as you will hear later in this story.

1920

- 14d
- Li rois est en la chanbre entrez,  
 A soi manda toz ses privez,  
 Pus lor voia et defendi  
 Qu'il ne soient ja si hardi  
 1925 Qu'il allent aprés lui plain pas.  
 Chascun li dist, "Rois, est ce gas,  
 A aler vos sous nule part?  
 Ainz ne fu rois qui n'ait regart.  
 Qel novele avez vos oïe?  
 1930 Ne vos movez por dit d'espie."
- Li rois respont, "Ne sai novele,  
 Mais mandé m'a une pucele  
 Que j'alle tost a lié parler.  
 Bien me mande n'i moigne per.
- 1935 G'irai tot seus sor mon destrier,  
 Ne merrai per ne escuier,  
 A ceste foiz irai sanz vos."  
 Il respondent, "Ce poise nos.  
 Chatons commanda a son filz  
 1940 A eschiver les leus soutiz."  
 Il respond, "Je le sai assez.  
 Laisiez moi faire auques mes sez."  
 Li rois a fait sa sele metre,  
 S'espee çaint, sovent regrete  
 1945 A lui tot sol la cuvertise  
 Que Tristran fist, quant il l'ot prissee  
 Yseult la bele o le cler vis,  
 O qui s'en est alé fuitis.  
 S'il les trove, molt les menace,  
 1950 Ne laira pas ne lor mesface.  
 Molt est li rois acoragiez  
 De destruire: c'est granz pechiez!  
 De la cité s'en est issuz  
 Et dist mex veut estre penduz  
 1955 Qu'il ne prenge de ceus venjance  
 Que li ont fait tel avilance.  
 A la croiz vint, ou cil l'atent,  
 Dist li qu'il aut isnelement  
 Et qu'il le meint la droite voie.  
 1960 El bois entrent, qui molt onbroie.  
 Devant le roi se met l'espie;  
 Li rois le sieut, qui bien s'i fie  
 En l'espee que il a çainte,  
 Dont a doné colee mainte.  
 1965 Si fait il trop que sorquidez;  
 Quar, se Tristran fust esvelliiez,  
 Li niés o l'oncle se meslast,  
 Li uns morust, ainz ne finast.
- 15a

The king entered his chamber;  
he convened all his advisors  
and forbade them strictly  
to be so reckless  
as to follow him one step.

1925

Everyone said to him, "King, is this a joke  
that you are going somewhere alone?  
No king ever failed to take proper precautions.  
What news have you heard?  
Do not act on the word of a spy!"

1930

The king answered, "I have no news,  
but a maiden asked me  
to come quickly and speak with her,  
and she asked me not to bring anyone with me.  
I will go by myself, on horseback,  
without any companion or squire;  
for once, I will go without you."

1935

They answered, "This worries us.  
Remember, Cato ordered his son\*  
to avoid deserted places."

1940

He replied, "I know that perfectly well,  
but let me do what I must do."  
The king had his horse saddled.  
He girded on his sword; he repeatedly lamented  
to himself the evil  
Tristran had done when he abducted  
the beautiful, fair Iseut,  
with whom he had fled.  
He threatened them, saying that if he found them,  
he would not fail to kill them.

1945

He was determined  
to destroy them—what a pity!  
He then departed from the city  
and said that he would rather be hanged  
than fail to avenge himself  
on those who had sinned so against him.

1950

He came to the Cross, where the man was awaiting him.  
He told the man to go ahead quickly  
and lead him directly to the place.

1955

They entered the woods, which were very dark.  
The spy led the king,  
who followed him, trusting  
in the sword he had girded on,  
with which he had struck many a blow.  
But he was too presumptuous;  
for if Tristran had awakened  
and the nephew and uncle had fought,  
one of them would have died before it was finished.

1960

1965

- Au forestier dist li roi Mars  
 1970 Qu'il li dorroit d'argent vint mars,  
 Sel menoit tost a son forfeit.  
 Li forestier (qui vergonde ait!)  
 Dist que pres sont de lor besoigne.  
 Du buen cheval, né de Gascoingne,  
 Fait l'espie le roi decendre,  
 De l'autre part cort l'estrier prendre;  
 A la branche d'un vert pomier  
 La reigne lient du destrier.  
 Poi vont avant, quant ont veü  
 1980 La loge por qu'il sont meü.  
 Li rois deslace son mantel,  
 Dont a fin or sont li tasel;  
 Desfublez fu, molt out gent cors.  
 Du fuerre trait l'espee fors,  
 1985 Iriez s'en torne, sovent dit  
 Q'or veut morir s'il nes ocit.  
 L'espee nue an la loge entre.  
 Le forestier entre soventre,  
 Grant erre aprés le roi acort;  
 1990 Li ros li coine qu'il retort.  
 Li rois en haut le cop leva,  
 Iré le fait, si se tresva.  
 Ja descendist li cop sor eus;  
 Ses oceïst, ce fust grant deus.  
 1995 Quant vit qu'ele avoit sa chemise  
 Et q'entre eus deus avoit devise,  
 La bouche o l'autre n'ert jostee,  
 Et quant il vit la nue espee  
 Qui entre eus deus les desevertot,  
 2000 Vit les braies que Tristran out:  
 "Dex!" dist li rois, "ce que peut estre?  
 Or ai veü tant de lor estre,  
 Dex! Je ne sai que doie faire,  
 Ou de l'ocire ou du retraire.  
 2005 Ci sont el bois, bien a lonc tens.  
 Bien puis croire, se je ai sens,  
 Se il s'amaserent folement,  
 Ja n'i eüssent vestement,  
 Entré eus deus n'eüst espee,  
 2010 Autrement fust cest' asenblee.  
 Corage avoie d'eus ocire:  
 Nes tocherai, retrairai m'ire.  
 De fole amor corage n'ont.  
 N'en ferrai nul. Endormi sont:  
 2015 Se par moi eirent atouchié,  
 Trop par feroie grant pechié;

15b

- King Mark said to the forester  
 that he would give him twenty marks of silver  
 if he led him quickly to the offender. 1970
- The forester—may he be shamed!—  
 said that they were near their destination.
- The spy had the king dismount  
 from his good Gascon horse,  
 running up to hold the stirrup. 1975
- They tied the horses' reins  
 to the limb of a green apple tree.
- They had advanced only a little when they saw  
 the bower they were seeking. 1980
- The king opened his cloak,  
 with its clasps of fine gold;  
 he took it off, revealing his handsome body.  
 He drew his sword from its scabbard;  
 he advanced angrily, saying repeatedly 1985  
 that if he did not kill them he himself wanted to die.  
 With his sword drawn, he entered the bower.
- The forester went in after him,  
 following him closely,  
 but the king signaled for him to leave. 1990
- The king raised his sword high  
 in anger, but he could go no farther.  
 He almost struck them;  
 if he had killed them, it would have been a tragedy!  
 When he was that she was wearing her chemise 1995  
 and saw that there was a space between them  
 and that their mouths were not touching,  
 and when he saw the naked sword  
 which was separating them  
 and saw the trousers that Tristran wore,  
 the king said, "God, what can this mean?  
 Now I have seen just how they live,  
 and, God! I do not know what to do,  
 whether to kill them or leave.  
 They have been here in the woods a long time. 2000
- It is reasonable to conclude that,  
 if they loved each other sinfully,  
 they would not be dressed,  
 and there would not be a sword between them.  
 They would be together in quite a different way! 2010
- I wanted to kill them,  
 but I will not touch them; I will calm my anger.  
 They have no illicit intent.  
 I will not strike either of them. They are asleep:  
 if I even touched them, 2015  
 it would be terribly wrong.

- Et se g'esvel cest endormi  
 Et il m'ocit ou j'oci lui,  
 Ce sera laide reparlance.
- 2020 Je lor ferai tel demostratione  
 Ançois que il s'esvelleront,  
 Certainement savoir porront  
 Qu'il furent endormi trové  
 Et q'en a eü d'eus pité,
- 2025 Que je nes vuel noient ocire,  
 Ne moi ne gent de mon empire.  
 Ge voi el doi a la reïne  
 L'anel o pierre esmeraudine;  
 Or li donnai (molt par est buens),
- 2030 Et g'en rai un qui refu suens:                            15c  
 Osterai li le mien du doi.  
 Uns ganz de vair ai je o moi,  
 Qu'el aporta o soi d'Irlande.  
 Le rai qui sor la face brande
- 2035 (Qui li fait chaut) en vuel covrir;  
 Et, qant vendra au departir,  
 Prendrai l'espee d'entre eus deus  
 Dont au Morhot fu del chief blos."
- Li rois a deslié les ganz,  
 Vit ensenble les deus dormanz,  
 Le rai qui sor Yseut decent  
 Covre des ganz molt bonement.  
 L'anel du doi defors parut:
- 2040 Souef le traist, qu'il ne se mut.  
 Primes i entra il enviz;  
 Or avoit tant les doiz gresliz  
 Qu'il s'en issi sanz force fere;  
 Molt l'en sot bien li rois fors traire.
- 2045 L'espee qui entre eus deus est  
 Souef oste, la soue i met.  
 De la loge s'en issi fors,  
 Vint au destrier, saut sor le dos;  
 Au forestier dist qu'il s'en fuie,
- 2050 Son cors trestort, si s'en conduie.  
 Vet s'en li rois, dormant les let.  
 A cele foiz n'i a plus fait.  
 Reperiez est a sa cité.  
 De plusorز parz out demandé
- 2055 Ou a esté et ou tant fut.  
 Li roi lor ment, pas n'i connut  
 Ou il ala ne que il quist  
 Ne de faisance que il fist.  
 Mais or oiez des endormiz,
- 2060 Que li rois out el bois gerpiz.

- and if I awakened him  
and he killed me, or I him,  
people would condemn me.
- I will leave them proof  
before they awaken,  
so they will know beyond a doubt  
that they were found asleep  
and that someone took pity on them.
- For I certainly do not want them to be killed,  
either by me or by any of my subjects.
- I see on the queen's finger  
her fine emerald ring.  
I gave it to her, and it is very valuable.
- I have another one which was once hers:  
I will take mine from her finger.
- I have with me a pair of fur gloves  
which she brought with her from Ireland;  
I will use them to block the ray of sunlight  
falling on her face and making her hot.
- And when it is time to leave,  
I will take from between them the sword  
with which the Morholt was beheaded."
- The king unlaced his gloves;  
he looked at the two sleeping together  
and gently placed the gloves so that they blocked  
the ray of sun that fell upon Iseut.
- The ring was visible on her finger;  
he pulled at it gently, without moving her finger.  
Originally, it had been very tight,  
but her fingers were now so thin  
that it came off effortlessly.
- The king was able to remove it without difficulty.
- He gently removed the sword  
that was between them and placed his own there.
- He then left the bower,  
returned to his horse, and mounted it;  
he told the forester to leave immediately—  
to depart, to be gone.
- The king departed also, leaving them asleep.
- On that occasion, he did nothing more.
- He returned to his city.
- Many people asked him  
where he had gone and had stayed so long.
- The king lied to them; he did not admit  
where he had been, what he had been seeking,  
or anything he had done.
- But now hear about the sleeping couple  
whom the king had left in the forest.
- 2020
- 2025
- 2030
- 2035
- 2040
- 2045
- 2050
- 2055
- 2060

- |      |  |     |
|------|--|-----|
| 2065 | Avis estoit a la roïne<br>Qu'ele ert en une grant gaudine,<br>Dedenz un riche pavellon.<br><br>A li venoient dui lion,<br>Qui la voloient devorer;<br>El lor voloit merci cri'er,<br>Mais li lion, destroiz de fain,<br>Chascun la prenoit par la main.<br><br>Li gant paré du blanc hermine<br>Li sont choiet sor la poitrine.<br>Tristran, du cri qu'il ot, s'esvella,<br>Tote la face avoit vermelle.<br><br>Esfreez s'est, saut sus ses piez,<br>L'espee prent com home iriez,<br>Regarde el brant, l'osche ne voit:<br>Vit le pont d'or qui sus estoit,<br>Connut que c'est l'espee au roi. | 15d |
| 2070 | Geta un cri, si s'esvella.<br><br>La roïne vit en son doi<br>L'anel que li avoit doné,<br>Le suen revit du dei osté.<br>Ele cria: "Sire, merci!<br>Le rois nos a trovez ici."  |     |
| 2075 | Il li respont: "Dame, c'est voirs.<br>Or nos covient gerpir Morrois,<br>Qar molt li par somes mesfait.<br>M'espee a, la soue me lait:<br>Bien nos peüst avoir ocis."   |     |
| 2080 | "Sire, voire, ce m'est avis."<br>"Bele, or n'i a fors du fuir.<br>Il nos laissa por nos traïr:<br>Seus ert, si est alé por gent,<br>Prendre nos quide, voirement.<br>Dame, fujion nos en vers Gales.   |     |
| 2085 | Li sanc me fuit." Tot devient pales.   | 16a |
| 2090 | Atant, es vos lor escuier,<br>Qui s'en venoit o le destrier.<br>Vit son seignor (pales estoit),<br>Demande li que il avoit.  |     |
| 2095 | "Par foi, mestre, Marc li gentis<br>Nos a trovez ci endormis;<br>S'espee lait, la moie en porte:<br>Felonie criem qu'il anorte.<br>Du doi Yseut l'anel, le buen,   |     |
| 2100 | En a porté, si lait le suen:<br>Par cest change poon parçoivre,<br>Mestre, que il nos veut deçoivre;   |     |
| 2105 |  |     |
| 2110 |  |     |

- The queen was dreaming  
that she was in a large wood,  
in a rich pavilion;  
two lions approached her,  
intending to devour her.
- She was about to beg for mercy,  
but each of the famished lions  
took her by a hand.
- Because of the fear that Iseut felt,  
she cried out and woke up.
- The gloves, trimmed in white ermine,  
had fallen on her breast.
- Tristran, hearing her cry, awoke  
with his face all flushed.
- He was frightened, and he sprang to his feet.
- He seized the sword like a man enraged,  
looked at the blade, and saw that it had no notch.
- He then noticed the golden pommel  
and recognized the sword as the king's.
- The queen saw on her finger  
the ring he had left her
- and saw that he had taken hers from hr finger.
- She cried out, "Alas, sir,  
the king has discovered us here!"
- He answered, "That is true, my lady.  
Now we must leave Morrois,
- for he is surely convinced of our guilt.  
He has taken my sword and left me his:  
he could easily have killed us!"
- "Sir, I agree with you."
- "My love, there is nothing left to do but flee.  
He left us in order to deceive us.
- He was alone, and he has now gone back for help:  
he clearly expects to capture us.
- Lady, let us flee toward Wales.
- I am faint!" He became pale.
- At that moment, their squire arrived,  
who was returning with the horse.
- He saw his lord, who was pale,  
and asked him what was wrong.
- "Alas, master, noble Mark  
found us asleep here;
- he left his sword and took mine.  
I fear that he is planning some treachery. .
- He took the fine ring  
from Iseut's finger and left his own.
- From this exchange we can conclude, master,  
that he means to trick us,

2065

2070

2075

2080

2085

2090

2095

2100

2105

2110

- Quar il ert seus, si nos trova,  
Poor li prist, si s'en torna.
- 2115 Por gent s'en est alé arriere,  
Dont il a trop et baude et fire.  
Ses amerra, destruire veut  
Et moi et la roïne Yseut;  
Voint le pueple, nos veut prendre,  
2120 Faire ardoir et venter la cendre.  
Fuion, n'avon que demorer."  
N'avet en eus que demorer.  
S'il ont poor, n'en püent mais:  
Li rois sevent fel et engrés.
- 2125 Torné s'en sont bone aleüre,  
Li roi doutent, por l'aventure.  
Morrois trespassent, si s'en vont,  
Grans jornees par poor font,  
Droit vers Gales s'en sont alé.
- 2130 Molt les avra amors pené:  
Trois anz plainiers sofrirent peine,  
Lor char pali et devint vain.
- Seignors, du vin de quoi il burent  
Avez oï, por quoi il furent
- 2135 En si grant paine lonctens mis; 16b  
Mais ne savez, ce m'est avis,  
A combien fu determinez  
Li lovendrins, li vin herbez:  
La mere Yseut, qui le bolli,
- 2140 A trois anz d'amistié le fist.  
Por Marc le fist et por sa fille:  
Autre en pruva, qui s'en essille.  
Tant con durerent li troi an,  
Out li vins si soupris Tristran
- 2145 Et la roïne ensenble o lui  
Que chascun disoit: "Las n'en sui."\*  
L'endemain de la Saint Jehan  
Aconpli furent li troi an  
Que cil vin fu determinez.
- 2150 Tristran fu de son lit levez,  
Iseut remest en sa fullie.  
Tristran, sachiez, un doitie  
A un cerf traist, qu'il out visé,  
Par les flans l'a outrebersé.
- 2155 Fuit s'en li cerf, Tristran l'aqeut;  
Que soirs fu plains tant le porseut.  
La ou il cort après la beste,  
L'ore revient, et il s'areste,  
Qu'il ot beü le lovendant.
- 2160 A lui seus senpres se repent:

- for he was alone. He found us,  
he was frightened, and he left.  
He went back for help, 2115  
for he has many courageous and able men.  
He will bring them back, since he wants to destroy  
the queen Iseut and me.  
He wants people to see him capture us,  
have us burned publicly, and scatter our ashes. 2120  
Let us flee; we cannot stay any longer."
- There was no reason to stay.  
They could not help being afraid,  
for they knew the king was a violent and angry man.  
They left hurriedly, 2125  
fearing the king because of what had happened.  
They passed through Morrois, and kept going,  
putting in very long days because of their fear.  
They fled directly toward Wales.  
Love had caused them great pain: 2130  
for three full years they had suffered,  
and they had become pale and weak.
- Lords, you have heard about the wine they drank,  
which brought upon them  
so much torment for a long time; 2135  
but I do not think you know  
how long the potion, the wine mixed with herbs,  
was supposed to last.  
Iseut's mother, who brewed it,  
made it to last for three years of love. 2140  
She made it for Mark and for her daughter;  
someone else drank it and was exiled as a result.  
For the full three years,  
the wine had so dominated Tristran  
and the queen along with him 2145  
that each said, "I have no regrets."
- On the day after the feast of Saint John,  
the three years of the potion's effect  
had come to an end.  
Tristran got up from his bed, 2150  
while Iseut remained in her bower.  
You should know that Tristran took aim  
and shot an arrow at a stag;  
he wounded it in the side.  
The stag fled, and Tristran followed it; 2155  
he pursued it until nightfall.  
As he was running after the animal,  
the very hour came when he had drunk the potion,  
and he came to a stop.  
Suddenly, he repented, saying to himself, 2160

- "Ha, Dex!" fait il, "tant ai traval!  
 Trois anz a hui, que riens n'i fal,  
 Onques ne me falli pus paine  
 Ne a foirié n'en sorsemaine.
- 2165      Oublié ai chevalerie,  
 A seure cort et baronie.  
 Ge sui essillié du païs,  
 Tot m'est falli et vair et gris,  
 Ne sui a cort a chevaliers.
- 2170      Dex! Tant m'amast mes oncles chiers,      16c  
 Se tant ne fuse a lui mesfez!  
 Ha, Dex! Tant foiblement me vet!  
 Or deüse estre a cort a roi,  
 Et cent danzeaus avoques moi,
- 2175      Qui servisent por armes prendre  
 Et a moi lor servise rendre.  
 Aler deüse en autre terre  
 Soudoyer et soudees querre.  
 Et poise moi de la roïne,
- 2180      Qui je doins loge por cortine.  
 En bois est, et si peüst estre  
 En beles chanbres, o son estre,  
 Portendues de dras de soie.  
 Por moi a prise male voie.
- 2185      A Deu, qui est sire du mont,  
 Cri ge merci, que il me donst  
 Itel corage que je lais.  
 A mon oncle sa feme en pais.  
 A Deu vo je que jel feroie
- 2190      Molt volentiers, se je pooie,  
 Si que Yseut fust acordee  
 O le roi Marc, qui'st esposee  
 (Las!) si qel virent maint riche ome,  
 Au fuer q'en dit la loi de Rome."
- 2195      Tristran s'apuie sor son arc,  
 Sovent regrete le roi Marc,  
 Son oncle, qui a fait tel tort,  
 Sa feme mise a tel descort.  
 Tristran au soir se dementot.
- 2200      Oiez d'Iseut con li estoit!  
 Sovent disoit: "Lasse, dolente,  
 Porqoi eüstes vos jovente?  
 En bois estes com autre serve,  
 Petit trovez qui ci vus serve.
- 2205      Je suis roïne, mais le non      16d  
 En ai perdu par ma poison  
 Que nos beümes en la mer.  
 Ce fist Brengain, qu'i dut garder:

- "Oh, God, I am suffering so much;  
 for three years to the day, without respite,  
 I have never been without pain—  
 on feast days and others alike.  
 I have forgotten chivalry,  
 the court, and the knightly life. 2165  
 I am living in exile,  
 I am deprived of furs and fine clothes,  
 and I am no longer at court in the company of knights.  
 God! My uncle would have loved me so  
 if I had not betrayed him!  
 Oh, God! I am so miserable!  
 I should be at the royal court,  
 attended by a hundred young men  
 who serve me in order to become knights 2175  
 and join my retinue.  
 I should be traveling to other lands,  
 performing services and earning handsome rewards.  
 And I am distressed for the queen,  
 to whom I gave a hut instead of a curtained chamber. 2180  
 She lives in the forest, when she could be  
 in beautiful rooms decorated with silk,  
 in the company of her attendants.  
 Because of me, she has gone astray.  
 I ask God, ruler of the world, 2185  
 to grant me mercy and give me  
 the strength to leave  
 my uncle's wife to him in peace!  
 Before God, I swear that I would do it  
 gladly, if I could,  
 so that Iseut might be reconciled 2190  
 with King Mark, whom she married,  
 alas, in the presence of many noble men  
 and according to the rites of the Christian Church."
- Tristran leaned on his bow,  
 regretting the wrong he had done  
 to King Mark, his uncle,  
 by creating discord between him and his wife.  
 Tristran lamented through the evening. 2195  
 Now hear how it was with Iseut:  
 She kept repeating to herself, "Alas, miserable woman!  
 How you have wasted your youth!  
 You are living in the forest like a serf,  
 with no one to serve you here.  
 I am a queen, 2200  
 but I have lost that title  
 because of the potion we drank at sea.  
 Brangain was at fault, for she was in charge of it.

- 2210 Lasse! Si male garde en fist!  
 El n'en pout mais, quar j'ai trop pris.  
 Les damoiseles des anors,  
 Les filles as frans vavasors  
 Deüse ensenble o moi tenir  
 En mes chanbres, por moi servir,  
 2215 Et les deüise marier  
 Et as seignors por bien doner.  
 Amis Tristran, en grant error  
 Nos mist qui le boivre d'amor  
 Nos aporta ensenble a boivre,  
 2220 Mex ne nos pout el pas deçoivre."\*  
     Tristran li dist: "Roïne gente,  
     En mal usons nostre jovente.  
     Bele amie, se je peüse,  
     Par conseil que je en eüse,  
 2225 Faire au roi Marc acordement,  
     Qu'il pardonnast son mautalent  
     Et qu'il preïst nostre escondit,  
     C'onques nul jor, n'en fait n'en dit,  
     N'oi o vos point de drüerie  
 2230 Qui li tornast a vilanie.  
     N'a chevalier en son roiaume,  
     Ne de Lidan tresque en Dureaume,  
     S'il voloit dire que amor  
     Eüse o vos por deshonor,  
 2235 Ne m'en trovast en champ, armé.  
     Et s'il avoit en volenté,  
     Quant vos avriiez deresnie,  
     Qu'il me soufrist de sa mesnie,  
     Gel serviroie a grant honor,  
 2240 Conme mon oncle et mon seignor:  
     N'avroit soudoier en sa terre  
     Qui miex le servist de sa gerre.\*  
     Et s'il estoit a son plesir  
     Vos a prendre et moi de gerpir,  
 2245 Qu'il n'eüst soin de mon servise,  
     Ge m'en iroie au roi de Frise,  
     Ou m'en passeroie en Bretaigne  
     O Gouvernal, sanz plus compaigne.  
     Roïne franche, ou que je soie,  
 2250 Vostre toz jorz me clameroie.  
     Ne vosise la departie,  
     S'estre peüst la compaignie,  
     Ne fust, bele, la grant soufraite  
     Que vos soufrez et avez faite  
 2255 Toz dis, por moi, par desertine.  
     Por moi perdez non de roïne.

17a

- Alas! She took care of it badly.  
 But she had no remedy, for I had drunk too much. 2210  
 I should have around me  
 well-bred young women,  
 the daughters of worthy vassals,  
 to serve me in my chambers,  
 and I should arrange their marriages 2215  
 and give them to noble men.  
 Dear Tristran, she who brought us  
 the love potion to drink together  
 led us astray;  
 she could not have betrayed us more cruelly!" 2220
- Tristran told her, "Noble Queen,  
 we are wasting our youth.  
 My love, if only I could  
 be well advised about how  
 to be reconciled with Mark, 2225  
 so that he would forget his anger  
 and accept our assurance  
 that never, by word or deed,  
 did we have a shameful love  
 that brought disgrace to him! 2230
- There is no knight in his kingdom,  
 from Dinan to Durham\*,  
 who, if he claimed that  
 I loved you dishonorably,  
 would not find me, armed, on the battlefield. 2235
- And if Mark were willing,  
 once you are vindicated,  
 to accept me in his household,  
 I would serve him with honor,  
 as my uncle and my lord; 2240
- he would have no soldier  
 who would serve him better in war.  
 And if it were his wish  
 to take you back but to reject me,  
 having no desire for my service, 2245
- I would go to the king of Dumfries,\*  
 or else I would cross into Brittany,  
 with Gouvernal, but no other companion.  
 Noble Queen, wherever I may be,  
 I will always be yours. 2250
- If there were any way to stay together,  
 I would never want this separation,  
 were it not, my love, for the deprivation  
 that you endure and have endured  
 for a long time, on my account, in the wilderness. 2255
- Because of me, you have lost the title 'Queen.'

- Estre peüses a anor  
 En tes chambres, o ton seignor,  
 Ne fust, dame, li vins herbez  
 2260 Qui a la mer nos fu donnez.  
 Yseut, franche, gente façon,  
 Conselle moi que nos feron."  
 "Sire, Jesu soit graciez,  
 Qant degerpir volez pechiez!  
 2265 Amis, membre vos de l'ermitte  
 Ogrin, qui de la loi escrive  
 Nos preecha et tant nos dist,  
 Quant tornastes a son abit,  
 Qui est el chief de cel boschage!  
 2270 Beaus amis douz, se ja corage  
 Vos ert venuz de repentir,  
 Or ne peüst mex avenir.  
 Sire, corons a lui ariere.  
 De ce sui tote fianciere:  
 2275 Consel nos doroit honorable,  
 Par quoi a joie pardurable  
 Porron ancore bien venir."  
 Tristran l'entent, fist un sospir  
 Et dist: "Roïne de parage,  
 2280 Tornon arire a l'ermitage.  
 Encor enuit ou le matin,  
 O le conseil de maistre Ogrin,  
 Manderon a nostre talent  
 Par briés sanz autre mandement."  
 2285 "Amis Tristran, molt dites bien.  
 Au riche roi celestien  
 Puison andui crië merci,  
 Qu'il ait de nos, Tristran, ami!"  
 Arrire tornent el boschage,  
 2290 Tant ont erré qu'a l'ermitage  
 Vindrent ensemble li amant.  
 L'ermitte Ogrin trovent lisant.  
 Quant il les vit, bel les apele  
 (Assis se sont en la chapele):  
 2295 "Gent dechacie, a con grant paine  
 Amors par force vos demeine!  
 Conbien durra vostre folie?  
 Trop avez mené ceste vie.  
 Et, queles, quar vos repentez!"  
 2300 Tristran li dist, "Or escoutez.  
 Si longuement l'avon menee,  
 Itel fu nostre destinee.  
 Trois anz a bien, si que n'i falle,  
 Onques ne nos falli travalle.

17b

You could have lived a life of honor  
in your royal chambers with your lord,  
had it not been for the potion, my lady,  
that was given to us at sea.

2260

Noble, beautiful Iseut,  
tell me what we should do!"

"Sir, thanks be to God  
that you wish to repent of your sin!

Friend, remember the hermit

2265

Ogrin, who preached to us about the scriptures  
and spoke to us at length  
when you visited the hermitage  
at the edge of the forest.

Dear friend, if you have in you  
a sincere desire to repent,  
it could not come at a better time.

2270

Sir, let us hurry back to him.

I trust him completely.

He will give us honorable advice,  
by which we may yet  
achieve lasting happiness."

2275

Hearing her, Tristran sighed  
and said, "Noble Queen,  
we will return to the hermitage.  
Tonight or tomorrow morning,  
with the advice of Master Ogrin,  
we will make our intentions known  
by a letter and nothing more."

2280

"My dear Tristran, that is an excellent idea.  
And let us implore  
our great heavenly King  
to have mercy on us, dear Tristran."

2285

The lovers set out through the thicket;  
they walked until  
together they came to the hermitage.  
They found the hermit Ogrin there, reading.  
When he saw them, he greeted them warmly,  
and they sat down in the chapel.

2290

"Poor outcasts,  
love has caused you so much pain!  
How long will your sinful ways continue?  
You have led this life too long;  
I beg you to repent."

2295

Tristran said to him, "Listen to me.  
If we have lived this way a long time,  
it was our fate.  
For three full years, if I count correctly,  
we have never been without suffering.

2300

- 2305 S'or poions conseil trover  
 De la roïne racorder,  
 Je ne querrai ja plus nul jor  
 Estre o le roi Marc a seignor;  
 Ainz m'en irai ançois un mois  
 2310 En Bretaigne ou en Loenois.  
 Et se mes oncles veut soufrir  
 Moi a sa cort por lui servir,  
 Gel servirai si con je doi.  
 Sire, mon oncle est riche roi.
- 2315 .....  
 Le mellor conseil nos donnez,  
 Por Deu, sire, de ce qu'oez,  
 Et nos feron vos volentez."  
 Seignors, oiez de la roïne:  
 2320 As piez l'ermitte chiet encline,  
 De lui proier point ne se faint  
 Qu'il les acort au roi, si plaint:  
 "Qar ja corage de folie  
 Nen avrai je jor de ma vie.
- 2325 Ge ne di pas, a vostre entente,  
 Que de Tristran jor me repente,  
 Que je ne l'aim de bone amor  
 Et com amis, sanz desanor:  
 De la comune de mor cors
- 2330 Et je du suen some tuit fors."  
 L'ermites l'ot parler, si plore,  
 De ce q'il ot Deu en auure:  
 "Ha, Dex! Beaus rois omnipotent,  
 2335 Graces, par mon buen cuer, vos rent,  
 Qui vivre tant m'avez laisiez  
 Que ces deus genz de lor pechiez  
 A moi en vindrent conseil prendre.  
 Granz grez vos en puise je rendre!
- 2340 Ge jur ma creance et ma loi,  
 Buen conseil averez de moi.  
 Tristran, entent moi un petit  
 (Ci es venuz a mon habit),  
 Et vos, roïne, a ma parole  
 Entendez, ne soiez pas fole.
- 2345 Qant home et feme font pechié,\*  
 S'anç se sont pris et sont quitié  
 Et s'aus viennent a penitance  
 Et aient bone repentance,  
 Dex lor pardone lor mesfait,  
 2350 Tant ne seroit orible et lait.  
 Tristran, roïne, or escoutez  
 Un petitet, si m'entendez.

17c

17d

- If we could be advised  
 how to reconcile the queen with him,  
 I would forever forgo my desire  
 to rejoin my lord King Mark;  
 instead, before the month was up,  
 I would go away to Brittany or Lothian. 2305
- But if my uncle will permit me  
 to serve him at court,  
 I will serve him faithfully.  
 Sir, my uncle is a powerful king. 2310
- ..... 2315
- Give us the best advice you can,  
 Sir, in God's name, about what you have heard,  
 and we will do your will."
- Lords, now hear what the queen did:  
 She threw herself at the feet of the hermit  
 and, with no hesitation, implored him  
 to reconcile them with the king, insisting, 2320
- "Never in my life will I  
 have any sinful desires.
- Please understand that I am not saying  
 that I regret my relationship with Tristran  
 or that I do not love him properly  
 and honorably, as a friend. 2325
- But he is entirely free of any carnal desire for me,  
 and I for him." 2330
- The hermit listened to her and wept.  
 He praised God for what he had heard:  
 "Oh, God, great omnipotent King,  
 I give thanks to You with all my heart  
 that You have let me live long enough  
 that these two have come to me 2335
- for advice concerning their sin.  
 May I forever be grateful to You!  
 I swear on my faith and my religion  
 that you will have good counsel from me.
- Tristran, since you have come here to my dwelling,  
 listen to me,  
 and you, Queen, hear me well,  
 and act wisely. 2340
- When a man and a woman sin,  
 if they have loved each other and then separated,  
 and if they repent  
 and are genuinely repentant, 2345
- God will forgive them for their transgression,  
 however horrible and ugly it may have been.
- Tristran, Queen, now listen to me  
 a moment and understand me: 2350

- Por honte oster et mal covrir  
 Doit on un poi par bel mentir.  
 2355 Qant vos conseil m'avez requis,  
 Gel vos dorrai sanz terme mis.  
 En parchemin prendrai un brief:  
 Saluz avra el premier chief.  
 A Lancien le trametez,
- 2360 Le roi par bien salu mandez  
 En bois estes o la roïne,  
 Mis, s'il voloit de lui saisine  
 Et pardonast son mautalent,  
 Vos feriez por lui itant.
- 2365 Vos en iriez a sa cort;  
 N'i avroit fort, sage ne lort,  
 S'il veut dire qu'en vilanie  
 Eüsiez prise drüerie,  
 Si vos face li rois Marc pendre,
- 2370 Se vos ne vos poez defendre.  
 Tristran, por ce t'os bien loer,  
 Que ja n'i troveras ton per  
 Qui gage doinst encontre toi.  
 Icest conseil te doin par foi.
- 2375 Ce ne puet il metre en descort:  
 Qant il vos vout livrer a mort  
 Et en feu ardoir, par le nain  
 (Cortois le virent et vilain),  
 Il ne voloit escouter plait.
- 2380 Quant Dex vos avoit merci fait  
 Que d'iluec fustes eschapez,  
 Si com il est oï assez,  
 Que, se ne fust la Deu vigor,  
 Destruit fusiez a deshonor
- 2385 (Tel saut feïstes qu'il n'a home  
 De Costentin entresqu'a Rome,  
 Se il le voit, n'en ait hisdor),  
 Iluec fuistes par poor.  
 Vos rescosistes la roïne,
- 2390 S'avez esté pus en gaudine.  
 De sa terre vos l'amenastes,  
 Par mariage li donastes.  
 Tot ce fu fait, il le set bien;  
 Nocie fu a Lencien.
- 2395 Mal vos estoit lié a fallir,  
 O lié vosistes mex fuîr.  
 S'il veut prendre vostre escondit  
 Si quel verront grant et petit,  
 Vos li offrez a sa cort faire.
- 2400 Et se lui venoit a viaire,

18a

- In order to escape shame and conceal evil,  
you have to be able to tell a few lies.  
Since you asked me for advice, 2355  
I will give it to you without delay.  
I will prepare a letter on parchment.  
It will begin with a salutation.  
Address it to him at Lantyan.  
Tell the king, with proper respect, 2360  
that you are in the forest with the queen,  
but that if he wants to take her back  
and forget his anger,  
you will then do the same for him  
and will return to his court.  
Then, if any man there, wise or foolish, 2365  
wants to accuse you  
of harboring an illicit love,  
may King Mark have you hanged  
if you cannot defend yourself.  
Tristran, I dare to give you that advice, 2370  
because never will you find your equal there  
who would accept your challenge.  
I am advising you in good faith.  
He cannot deny this: 2375  
When he wanted to condemn you to death  
and have you burned, then because of the dwarf—  
and nobles and commoners alike saw this—  
he refused to permit a trial.  
When God had mercy on you 2380  
so that you escaped from there,  
as everyone has heard,  
were it not for God's power,  
you would have perished in disgrace.  
There is no man between Constantine and Rome who,\* 2385  
seeing the leap you took,  
would not have been terrified.  
Then you fled because of fear;  
you rescued the queen,  
and since then you have lived in the wilderness. 2390  
You brought her from her land  
and gave her to him in marriage.  
All that happened and he knows it.  
She was wedded at Lantyan.  
You could not leave her in trouble, 2395  
so you thought it best to flee with her.  
If he is willing to hear your defense,  
so that everyone, great and small, can witness it,  
you will offer to present it in court.  
And if he agrees, 2400

- Qant vos serez de lui loiaus,  
 Au loement de ses vasaus  
 Preïst sa feme la cortoise.  
 Et, se savez que lui n'en poise,  
 2405 O lui serez ses soudoirs,  
 Servirez le molt volentiers.  
 Et s'il ne veut vostre servise,  
 Vos passerez la mer de Frise,  
 Iroiz servir un autre roi.
- 2410 Tex ert li brief." "Et je l'otroi.  
 Tant ait plus mis, beau sire Ogrin,\*  
 Vostre merci, el parchemin:  
 Que je ne m'os en lui fier;  
 De moi a fait un ban cri'er.
- 2415 Mais je li prié, com a seignor  
 Que je molt aim par bone amor,  
 Un autre brief reface faire,  
 S'i face escrire tot son plaire;  
 A la Croiz Roge, anmi la lande,
- 2420 Pende le brief, si le commande.  
 Ne li os mander ou je sui,  
 Ge crier qu'il ne me face ennui.  
 Ge crerai bien, quant je l'avrai,  
 Le brief: quant qu'il voudra feraie.
- 2425 Maistre, mon brief set seelé!  
 En la queue escriroiz: 'Vale!'  
 A ceste foiz je n'i sai plus."  
 Ogrins l'ermite lieve sus,  
 2430 Pene et enque et parchemin prist,  
 Totes ces paroles i mist.  
 Qant il out fait, prist un anel,  
 La pierre passot el seel.  
 Seelé est, Tristran le tent,  
 Il le reçut molt bonement.
- 2435 "Quil portera?" dist li hermites.  
 "Gel portera!" "Tristran, nu dites."  
 "Certes, sire, si fera bien,  
 Bien sai l'estre de Lancien.  
 Beau sire Ogrin, vostre merci,
- 2440 La roïne remaindra ci;  
 Et anevois, en tens oscur,  
 Qant li rois dormira seür,  
 Ge monterai sor mon destrier,  
 O moi merrai mon escuier.
- 2445 Defors la vile a un pendant:  
 La decendrai, s'irai avant.  
 Mon cheval gardera mon mestre,  
 Mellor ne vit ne lais ne prestre."

18b

once your loyalty to him is established,  
 then, on the advice of his barons,  
 he should take back his noble wife.  
 And once you know he is in agreement,  
 you will be his warrior  
 and serve him gladly.

2405

But if he does not want your service,  
 you will cross the sea to Dumfries,  
 and you will serve another king.

That is what should be in the letter." "And I approve.

2410

But with your permission, good Sir Ogrin,  
 let something else be added to the letter,  
 because I do not dare to trust him:  
 he issued a warrant for me.

But I ask him, as my lord  
 whom I love and honor,  
 to have another letter prepared  
 and to make his pleasure known in it.

2415

Let him order that the letter be left  
 at the Red Cross in the middle of the heath.

2420

I dare not tell him where I am,  
 for fear that he will harm me.

I will be reassured when I have  
 the letter, and I will do whatever he wishes.

Master, let my letter be sealed,  
 and write on the ribbon, *Vale!*

2425

Now I have nothing more to add."

Ogrin the hermit got up;  
 he took pen and ink and parchment,  
 and wrote down all the words.

2430

When he had finished, he took a ring  
 and pressed the stone into the wax seal.  
 When it was sealed, he handed it to Tristran,  
 who took it gratefully.

"Who will deliver it?" asked the hermit.

2435

"I will take it." "Don't say that, Tristran!"

"Yes, sir, I will do it.

I know Lantyan well.

Good Sir Ogrin, with your permission,  
 the queen will stay here;  
 soon, when it is dark  
 and the king is sleeping soundly,  
 I will mount my horse  
 and take my squire with me.

2440

There is a hill outside the town;

2445

I will dismount there and continue on foot.

My master will hold my horse—  
 neither priest nor layman ever saw a better one."

- 2450      Anuit, aprés soleil couchier,  
           Qant li tens prist a espoisier,  
           Tristran s'en torne avoc son mestre.                  18c  
           Bien sot tot le païs et l'estre.  
           A Lancien, a la cité,  
           En sont venu, tant ont erré.  
 2455      Il decent jus, entre en la vile.  
           Les gaites cornent a merville.  
           Par le fossé dedenz avale  
           Et vint errant tresque en la sale.  
           Molt par est mis Tristran en fort.  
 2460      A la fenestre ou li rois dort  
           En est venu, souef l'apele,  
           N'avoit son de criér harele.  
           Li rois s'esvelle et dit aprés:  
           "Qui es, qui a tel eure ves?  
 2465      As tu besoin? Di moi ton non."  
           "Sire, Tristran m'apele l'on.  
           Un brief aport, sil met ci jus  
           El fenestrier de cest enclus.  
           Longuement n'os a vos parler,  
 2470      Le brief vos lais, n'os plus ester."  
           Tristran s'en torne, li rois saut,  
           Par trois foiz l'apela en haut:  
           "Por Deu, beaus niés, ton oncle atent!"  
           Li rois le brief a sa main prent.  
 2475      Tristran s'en vet, plus n'i remaint,  
           De soi conduire ne se faint,  
           Vient a son mestre, qui l'atent,  
           El destrier saut legierement.  
           Governal dist, "Fol, quar esploites!  
 2480      Alon nos en les destoletes!"  
           Tant ont erré par le boschage  
           Q'au jor vindrent a l'ermitage.  
           Enz sont entré. Ogrins prioit  
           Au roi celestre quant que il pot  
 2485      Tristran defende d'enconbrier  
           Et Governal, son escuier.                  18d  
           Qant il le vit, es le vos lié:  
           Son criator a gracié.  
           D'Iseut n'estuet pas demander  
 2490      S'ele out poor d'eus encontrer.  
           Ainz, pus li soir qu'il en issirent  
           Tresque l'ermité et el les virent,  
           N'out les eulz essuiez de lermes:  
           Molt par li senbla lons cis termes.  
 2495      Qant el le vit venir, lor prie ...\*  
           Que il i fist—ne fu pas fole—\*

- That evening, after sunset,  
when the sky began to darken,  
Tristran set out with his master. 2450  
He was very familiar with the region.  
They rode hard until they came  
at last to Lantyan.  
he dismounted and entered the city. 2455  
The guards sounded their horns loudly.  
He jumped down into a trench  
and went on until he reached the hall.  
Tristran, anxious and frightened,  
came to the window where the king was sleeping  
and called to him softly— 2460  
he had no desire to speak loudly!  
The king awoke and said,  
“Who are you, coming here at this hour?  
What do you want? Tell me your name.” 2465  
“Sir, I am called Tristran.  
I am bringing a letter, and I will leave it here  
on this window ledge.  
I do not dare speak with you for long.  
I am leaving you the letter, and I dare not stay.” 2470  
Tristran turned away, and the king jumped up,  
calling to him aloud three times;  
“In God's name, dear nephew, wait for your uncle!”  
The king picked up the letter.  
Tristran left without pausing: 2475  
he was eager to be gone!  
He returned to his master, who was waiting for him,  
and jumped nimbly on his horse.  
Governal said, “Hurry, foolhardy man!  
Let us escape by the side-roads!” 2480  
They rode through the wilderness  
until they reached the hermitage at dawn.  
They went in. Ogrin was fervently praying  
that the heavenly King would  
protect both Tristran 2485  
and his squire Governal from danger.  
When he saw him, he was overjoyed,  
and he thanked his Creator.  
There is no need to ask if  
Iseut feared for them. 2490  
Never, from the time they left at night  
until she and the hermit saw them again  
had her eyes been free of tears.  
The wait had seemed interminable to her.  
When she saw him arriving, she asked ... 2495  
(for she was wise) what he had done:

- "Amis, di moi, se Dex t'anort,  
Fus tu donc pus a lo roi cort?"  
 Tristran lor a tot reconté,  
 2500 Conment il fu a la cité  
 Et comment o le roi parla,  
 Coment li rois le rapela,  
 Et du briés que il a gerpi,  
 Et con li rois trova l'escrit.  
 2505 "Dex!" dist Ogrin, "graces te rent.  
 Tristran, sachiez, assez briment  
 Orez noveles du ro Marc."  
 Tristran decent, met jus son arc.  
 Or sejornent a l'ermitage.  
 2510 Li rois esvelle son barnage.  
 Primes manda le chapelain,  
 Le brief li tent qu'a en la main.  
 Cil fraint la cire et lut le brief.  
 Li roi choisi el premier chief,  
 2515 A qui Tristran mandoit saluz.  
 Les moz a tost toz conneüz,  
 Au roi a dit le mandement.  
 Li rois l'escoute bonement;  
 A grant merveille s'en esjot,  
 2520 Qar sa feme forment amot.  
 Li rois esvelle ses barons,  
 Les plus proisiez mande par nons;  
 Et qant il furent tuit-venu,  
 Li rois parla, il sont teü:  
 2525 "Seignors, un brief m'est ci tramis.  
 Rois sui sor vos, vos mi marchis.  
 Li briés soit liez et soit oïz;  
 Et qant liz sera li escriz,  
 Conselliez m'en, jel vos requier:  
 2530 Vos m'en devez bien consellier."  
 Dinas s'en est levé premierz,  
 Dist a ses pers, "Seignors, oiez!  
 S'or oiez que ne die bien,  
 Ne m'en creez de nule rien.  
 2535 Qui mex savra dire, si die,  
 Face le bien, lest la folie.  
 Li brief nos est ici tramis  
 Nos ne savon de qel païs.  
 Soit liz li briés premierement;  
 2540 Et pus, solonc le mandement,  
 Qui buen conseil savra doner,  
 Sel nos doinst buen. Ne quier celer:  
 Qui son droit seignor mesconselle  
 Ne puet faire greignor merveille."

19a

"Friend, tell me, for God's sake,  
did you go to the king's court?"

Tristran told them everything:  
how he was in the city  
and how he spoke with the king,  
how the king called to him to come back,  
and about the letter he had left  
and how the king had found it.

Ogrin said, "May God be praised!  
Tristran, you can be sure  
that you will soon hear from King Mark."  
Tristran dismounted and put down his bow.  
They stayed on at the hermitage.

The king had his barons awakened.  
First, he sent for his chaplain  
and handed him the letter he was holding.  
The chaplain broke the seal and read the letter.  
At the top, he saw the name of the king,  
to whom Tristran was sending greetings.

He read the whole letter  
and explained the contents to the king.  
The king listened attentively;  
he was overjoyed,  
because he loved his wife so much.

The king awoke his barons  
and sent for those he valued most;  
and when they were all there,  
the king spoke, and they remained silent:

"Lords, a letter has been sent to me.  
I am your king, you are my vassals.  
Let the letter be read and heard,  
and when it is read,  
I ask you to advise me:  
it is your duty to advise me."

Dinas rose first  
and said to the others, "Lords, listen to me,  
and if you do not think my advice wise,  
then pay me no heed.

Anyone who can give better counsel should do so:  
let him give good advice and shun the bad.  
We do not know from what country  
this letter came to us.

Let it be read first,  
and then, depending on what it says,  
whoever can give sound advice  
should do so. I want to remind you  
that giving poor advice to one's rightful lord  
is the worst offense anyone can commit."

- 2545      Au roi diënt Corneualois,  
           "Dinas a dit trop que cortois.  
           Dan chapelain, lisiez le brief,  
           Oiant nos toz, de chief en chief."  
           Levez s'en est li chapelains,  
 2550      Le brief deslie o ses deus mains,  
           En piez estut devant le roi.  
           "Or escoutez, entendez moi.  
           Tristran, li niés nostre seignor,  
           Saluz mande prime et amor  
 2555      Au roi et a tot son barnage:  
           'Rois, tu sez bien le mariage  
           De la fille le roi d'Irlande  
           Par mer en fui jusqu'en Horlande,  
           Par ma proece la conquis,  
 2560      Le grant serpent cresté ocis,  
           par quoi ele me fu donee.  
           Amenai la en ta contree.  
           Rois, tu la preïs a mollier  
           Si que virent ti chevalier.  
 2565      N'eüs gaires o li esté,  
           Quant losengier en ton reigné  
           Te firent acroire mençonge.  
           Ge sui tot prest que gage en donge,  
           Qui li voudroit blasme lever,  
 2570      Lié alegier contre mon per,  
           Beau sire, a pié ou a cheval  
           (Chascuns ait armes et cheval),  
           Qu'onques amor nen out vers moi,  
           Ne je vers lui, par nul desroi.  
 2575      Se je ne l'en puis alegier\*  
           Et en ta cort moi deraisnier,  
           Ardoir me fai devant ton ost;  
           Ni a baron que je t'en ost.  
           N'i a baron, por moi plaisir,  
 2580      Ne me face ardrë, ou jugier.  
           Vos savez bien, beaus oncles, sire,  
           Nos vosistes ardoir en ire;  
           Mais a Deu en prist grant pitié.  
           S'en aorames Damledé.  
 2585      La roïne par aventure  
           En eschapa. Ce fu droiture,  
           Se Dex me saut; quar a grant tort  
           Li voliez doner la mort.  
           G'enn eschapai, si fis un saut  
 2590      Contreval un rochier molt haut.      19c  
           Lors fu donnee la roïne  
           As malades en decepline.

The men of Cornwall told the king,  
 "Dinas has spoken very nobly.  
 Chaplain, read the letter  
 before all of us, from beginning to end."  
 The chaplain rose,  
 untied the letter with his own hands,  
 and stood before the king.

2545

"Now listen, and hear me well.

Tristran, our lord's nephew,  
 first sends greetings and love  
 to the king and all his barons.

2550

'King, you know the circumstances of the marriage  
 of the daughter of the king of Ireland.

I went to Ireland by sea;  
 by my prowess I won her,  
 by killing the great crested dragon;  
 and as a result she was given to me.  
 I brought her to your country;  
 King, you took her as your wife  
 in the presence of your knights.  
 Hardly had you married her  
 when malicious gossips in your kingdom  
 made you believe a lie.

2555

I am prepared to offer this challenge:  
 if anyone should make accusations against her,  
 I will defend her against any of my peers,  
 my lord, on foot or on horseback  
 (let each of us have arms and a horse!),  
 to prove that she never loved me dishonorably,  
 nor I her.

2560

If I cannot establish her innocence  
 and prove my own in your court,  
 then have me burned before your army.  
 My challenge extends to all your barons.

2565

There is not one of them who, to destroy me,  
 would not want to see me burned or condemned.

2570

Sir, dear uncle, you know  
 that in your rage you wanted to have us burned.  
 But God took mercy on us,  
 and we praise the Lord.

2580

By chance, the queen  
 escaped. That was only just,  
 because (God help me!) you were wrong  
 to want to put her to death.

2585

I too escaped, by leaping  
 from the top of a high cliff.  
 Then the queen was given  
 to the lepers as punishment.

2590

- Ge l'en portai, si li toli,  
 Puis ai toz tens o li fuï.  
 2595 Ne li devoie pas fallir,  
 Quant a tort dut por moi morir.  
 Puis ai esté o lié par bos,  
 Que je n'estoie pas tant os  
 Que je m'osase an plain mostrer.
- 2600 ..... \*
- A prendre nos et a vos rendre.  
 Feïsiez nos ardoir ou pendre:  
 Por ce nos estovoit fuïr.  
 Mais, s'or estoit vostre plesir  
 2605 A prendre Yseut o le cler vis,  
 N'avroit baron en cest païs  
 Plus vos servist que je feroie.  
 Se l'uen vos met en autre voie,  
 Que ne vuelliez le mien servise,  
 2610 Ge m'en irai au roi de Frise;  
 Jamais n'oras de moi parler,  
 Passerai m'en outre la mer.  
 De ce q'oiez, roi, pren conseil.  
 Ne puis mes souffrir tel trepel:  
 2615 Ou je m'acorderai a toi,  
 Ou g'en merrai la fille au roi  
 En Irlandë, ou je la pris.  
 Roïnë ert de son païs.””  
 Li chapelains a au roi dit,  
 2620 “Sire, n'a plus en cest escrit.””  
 Li baron oient la demande,  
 Qe por la fille au roi d'Irlande  
 Offre Tristran vers eus batalle.  
 N'i a baron de Cornoualle  
 2625 Ne die, “Rois, ta feme pren.  
 Onques cil n'orent nul jor sen  
 Qui ce distrent de la roïne,  
 Dont la parole est ci oïe.  
 Ne te sai pas conseil doner  
 2630 Tristran remaigne deça mer.  
 Au riche roi aut, en Gavoie,  
 A qui li roiz escoz gerroie.  
 Si se porra la contenir,  
 Et tant porrez de lui oïr,  
 2635 Vos manderez por lui, qu'il vienge.  
 Ne savon el qel voie tienge.  
 Mandez par brief que la roïne  
 Vos ameint ci a brief termine.””  
 Li rois son chapelain apele:  
 2640 “Soit fait cist brief o main isnele.

I rescued her from them,  
and since that time I have been fleeing with her.  
I could not fail her,  
for she nearly died, unjustly, because of me.  
Since then I have been with her in the woods,  
for I was not so foolhardy  
that I would dare to show myself on the plain.

2595

.....  
that we be captured and delivered to you.  
You would have had us burned or hanged,  
and thus we had to flee.  
But if it should now be your wish  
to take back the fair Iseut,  
you would have no baron in the country  
who would serve you better than I.  
If anyone convinces you otherwise,  
so that you do not want my service,  
I will go to the king of Scotland.  
You will never hear from me again,  
for I will go abroad.  
consider these matters carefully, King.  
I can no longer bear such torment.

2605

Either I will be reconciled with you,  
or I will take the king's daughter  
back to Ireland, where I found her,  
and she will be queen in her own country."

2610

The chaplain said to the king,

2615

"Sir, there is nothing more in the letter."

The barons had heard the request:

2620

that for the daughter of the king of Ireland  
Tristran was willing to do battle with them.

Every baron of Cornwall  
said, "King, take back your wife."

2625

No one in his right mind  
could ever have said about the queen  
what we have heard.

But I cannot advise you  
to let Tristran stay in this country.

2630

Let him go serve the powerful king in Galloway,  
on whom the Scottish king is waging war.

He can remain there,  
and you will have news of him;  
and you may send for him and have him return.

2635

Otherwise, we do not know where he may go.  
Send him a letter telling him  
to return the queen to you right away."

The king called his chaplain:  
"Let this letter be written immediately:

2640

- Oï avez que i metroiz.  
 Hastez le brief: molt sui destroiz,  
 Molt a ne vi Yseut la gente;  
 Trop a mal trait en sa jovente.
- 2645 Et quant li brief ert seelez,  
 A la Croiz Roge le pendez;  
 Ancor enuit i soit penduz.  
 Escrivez i par moi saluz."  
 Quant l'ot li chapelain escrit,
- 2650 A la Croiz Roge le pendit.  
 Tristran ne dormi pas la nuit.  
 Ainz que venist la mie nuit,  
 La Blanche Lande out traversee,  
 La chartre porte seelee.
- 2655 Bien sout l'estre de Cornoalle,  
 Vient a Ogrin, il la li balle.  
 Li hermite la chartre a prise,  
 Lut les letres, vit la franchise  
 Du roi, qui pardonne a Yseut
- 2660 Son mautalent, et que il veut  
 Repenre la tant bonelement;  
 Vit le terme d'accordement.  
 Ja parlera si com il doit  
 Et con li hon qui a Deu croit:
- 2665 "Tristran, quel joie t'est creüe!  
 Ta parole est tost entendue,  
 Que li rois la roïne prent.  
 Loé li ont tote sa gent;  
 Mais ne li osent pas loer
- 2670 Toi retenir a soudeier,  
 Mais va servir en autre terre  
 Un roi a qui on face gerre,  
 Un an ou deus. Se li rois veut,  
 Revien a lui et a Yseut.
- 2675 D'ui en tierz jor, sanz nul déçoivre,  
 Est li rois prest de lié reçoirre.  
 Devant le Gué Aventuros  
 Est li plez mis de vos et d'eus:  
 La li rendroiz, iluec ert prise.
- 2680 Cist briés noient plus ne devise."  
 "Dex!" dist Tristran, "quel departie!  
 Molt est dolenz qui pert s'amie.  
 Faire l'estuet, por la soufrete  
 Que vos avez por moi fort trete:
- 2685 N'avez mestier de plus souffrir.  
 Quant ce vendra au departir,  
 Ge vos dorrai ma drüerie,  
 Vos moi la vostre, bele amie.

20a

you have heard what you should put in it.

Hurry with the letter: I am impatient,  
for I have not seen the noble Iseut for a long time.  
She has suffered too much in her youth!

And when the letter is sealed,

2645

hang it upon the Red Cross.

Let it be placed there tonight.

Add my greetings to the letter."

When the chaplain had written it,

he attached it to the Red Cross.

2650

Tristran did not sleep that night.

Before midnight,

he passed through the White Heath,

carrying the sealed letter.

(He knew the Cornwall countryside well.)

2655

He came to Ogrin and gave it to him.

The hermit took the letter

read it, and saw that

the king generously agreed to forget his anger

against Iseut

2660

and was willing to take her back,

and he learned when the reconciliation was to occur.

Then he spoke as a dutiful

and Christian man should:

"Tristran, what joy has come to you!"

2665

Your plea has been heard,

for the king is taking his wife back;

all his men advised him to do so.

But they do not dare advise him

to retain your services.

2670

Instead, go to another country and serve

a warring king

for a year or two. Then, if the king wishes,

come back to him and Iseut.

Three days from now, without any treachery,

2675

the king will be ready to receive her.

The meeting between you and them will take place

at the Perilous Ford:

there you will give her up, and he will take her back.

That is all the letter says."

2680

"God," said Tristran, "what a painful separation!

He who loses the woman he loves is unhappy indeed!

But it must be done, because of the suffering

you have endured on my account.

You do not have to suffer any more.

2685

When we have to separate,

I will pledge my love to you,

and you to me, my love.

- Ja ne serai en cele terre  
 2690 Que ja me tienge pais ne gerre  
 Que mesage ne vos envoi.  
 Bele amie, remandez moi  
 De tot en tot vostre plesir!"  
 Iseut parla o grant sospir:  
 2695 "Tristran, entent un petitet:  
 Husdent me lesse, ton brachet.  
 Ainz berseret a veneor  
 N'ert gardé e a tel honor  
 Con cist sera, beaus douz amis.  
 2700 Qant gel verrai, ce m'est avis,  
 Menberra moi de vos sovent.  
 Ja n'avrai si le cuer folent,  
 Se je le voi, ne soie lie.  
 Ainz, puis que la loi fu jugie,  
 2705 Ne fu beste si herbergie  
 Ne en si riche lit couchie.  
 Amis Tristran, j'ai un anel,  
 Un jaspe vert a un seel.  
 Beau sire, por l'amor de moi,  
 2710 Portez l'anel en vostre doi;  
 Et s'il vos vient, sire, a corage  
 Que me mandez rien par mesage,  
 Tant vos dirai, ce saciez bien,  
 Certes, je n'en croiroie rien,  
 2715 Se cest anel, sire, ne voi.  
 Mais, por defense de nul roi,  
 Se voi l'anel, ne lairai mie,  
 Ou soit savoir ou soit folie,  
 Ne face con que il dira,  
 2720 Qui cest anel m'aportera,  
 Por ce qu'il soit a nostre anor:  
 Je vos pramet par fine amor.  
 Amis, dorrez me vos tel don,  
 Husdant le baut, par le landon?"  
 2725 Et il respont, "La moie amie,  
 Husdent vos doins par drüerie."  
 "Sire, c'est la vostre merci.  
 Quant du brachet m'avez seisi,  
 Tenez l'anel, de gerredon."  
 2730 De son doi l'oste, met u son.                  20c  
 Tristran en bese la roïne,  
 Et ele lui, par la saisine.  
 Li hermites en vet au Mont,  
 Por les richeces qui la sont.  
 2735 Aprés achate ver et gris,  
 Dras de soie et de porpre bis,

As long as I shall live,  
whether in war or peace,  
I will not fail to send messages to you,  
and dear friend, send me news  
and tell me your pleasure."

2690

With a great sigh, Iseut said,  
"Tristran, listen to me a moment:  
leave me Husdent, your hunting dog.  
Never has a hunter's dog  
been cared for as well  
as this one will be, dear friend.  
I know that when I see him,  
I will always think of you.  
I will never be so sad  
that I will not be made happy by the sight of him.  
Never since our faith was founded

2695

has any animal had such fine shelter  
or slept in such a rich bed.

2700

Dear Tristran, I have a ring,  
a green jasper with a seal.  
Good sir, for love of me,  
wear the ring on your finger;  
and, sir, if you wish  
to send me a message,  
I assure you—and hear me well—  
that I will not believe anything  
if I do not see the ring.

2705

But no king's command  
could prevent me, if I see the ring,  
from doing anything,  
wise or foolish,  
that the bearer of the ring tells me,  
as long as it is honorable:  
and I promise that with all my heart.  
Friend, will you give me such a gift—  
the swift Husdent, who is tied over there?"

2710

And he answered, "My dear,  
For love of you, I will give you Husdent."

2715

"Sir, thank you.  
And since you have given me the dog,  
take the ring in exchange."  
She took it off her finger and placed it on his.  
Tristran kissed the queen,  
and she kissed him, to seal their exchange.

2720

The hermit went to the Mount,\*  
because of the rich market held there.

2725

He bought gray and white furs,  
silk and rich purple fabrics,

2730

- Escarlates et blanc chainsil,  
 Asez plus blanc que flor de lil,  
 Et palefroi souef anblant,  
 2740 Bien atornez d'or flanboiant.  
 Ogrins l'ermite tant achate  
 Et tant acroit et tant barate  
 Pailes, vairs et gris et hermine  
 Que richement vest la roïne.  
 2745 Par Cornoualle fait huchier  
 Li rois s'acorde a sa mollier:  
 "Devant le Gué Aventuros  
 Iert pris acordement de nos!"  
 Oï en ont par tot la fame;  
 2750 N'i remest chevalier ne dame  
 Qui ne vienge a cel' asenblee.  
 La roïne ont molt desirree:  
 Amee estoit de tote gent,  
 Fors des felons que Dex cravent!  
 2755 Tuit quatre en orent tels soudees:  
 Li dui en furent mort d'espees,  
 Li tierz d'une seete ocis;  
 A duel morurent el pais.  
 Li forestier quis encusa  
 2760 Mort cruele n'en refusa;  
 Quar Perinis, li franc, li blois,  
 L'ocist puis d'un gibet el bois.  
 Dex les venga de toz ces quatre,  
 Qui vout le fier orguel abatre.  
 2765 Seignors, au jor du parlement                          20d  
 Fu li rois Marc o molt grant gent.  
 La out tendu maint pavellon  
 Et mainte tente de baron:  
 Loin ont porpris la praeerie.  
 2770 Tristran chevauché o s'amie,  
 Tristran chevauche et voit le merc.  
 Souz son bliaut ot son hauberc;  
 Quar grant poor avoit de soi,  
 Por ce qu'il out mesfait au roi.  
 2775 Choisi les tentes par le pree,  
 Conut li roi et l'asenblee.  
 Iseut apele bonement:  
     "Dame, vos retenez Hudent.  
 Pri vos, por Deu, que le gardez;  
 2780 S'onques l'amastes, done l'amez.  
 Vez la le roi, vostre seignor,  
 O lui li home de s'onor.  
 Nos ne porron mais longuement  
 Aler nos deus a parlement.

- fine wool and linen  
far whiter than lilies;  
and he bought a gentle riding-horse  
with a harness of brightest gold. 2740
- The hermit Ogrin bought  
and bartered and acquired by credit  
enough precious cloth and gray furs and ermine  
to dress the queen richly.
- The king had his reconciliation with his wife  
announced throughout Cornwall: 2745  
“Our reconciliation will take place  
at the Perilous Ford.”
- The news was heard everywhere,  
and every knight and lady  
came to the gathering. 2750
- They had long desired the queen's return;  
she was loved by all,  
except the evil ones (may God destroy them!).  
All four of them later got what they deserved:\* 2755  
two were killed with swords,  
the third by an arrow;  
they died a painful death in their land.
- And the forester who denounced the lovers\*  
did not escape a cruel death, 2760  
for the valiant, fair Perinis  
killed him in the forest with his sling.  
God avenged the lovers on all four of them,  
for He wanted to subdue their sinful pride.
- Lords, on the day of the assembly, 2765  
King Mark was surrounded by a great crowd.  
Many pavilions had been set up there,  
and the tents of many barons:  
they covered the plain.
- Tristran rode with his lady 2770  
until he saw the stone marker.  
Beneath his tunic he had worn his hauberk;  
he feared greatly for his safety,  
because he had wronged the king.  
He caught sight of the tents on the meadow, 2775  
and he recognized the king and his company.  
He spoke gently to Iseut:
- “Lady, keep Husdent.  
I ask you, in God's name, to care for him.  
If you ever loved him, love him now. 2780  
There is the king, your lord,  
and his men with him.  
We will not long be able  
to continue talking together.

- 2785 Je voi venir ces chevaliers  
 Et le roi et ses soudoirs,  
 Dame, qui viennent contre nos.  
 Por Deu, le riche glorios,  
 Se je vos mant aucune chose,  
 2790 Hastivement ou a grant pose,  
 Dame, faites mes volentez."  
 "Amis Tristran, or m'escoutez:  
 Par cele foi que je vos doi,  
 Se cel anel de vostre doi  
 2795 Ne m'envoiez, si que jel voie,  
 Rien qu'il deïst ge ne croiroie.  
 Mais, des que reverrai l'anel,  
 Ne tor ne mur ne fort chastel  
 Ne me tendra ne face errant  
 2800 Le mandement de mon amant,                   21a  
 Solonc m'enor et loiauté  
 Et je sace soit vostre gré."  
 "Dame," fait il, "Dex gré te sace!"  
 Vers soi l'atrait, des braz l'enbrace.  
 2805 Yseut parla, qui n'ert pas fole:  
 "Amis, entent a ma parole,  
 Or me fai donc bien a entendre:  
 Tu me conduiz, si me veuz rendre  
 Au roi, par le consel Ogrin,  
 2810 L'ermite, qui ait bone fin.  
 Por Deu vos pri, bœaus douz amis,  
 Que ne partez de cest païs  
 Tant qos saciez comment li rois  
 Sera vers moi, iriez ou lois.  
 2815 Gel prié, qui sui ta chiere drue,  
 Qant li rois m'avra retenue,  
 Que chiés Orri le forestier  
 T'alles la nuit la herbergier.  
 Por moi sejorner ne t'ennuit!  
 2820 Nos i geümes mainte nuit,  
 En nostre lit que nos fist faire ...  
 Li trois qui nos erent de moleste\*  
 Mal troveront en la parfin:  
 Li cors giront el bois, sovin,  
 2825 Beau chiers amis, et g'en ai dote:  
 Enfer ovre, qui les tranglote!  
 Ges dot, quar il sont molt felon.  
 El buen celier, soz le boron,  
 Seras entrez, li miens amis.  
 2830 Manderai toi par Perinis  
 Les noveles de la roi cort.  
 Li miens amis, que Dex t'enort!

- I see those knights approaching,  
and the king and his soldiers,  
who are coming toward us, my lady.  
In the name of God, our great glorious King,  
if at any time I should make a request of you,  
whether it is soon or much later,  
lady, do my will." 2785
- "Listen to me, dear Tristran:  
by the faith I owe to you,  
if you do not send me the ring that is on your finger,  
so that I see it with my own eyes,  
I will not believe what is said to me.  
But as soon as I see the ring,  
no tower or wall or castle  
could prevent me from immediately doing  
the bidding of my lover,  
provided it is honorable and good  
and I know it is your will." 2790
- "Lady," he said, "may God bless you."  
He drew her to him and pressed her in his arms. 2795
- Iseut spoke wisely:  
"Friend, listen to my words,  
and understand me well:  
you are bringing me back to give me  
to the king on the advice of Ogrin  
the hermit (may he be blessed!).  
In God's name, I beg you, dear sweet friend,  
not to leave the country  
until you know whether the king  
is angry or reasonable with me.  
As your true love, I ask you,  
once the king has taken me back,  
to go to Orri the forester  
and remain at his home. 2810
- Agree to stay there for my sake.  
We spent many a night there  
in a bed that he made for us.  
The three who were our enemies  
will some day pay for their actions.  
Their bodies will lie sprawled in the forest,  
dear friend, but now I am afraid of them:  
may Hell open up and devour them!  
I fear them because they are completely evil.  
My friend, you will have gone  
into hiding beneath the cabin.  
Through Perinis, I will send you  
news of the royal court.  
May God keep you, my friend! 2820
- 2825

- Ne t'ennuit pas la herbergier!  
 Sovent verrez mon mesagier:  
 2835 Manderai toi de ci mon estre  
       Par mon vaslet et a ton mestre."  
       "Non fera il, ma chiere amie,  
       Qui vos reprovera folie  
       Gart soi de moi con d'anemi!"
- 2840 "Sire," dist Yseut, "grant merci!  
       Or sui je molt boneüree:  
       A grant fin m'avez asenee."  
       Tant sont alé et cil venu  
       Qu'il s'entredïent lor salu.
- 2845 Li rois venoир molt fierement  
       Le trait d'un arc devant sa gent;  
       O lui Dinas, cil de Dinan.\*  
       Par la reigne tenoit Tristran  
       La roïne, qui conduioit.
- 2850 La, salua si com il doit:  
       "Rois, ge te rent Yseut, la gente:  
       Hon ne fist mais plus riche rente.  
       Ci voi les homes de ta terre  
       Et, oiant eus, te vuel requerre
- 2855 Que me sueffres a esligier  
       Et en ta cort moi deraisnier  
       C'onques o lié n'oi drüerie,  
       Ne ele o moi, jor de ma vie.  
       Acroire t'a l'en fait mençonge;
- 2860 Mais se Dex joie et bien me donge,  
       Onques ne firent jugement,  
       Combatre a pié ou autrement.  
       Dedenz ta cort, se je t'en sueffre,  
       Se sui dannez, si m'art en soffre.
- 2865 Et, se je m'en pus faire saus,  
       Qu'il n'i ait chevelu ne chaus ...\*  
       Si me retien ovocques toi,  
       O m'en irai en Loenoi."  
       Li rois a son nevo parole.
- 2870 Andrez, qui fu nez de Nicole,  
       Li a dit, "Rois, quar le retiens,  
       Plus en seras doutez et criens."  
       Molt en faut poi que ne l'otroie,  
       Le cuer forment l'en asouploie.
- 2875 A une part li rois le trait;  
       La roïne ovoc Dinas let,  
       Qui molt par ert voirs et loiaus  
       Et d'anor faire communax.  
       O la roïne geue et gabe,
- 2880 Du col li a osté la chape,

21b

21c

Please do not refuse to stay there.  
 My messenger will come to you often;  
 I will send you news of myself,  
 by way of my servant, to your master."

2835

"My love, I will not refuse to do that.  
 Whoever accuses you of impropriety  
 should beware and consider me his enemy!"

"Sir," said Iseut, "thank you.  
 Now I am very happy,  
 for you have put my mind at ease."

2840

They advanced, and the others approached  
 until they met and exchanged greetings.  
 The king rode out proudly,  
 a bow's shot in front of his men.  
 With him was Dinas of Dinan.  
 Tristran held the reins  
 of Iseut's horse and led her forward.  
 He greeted the king properly:

2845

"King, I am returning the fair Iseut to you.  
 No one ever gave up anything so precious.  
 I see here the men of your land;  
 and in their presence, I wish to ask  
 your permission to establish my innocence  
 and prove before your court  
 that never in my life was I her lover  
 or she my mistress.

2850

People have made you believe a lie;  
 but, as God is my witness,  
 they never proved it  
 by combat on foot or otherwise.  
 If I submit to your will in court  
 and am thus condemned, then burn me in sulphur.  
 But if I can survive unharmed,  
 let no one, young or old ...\*

2855

Now keep me with you,  
 or I will go away to Lothian."

2860

The king spoke with his nephew.  
 Andret, a native of Lincoln,  
 told him, "King, keep him with you,  
 and you will be more respected and feared as a result."  
 Mark was tempted to grant this request,  
 for his heart had softened toward him.

2865

The king took Tristran aside;  
 he left the queen with Dinas,  
 who was true, loyal,  
 and known to be honorable.  
 Dinas chatted and joked with the queen  
 and removed her rich scarlet cape

2875

2880

- Qui ert d'escarlate molt riche.  
 Ele out vestu une tunique  
 Desus un grant bliaut de soie.  
 De son mantel que vos diroie?
- 2885 Ainz l'ermite, qui l'achata,  
 Le riche fuer ne regreta.  
 Riche ert la robe et gent le cors;  
 Les eulz out vers, les cheveus sors.  
 Li seneschaus o lié s'envoise.
- 2890 As trois barons forment en poise:  
 Mal aient il, trop sont engrés!  
 Ja se traïront du roi plus pres:  
 "Sire," font il, "a nos entent:  
 Consel te doron bonement.
- 2895 La roïne a esté blasmee  
 Et foï hors de ta contree.  
 Se a ta cort resont ensenble,  
 Ja dira l'en, si con nos senble,  
 Que en consent lor felonie:
- 2900 Poi i avra qui ce ne die.  
 Lai de ta cort partir Tristran;  
 Et quant vendra jusqu'a un an,  
 Que tu seras aseürez  
 Que Yseut te tienge loiautez,
- 2905 Mande Tristran qu'il vienge a toi. 21d  
 Ce te loons par bone foi."  
 Li rois respont, "Que que nus die,  
 De vos conselz n'istrai je mie."  
 Ariere en viennent li baron,
- 2910 Por le roi content sa raison.  
 Quant Tristran oit n'i a porloigne,  
 Que li rois veut qu'il s'en esloigne,  
 De la roïne congé prent;  
 L'un l'autre esgarde bonement.
- 2915 La roïne fu coloree,  
 Vergoigne avoit por l'asenblee.  
 Tristan s'en part, ce m'est avis.  
 Dex! Tant cuer fist le jor pensis!  
 Li rois demande ou tornera:
- 2920 Quant qu'il voudra, tot li dorra;  
 Molt par li a a bandon mis  
 Or et argent et vair et gris.  
 Tristran dist, "Rois de Cornoualle,  
 Ja n'en prendrai mie maale."
- 2925 A quant que puis vois a grant joie  
 Au roi riche que l'en gerroie."  
 Molt out Tristran riche convoi  
 Des barons et de Marc le roi.

from her shoulders.

She was wearing a tunic  
over a silk chemise.

What can I tell you of her mantel?

The hermit who bought it  
never regretted the great cost!  
The robe was rich, and Iseut was beautiful.  
Her eyes were green, her hair golden.  
The seneschal enjoyed her company,  
to the great displeasure of the three barons:  
may they be cursed for their viciousness!

2885

They drew nearer to the king  
and said, "Sir, listen to us,  
and we will give you sound advice."

The queen was accused  
and fled from your country.  
If they are together again in your court,  
it is our opinion that people will say  
that you condone their crime.

2895

There will be few who do not say as much.  
Send Tristran away from your court,  
and when a year has passed,  
if you are certain  
that Iseut is true to you,  
you can send for Tristran.

2900

We are advising you in good faith."

The king answered, "Whatever anyone may say,  
I will not ignore your advice."

The barons moved away and,  
in the name of the king, announced his decision.  
When Tristran heard that he would not be pardoned  
and that the king wanted him to go away,  
he took leave of the queen.

2910

They looked at each other tenderly.  
The queen blushed,  
embarrassed because of the crowd gathered there.  
Tristran then rode off, I believe.

God! Many hearts were saddened that day.  
The king asked him where he was going  
and told him he would give him anything he wanted,  
and he put gold, silver, and furs  
at his disposal.

2915

Tristran replied, "King of Cornwall,  
I will not accept anything from you.  
As soon as possible, I will happily go  
to the great king who is embroiled in war."

2920

Tristran had an impressive escort  
composed of Mark's barons and King Mark himself.

2925

- Vers la mer vet Tristran sa voie.  
 2930 Yseut o les euz le convoie;  
 Tant con de lui ot la veüe  
 De la place ne se remue.  
 Tristran s'en vet, retorné sont  
 Cil qui pose convoié l'ont.
- 2935 Dinas encor le convoiout,  
 Sovent le besse et li proiot  
 Seürement revienge a lui.  
 Entrafié se sont il dui:  
 "Dinas, entent un poi a moi.
- 2940 De ci m'en part, bien sez por quoi. 22a  
 Se je te mant par Governal  
 Aucune chose besoignal,  
 Avance la, si con tu doiz."  
 Baisié se sont plus de set foiz.
- 2945 Dinas li prie ja nel dot,  
 Die son buen: il fera tot.  
 Dit molt a bele deseuvre,  
 Mais, sor sa foi aseüree,  
 La retendra ensenble o soi;
- 2950 Non feroit, certes, por le roi.  
 Iluec Tristran de lui s'en torne:  
 Au departir andui sont morne.  
 Dinas s'en vient après le roi.  
 Qui l'atendoit a un chaumoi.
- 2955 Ore chevauchent li baron  
 Vers la cité tot a bandon.  
 Tote la gent ist de la vile,  
 Et furent plus de quatre mile,  
 Qu'omes que femes que enfanz;
- 2960 Que por Yseut, que por Tristranz,  
 Mervellose joie menoient.  
 Li saint par la cité sonoient.  
 Qant il oient Tristran s'en vet,  
 N'i a un sol grant duel ne fet.
- 2965 D'Iseut grant joie demenoient,  
 De lui servir molt se penoient;  
 Quar, ce saciez, ainz n'i ot rue  
 Ne fust de paile portendue;  
 Cil qui n'out paile mist cortine.
- 2970 Par la ou aloit la roïne  
 Est la rue molt bien jonchie.  
 Tot contrement, par la chaucie,  
 Si vont au mostier Saint Sanson.  
 La roïne et tuit li baron
- 2975 En sont trestuit ensenble alé. 22b  
 Evesque, clerc, moine et abé

The young man set out toward the sea.  
 Iseut's eyes followed him,  
 and as long as he was in sight,  
 she did not move.

2930

Tristran left, and those  
 who had accompanied him returned.  
 Dinas escorted him farther;  
 he embraced him again and again and urged him  
 to return to him safe and sound.  
 The two swore fidelity to each other.

2935

"Dinas, listen to me.  
 I am leaving here; you know the reason.  
 If I send word by Gouvernal  
 about anything I might need,  
 look after it properly."  
 They embraced again and again.\*

2940

Dinas told him not to fear,  
 but to make his pleasure known, and he would do it all.  
 He bade him a fond farewell,\*  
 and he gave his word  
 that he would keep Iseut with him,  
 but he surely was not doing it for the king's sake.  
 Thereupon, Tristran left him,  
 and, on separating, both of them were sad.

2945

Dinas returned to the king,  
 who was waiting on a heath.  
 The barons all rode  
 quickly back to the city.  
 All the people came out of the city,  
 and there were more than four thousand of them—  
 men, women, and children—  
 who were wildly rejoicing  
 for Iseut and Tristran.

2950

Bells rang throughout the city.  
 But when they learned that Tristran was leaving,  
 there was not a one who did not feel bitter grief.  
 They rejoiced about Iseut,  
 and all wished to serve her;  
 and imagine this: every street  
 was hung with brocaded cloths,  
 and those who did not have brocade hung tapestries.

2960

Wherever the queen went,  
 the streets were strewn with flowers.  
 Along the road, up the hill,  
 they went to the monastery of St. Samson,  
 the queen and all the barons  
 all going together.  
 Bishops, clerics, monks, and abbots

2970

2975

- Encontre lié sont tuit issu,  
 D'aubes, de chapes revestu;  
 Et la roïne est decendue,  
 2980 D'une porpre inde fu vestue.  
 L'evesque l'a par la main prise,  
 Si l'a dedenz le mostier mise;  
 Tot droit la meinent a l'auter.  
 Dinas li preuz, qui molt fu ber,
- 2985 Li aporta un garnement  
 Que bien valoit cent mars d'argent,  
 Un riche paile fait d'orfrois  
 (Onques n'out tel ne qens ne rois);  
 Et la roïne Yseut l'a pris
- 2990 Et, par buen cuer, sor l'autel mis.  
 Une chasublë en fu faite,  
 Qui ja du tresor n'iert hors traite  
 Se as grans festes anvés non.  
 Encore est ele a Saint Sanson:
- 2995 Ce diënt cil qui l'ont veüe.  
 Atant est du mostier issue.  
 Li rois, li prince et li contor  
 L'en meinent el palais hauçor.  
 Grant joie i ont le jor menee.
- 3000 Onques porte n'i fu veee:  
 Qui vout entrer si pout mengier,  
 Onc a nul n'i fist on dangier.  
 Molt l'ont le jor tuit honoree:  
 Ainz le jor que fu espousee
- 3005 Ni li fist hom si grant honor  
 Con l'on li a fait icel jor.  
 Le jor franchi li rois cent sers  
 Et donna armes et haubers  
 A vint danzeaus qu'il adouba.
- 3010 Or oiez que Tristran fera. 22c  
 Tristran s'en part, fait a sa rente.  
 Let le chemin, prent une sente;  
 Tant a erré voie et sentier  
 Qu'a la herberge au forestier
- 3015 En est venu celeement.  
 Par l'entree priveement  
 Le mist Orri el bel celier.  
 Tot li trove quant q'ot mestier.  
 Orris estoit merveilles frans.
- 3020 Senglers, lehes prenent o pans,  
 En ses haies grans cers et biches,  
 Dains et chevreus. Il n'ert pas chiches,  
 Molt en donet a ses serjanz.  
 O Tristran ert la sejornanz

- all came out to greet her,  
dressed in cassocks and copes.  
The queen dismounted.  
She was dressed in dark blue. 2980
- The bishop took her by the hand  
and led her into the church;  
he led her up to the altar.  
The valiant and noble Dinas  
brought her a garment 2985  
worth a hundred silver marks,  
a rich cloth embroidered in gold,  
such as no count or king ever owned.
- The queen Iseut took it  
and placed it reverently on the altar. 2990  
It was later made into a chasuble,  
which never left the treasure  
except on feast days.  
It is still at St. Samson's;  
those who have seen it say so. 2995
- Then she left the church.  
The king, the princes, and the counts  
accompanied her to the high palace.  
There was great rejoicing there that day.  
No door was closed to anyone; 3000  
all who wanted to come in were fed,  
and no one was refused.
- Everyone honored her greatly that day:  
Never, since the day she was married,  
had she received as much honor 3005  
as they bestowed on her that day.  
The king freed one hundred serfs that day  
and gave arms and hauberks  
to twenty young men he knighted.
- Now listen to what Tristran did! 3010  
he had made restitution, and he went away.  
He left the road and set out on a small path;  
he followed trails and paths  
until he came secretly  
to the forester's lodging. 3015
- Through a secret entrance  
Orri led him into the fine cellar.  
There he found everything he needed.  
Orri was extremely generous.  
He caught boars and wild sows in his nets; 3020  
and within his hedgerows he trapped stags and does,  
deer and bucks. He was unselfish;  
he gave much of it to his servants.  
With Tristran he lived there

- 3025 Priveement en souterrin.  
 Par Perinis, li franc meschin,  
 Soit Tristran noves de s'amie.  
 Oiez des trois, que Dex maudie,  
 Par qui Tristran an est alez:  
 3030 Par eus fu molt li rois malez.  
 Ne tarja pas un mois entier  
 Que li rois Marc ala chacier,  
 Et avoc lui li traïtor.  
 Or escoutez que font cel jor:  
 3035 En une lande, a une part,  
 Ourent ars li vilain essart;  
 Li rois s'estut el bruelleïz,  
 De ses buens chiens oï les cris.  
 La sont venu li troi baron,  
 3040 Qui le roi mistrent a raison:  
 "Rois, or entent nostre parole.  
 Se la roïne a esté fole,  
 El n'en fist onques escondit.  
 S'a vilanie vos est dit;  
 3045 Et li baron de ton païs                          22d  
 T'en ont par mainte foiz requis,  
 Qu'il vuelent bien s'en esconde  
 Que o Tristran n'ot sa drüerie.\*  
 Escondire se doit c'on ment.  
 3050 Si l'en fait faire jugement  
 Et enevoies l'en requier,  
 Priveement, a ton couchier.  
 S'ele ne s'en veut escondire,  
 Lai l'en aler de ton empire."
- 3055 Li rois rogi, qui escouta:  
 "Par Deu! Seignors Cornot, molt a  
 Ne finastes de lié reter.  
 De tel chose l'oi ci reter  
 Qui bien peüst remaindre a tant.  
 3060 Dites se vos alez querant  
 Que la roïne aut en Irlande.  
 Chascun de vos que li demande?  
 N'offri Tristran li a defendre?  
 Ainz n'en osastes armes prendre.  
 3065 Par vos est il hors du païs.  
 Or m'avez vos du tot surpris.  
 Lui ai chacié: or chaz ma feme?  
 Cent dehez ait par mié la cane  
 Qui me rova de lui partir!  
 3070 Par Saint Estiene le martir,  
 Vos me sorquerez, ce me poise.  
 Quel merveille que l'en si toise!"

- secretly, in the cellar. 3025  
 Through Perinis, the king's servant,  
 Tristran learned news of his mistress.
- Now hear about the three (may God curse them!)  
 because of whom Tristran had fled.  
 The king was greatly tormented because of them. 3030  
 Before a month had passed,  
 Mark went out hunting,  
 accompanied by the traitors.  
 Now listen to what they did that day!  
 The peasants had burned  
 part of the underbrush on a heath. 3035  
 As the king was standing in the burned area,  
 he heard the cries of his good dogs.
- The three barons came to him  
 and began to speak to the king: 3040  
 "King, listen to what we have to say.  
 The queen has never proven by oath  
 whether she was unfaithful to you,  
 and people condemn you for that.  
 The barons of your land 3045  
 have repeatedly asked you  
 to have her clear herself of the charge  
 that she took Tristran as her lover.  
 She must prove that people are lying.  
 Have her undergo a trial  
 and demand it immediately, 3050  
 in private, when you go to bed.  
 If she is not willing to be judged,  
 banish her from your kingdom."
- The king listened, and his face reddened. 3055  
 "For God's sake, Cornish lords,  
 will you never stop denouncing her?  
 She is again being accused of something  
 that should have been put to rest.  
 Tell me if you want  
 the queen sent to Ireland. 3060  
 What do you want of her?  
 Did Tristran not offer to defend her?  
 But you did not dare take up arms.  
 It is your fault he is gone from this country. 3065  
 Now you have completely surprised me:  
 I sent him away; must I now exile my wife, too?  
 May the mouth be cursed a hundred times  
 that convinced me to banish him.  
 By the martyr St. Stephen, 3070  
 you are going too far, and I am angry.  
 I am astonished at your persistence.

- |      |   |   |     |
|------|---|---|-----|
|      | S'il se mesfist, il est en fort.<br>N'avez cure de mon deport,<br>O vos ne puis plus avoir pes.<br>Par Saint Tresmor de Caharés,<br>Ge vos ferai un geu parti:<br>Ainz ne verroiz passé marsdi<br>(Hui est lundi), si le verrez."   |   |     |
| 3075 | Li rois les a si esfreez<br>Qu'il n'i a el fors prengent fuie.<br>Li rois Marc dist: "Dex vos destruie,<br>Qui si alez querant ma honte!<br>Por noient, certes, ne vos monte:<br>Ge ferai le baron venir<br>Que vos aviez fait fuür."<br>Qant il voient le roi marri,<br>En la lande, soz un larri,<br>Sont decendu tuit troi a pié,<br>Li rois lessent el champ, irié. | 23a   |     |
| 3080 | Entre eus dient: "Que porron faire?<br>Li rois Marc est trop deputaire;<br>Bien tost mandera son neveu,<br>Ja n'i tendra ne fei ne feu.   |   |     |
| 3085 | 3090  | S'il ça revient, de nos est fin:<br>Ja en forest ne en chemin<br>Ne trovera nul de nos trois<br>Le sanc n'en traie du cors, frois.<br>Dison le roi or avra pes,<br>N'en parleron a lui jamés."  |     |
| 3095 | 3100  | Enmié l'essart li rois s'estot.<br>La sont venu; tost les destot,<br>De lor parole n'a mes cure;<br>La loi qu'il tient de Deu en jure   |     |
| 3105 | 3110  | Tot souavet entre ses denz:<br>Mar fu jostez cist parlemenz.<br>S'il eüst or la force o soi,<br>La fusent pris, ce dit, tuit troi.<br>"Sire," font il, "entendez nos:   |     |
| 3115 | 3120  | Marriz estes et coroços<br>Por ce que nos dison t'anor.<br>L'en devroit par droit son seignor<br>Consellier: tu nos sez mal gré.<br>Mal ait quant qu'a soz son baudré<br>Cil qui te het! Cil s'en ira;*<br>Ja mar o toi s'en marriba.<br>Mais nos, qui somes ti feel,<br>Te donions loial conseil.<br>Quant ne nos croiz, fait ton plaisir:<br>Assez nos en orras taisir. | 23b |

If he did wrong, he is suffering for it.  
 You care nothing for my happiness;  
 I can no longer have peace with you.  
 By St. Trechmor of Carhaix,

3075

I will make you a wager:  
 today is Monday, and before Tuesday is finished,  
 you will see him here!"

The king frightened them so much  
 that they dared do nothing except flee.

3080

King Mark said, "May God destroy you  
 for trying to bring me shame!  
 It will surely do you no good:  
 I will summon the man  
 whom you drove away."

3085

When they saw Mark distraught,  
 the three of them dismounted  
 on the heath, beneath a holm-oak,  
 leaving the angry king in the field.

3090

They said to one another, "What can we do?

King Mark is too perverse;  
 he will soon send for his nephew  
 and will not keep his promise or vow.

If Tristran returns, we are finished.

3095

If he finds any of us three,  
 in the forest or on the road,  
 he will not fail to draw fresh blood from our bodies.  
 Let us tell the king he will now have peace,  
 and we will never mention the subject to him again."

3100

The king was standing in the field.

They came to him, but he brushed them aside,  
 for he had no desire to listen to them.

Softly, under his breath,  
 he swore on this faith:  
 they would pay dearly for what they had said!  
 If his men had been there,  
 all three of them would have been arrested.

3105

"Sir," they said, "listen to us.

You are upset and angry  
 because we are speaking about your honor.  
 Men have an obligation to advise their lord,  
 but you are offended when we do so.  
 Cursed by the heart of anyone\*

3110

who hates you! Such a person should leave;  
 he will live to regret his resentment of you.  
 But we, who are your faithful servants,  
 give you loyal counsel.

3115

Since you do not believe us, do as you will:  
 you will hear nothing more from us.

3120

- Icest mal talent nos pardonne."
- Li rois escoute, mot ne sone,  
Sor son arçon s'est acoutez,  
Ne s'est vers eus noient tormez:
- 3125 "Seignors, molt a encor petit  
Que vos oïstes l'escondit  
Que mes niés fist de ma mollier:  
Ne vosistes escu ballier,  
Querant alez a terre pié.
- 3130 La meslee des or vos vié.  
Or gerpisiez tote ma terre.  
Par Saint André, que l'en vet querre  
Outre la mer, jusque en Escoce,  
Mis m'en avez el cuer la boce,
- 3135 Qui n'en istra jusqu'a un an:  
G'en ai por vos chacié Tristran."
- Devant lui viennent li felon,  
Godoïnë et Guenelon  
Et Danalain que fu molt feus;
- 3140 Li troi l'ont aresnié entr'eus,  
Mais n'i parent plai encontrer:  
Vet s'en li rois sanz plus ester.  
Cil s'en partent du roi par mal.  
Forz chasteaus ont, bien clos de pal,
- 3145 Soiant sor roche, sor haut pui;  
A lor seignor feront ennui,  
Se la chose n'est amendee.
- Li rois n'a pas fait longe estee,  
N'atendi chien ne veneor;
- 3150 A Tintajol, devant sa tor,  
Est decendu, dedenz s'en entre.  
Nus ne set ne ne voit son estre.  
Es chanbres entre, çaint' espee.  
Yseut s'est contre lui levee,
- 3155 Encontre vient, s'espee a prise,  
Pus est as piez le roi asise.  
Prist la la main, si l'en leva.  
La roïne li enclina,  
Amont le regarde, a la chiere,
- 3160 Molt la vit et cruel et fiere,  
Aperçut soi qu'il ert marriz,  
Venuz s'en est aeschariz.
- "Lasse," fait ele, "mes amis  
Est trovez, mes sires l'a pris!"  
(Souef le dit entre ses denz.)
- 3165 Li sanz de li ne fu si loinz  
Qu'il ne li set monté el vis,  
Li cuer el ventre li froidist;

23c

Pardon us for displeasing you!"

The king listened silently.

He leaned on his saddle-bow  
without turning toward them:

"Lords, not long ago

3125

you heard my nephew's denials  
in regard to my wife.

At that time, you had no desire to take up arms,  
preferring to remain on foot.

So I forbid you to cause trouble now.

3130

Leave my land!

By St. Andrew, for whom pilgrims journey

beyond the sea to Scotland,

you have dealt me a painful wound

that will not heal before a year has passed.

3135

Because of you I banished Tristran."

Before him were the traitors:

Godoine, Ganelon,

and Denoalen, who was very evil.

All three of them pleaded with him,

3140

but they could not obtain satisfaction.

The king departed without further delay.

Resentfully, they left the king.

They had fortified castles, surrounded by palisades

and built on rocks high in the hills.

3145

They would cause their lord serious trouble

if this matter could not be settled!

The king did not delay long

and did not wait for his dogs or hunters.

At Tintagel, before his tower,

3150

he dismounted and entered.

No one saw him or knew he was there.

He came into their chamber, his sword girded on.

Iseut rose to meet him;

she came forward, took his sword,

3155

and then sat down at the king's feet.

He took her hand and had her stand up;

the queen bowed to him.

When she looked into his face,

she saw that his expression was fierce and cruel.

3160

She realized that he was angry

and that he had come alone.

"Alas," she said, "my friend

has been discovered, and my lord has captured him!"

(She said this under her breath.)

3165

Her blood

rushed to her face,\*

and her heart froze within her.

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 3170 | Devant le roi choï enverse,<br>Pasme soi, sa color a perse ...<br>Entre ses braz l'en a levee.*<br>Besie l'a et acolee;<br>Pensa que mal l'eüst ferue.<br>Quant de pasmer fu revenue:<br>"Ma chiere amie, que avez?"<br>"Sire, poor." "Ne vos tamez."<br>Qant ele l'ot qui l'aseüre;<br>Sa color vient, si aseüre;<br>Adonc li rest asouagié. |
| 3175 | Li rois l'entent, rist, si l'enbrace,<br>E li a fait li rois, "Amie,<br>J'a trois felons, d'ancesorie,<br>Qui heent mon amendement;<br>Mais se encor nes en desment,<br>Que nes enchaz fors de ma terre,  |
| 3180 | Molt bel a le roi aresnié:<br>"Sire, ge voi a ta color,<br>Fait t'ont marri ti veneor.<br>Ne te doiz ja marrir de chace."<br>Li rois l'entent, rist, si l'enbrace,  |
| 3185 | 23d<br>E li a fait li rois, "Amie,<br>J'a trois felons, d'ancesorie,<br>Qui heent mon amendement;<br>Mais se encor nes en desment,<br>Que nes enchaz fors de ma terre,  |
| 3190 | Li fel ne crient mais ma gerre.<br>Il m'ont asez adesentu,<br>Et je lor ai trop consentu:<br>N'i a mais rien del convertir.<br>Par lor parler, par lor mentir,  |
| 3195 | Ai mon nevo de moi chacié.<br>M'ai mais cure de lor marchié,<br>Prochainement s'en revendra,<br>Des trois felosn me vengera:<br>Par lui seront encor pendu."  |
| 3200 | La roïne l'a entendu;<br>Ja parlast haut, mais ele n'ose:<br>El fu sage, si se repose<br>Et dist, "Dex i a fait vertuz,<br>Qant mes sires s'est irascuz   |
| 3205 | Vers ceus par qui blasme ert levé.<br>Deu pri qu'il soient vergondé."<br>Souef le dit, que nus ne l'ot.<br>La bele Yseut, qui parler sot,<br>Tot simplement a dit au roi,   |
| 3210 | "Sire, que mal ont dit de moi?<br>Chascun puet dire ce qu'il pense.<br>Fors vos, ge n'ai nule defense:<br>Por ce vont il querant mon mal.<br>De Deu, le pere esperital,   |
| 3215 | Aient il male maudit'on!<br>Tantes foiz m'ont mis en frichon!"  |

- She fell back before the king;  
she fainted and became ashen. 3170  
He lifted her up in his arms.  
He embraced and kissed her;  
he thought she had fallen ill.  
When she regained consciousness, he asked,  
"My dear, what is wrong?"  
    "Sir, I am afraid." "Do not be afraid."  
When she heard his assurance,  
her color returned, and she became calm.  
She was again self-assured.  
She spoke cleverly to the king: 3180  
    "Sir, I can see by your expression  
that your hunters have made you angry.  
You should not upset yourself because of a hunt."  
The king heard that, laughed, kissed her  
and replied, "Friend, 3185  
for a long time three evil men  
have been jealous of my accomplishments.  
Unless I do something about it now,  
unless I drive them out of my land,  
the villains will no longer fear my power.  
They have pushed me too far,  
and I have given in to them too often.  
Now my mind is made up.  
Because of their words, their lies,  
I sent my nephew away from me. 3195  
I no longer want anything to do with them;  
but Tristran will soon return,  
and he will avenge me on the three traitors.  
They will yet be hanged by him!"  
The queen heard him 3200  
and almost cried out, but did not dare.  
Wisely, she composed herself  
and said, "God has worked a miracle,  
arousing my lord's anger  
toward those who made the accusations against me.  
I pray to God that they may be shamed." 3205  
(She said this softly, so that no one could hear.)  
The fair Iseut, who knew how to choose her words,  
asked the king directly,  
"Sir, what evil have they said of me?  
Everyone is free to say what he thinks:  
I have no one except you to defend me,  
and that is why they want to harm me.  
May God, our heavenly Father,  
curse them! 3215  
They have frightened me so often!"

- 24a
- "Dame," fait li rois, "or m'entent;  
 Parti s'en sont par maualent  
 Trois de mes plus proisiez barons."  
 Sire, porqoi? Par quels raisons?"  
 "Blasmer te font." "Sire, porqoi?"  
 "Gel te dirai," dit li li roi,  
 "N'as fait de Tristran escondit."  
 "Se je l'en faz?" "Et il m'ont dit ..."  
 Qu'il le m'ont dit." "Ge prest' en sui."  
 "Qant le feras? Ancor ancuil?"  
 "Brif terme i mez." "Asez est loncs."  
 "Sire, por Deu et por ses nons,  
 Entent a moi, si me conselle.  
 Que puet ce estre? Quel merveille  
 Qu'il ne me lesent an pes eure!  
 Se Damledeu mon cors seceure,  
 Escondit mais ne lor ferai,  
 Fors un que je deviserai.  
 Se lor faisoie soirement,  
 Sire, a ta cort, voiant ta gent,  
 Jusqu'a tierz jor me rediroient  
 Q'autre escondit avoir voudroient.  
 Rois, n'ai en cest païs parent  
 Qui por le mien destraignement  
 En feist gerre ne revel.  
 Mais de ce me seret molt bel.  
 De lor rebeche n'ai mes cure.  
 Se il vuelent avoir ma jure  
 Ou s'il volent loi de juise,  
 Ja n'en voudront si roide guise—  
 Metent le terme!—que ne face.  
 A terme avrai en mié la place  
 Li roi Artus et sa mesnie.  
 Se devant lui sui alegie,  
 Qui me voudroit aprés sordire,  
 Cil me voudroient escondire,  
 Qui avront veü ma deraisne,  
 Vers un Cornot ou vers un Saisne.  
 Por ce m'est bel que cil i soient  
 Et mon deresne a lor eulz voient.  
 Se en place est Artus li rois,  
 Gauvains, ses niés, li plus cortois,  
 Girflez et Qeu li seneschaus—  
 Tex cent en a li rois vasaus  
 N'en mentiront por rien qu'il oient—  
 Por les seurdiz se combattroient.  
 Rois, por c'est biens devant eus set  
 Faiz li deraisne de mon droit.
- 24b

"Lady," said the king, "listen to me.  
Three of my most valued barons  
have left me in anger."

"Why, sir? For what reason?"

3220

"They are accusing you." "Of what, sir?"

"I will tell you," the king said to her.

"You never vindicated yourself concerning Tristran."

"Suppose I do it?" "And they told me ...\*  
what they said to me." "I am ready to do it."

3225

"When will you do it? Even today?"

"That is very soon." "Much time has already passed."

"Sir, for God's sake and in His name,

listen to me and advise me.

What does all this mean? I am astonished  
that they never leave me in peace for an hour!

3230

May God help me,

I will offer no defense

except one of my own choosing.

If I took an oath

3235

in your court, sir, before your men,

not three days would pass before they would again say  
that they wanted some other proof.

King, I have no relative in this country

who, on account of my troubles,

3240

would undertake a war or revolt.

But that does not concern me.

I no longer care what people say.

if they want my oath,

or if they demand a trial by ordeal,

3245

they cannot think of an ordeal so cruel

that I will not accept it: let them choose the date!

But, at that time, I want King Arthur

and his entourage to be there.

If I am declared innocent before him,

3250

and if anyone makes accusations against me later,

those who witnessed my judgment

will be willing to defend me,

whether against a Cornishman or a Saxon.

For that reason, I want them to be there

3255

and witness my defense with their own eyes.

If King Arthur is there,

and his most noble nephew Gauvain,

And Girflet and Kay the seneschal—

the king has a hundred such vassals

3260

who would never lie about anything they heard—

they would willingly take up arms against slander.

King, that is why

my defense should take place before them.

- 3265 Li Cornot sont reherceor,  
De pluseurs evres tricheor.  
Esgarde un terme, si lor mande  
Que tu veus a la Blanche Lande  
Tuit i soient, et povre et riche.
- 3270 Qui n'i sera, tres bien t'afiche  
Que lor toudras lor herité.  
Si reseras d'eus aquité.  
Et li mien cors est toz seürs,  
Des que verra li rois Artus
- 3275 Mon message, qu'il vendra ça:  
Son corage sai des piça."
- Li rois respont, "Bien avez dit."
- Atant est li termes baniz  
A quinze jorz par le pais.
- 3280 Li rois le mande a trois naïs  
Que par mal sont parti de cort:  
Molt en sont lié, a que qu'il tort.  
Or sevent tuit par la contree  
Le terme asis de l'asenblee,
- 3285 Et que la ert li roi Artus,  
Et de ses chevaliers le plus  
O lui vendront de sa mesnie.  
Yseut ne s'ert mie atargie:
- 24c
- Par Perinis manda Tristran
- 3290 Tote la paine et tot l'ahan  
Qu'el a por lui ouan eüe.  
Or l'en soit la bonté rendue!  
Metre la puet, s'il veut, en pes:  
"Di li que il set bien un marchés,
- 3295 Au chief des planches, au Mal Pas;  
G'i sollé ja un poi mes dras.  
Sor la mote, el chief de la planche,  
Un poi deça la Lande Blanche,  
Soit, revestuz de dras de ladre;
- 3300 Un henap port o sai de madre\*  
(Un bocele ait dedesoz),\*  
O coroie atachié par noz;  
A l'autre main tienge un puiot,  
Si aprenge de tel tripot.
- 3305 Au terme ert sor la mote assis:  
Ja set assez bociez son vis;  
Port le henap devant son front,  
A ceus qui iluec passeront  
Demand l'aumosne sinplement.
- 3310 Il li dorront or et argent:  
Gart moi l'argent, tant que le voie  
Priveement, en chanbre coie."

- The Cornishmen are liars  
and deceivers in many ways!  
Choose a date and inform them  
that you want everyone, poor and rich alike,  
to come to the White Heath.  
Announce clearly that if anyone is not there,  
you will confiscate his inheritance;  
that way you will have no trouble with them.  
And I am confident  
that, as soon as King Arthur receives  
my message, he will come,  
for I have long known of his compassion." 3265
- The king answered, "You have spoken well."  
Then the date, set for two weeks from that time,  
was announced throughout the country.  
The king also sent word to the three Cornishmen  
who had left the court in anger. 3280
- Come what may, they were now happy.  
Now everyone in the country knew  
the date chosen for the gathering,  
and they knew that King Arthur would be there,  
and that most of the knights  
of his court would accompany him. 3285
- Iseut wasted no time.  
She had Perinis tell Tristran  
of the pain and suffering  
she had endured on his account that year:  
now let her be repaid for that suffering.  
If he were willing, he could spare her further torment:  
"Tell him that he is familiar with a marsh  
at the approach to the bridge, at Mal Pas,  
where I once soiled the hem of my dress. 3295
- He is to be on a small hill by the bridge,  
just this side of the White Heath,  
dressed in leper's clothes;  
he should have with him a leper's wooden goblet  
with a bottle beneath, 3300
- attached to it by a knotted leather thong.  
In his other hand he should have a crutch.  
And here now is our scheme:  
He will be sitting on the hill at the appointed hour.  
Have him make his face appear tumorous  
and hold the goblet in front of him;  
from those who pass by  
he is to ask for alms—nothing more. 3305
- They will give him gold and silver.  
He is to keep the money for me, until I see him  
alone, in a private room." 3310

- Dist Perinis, "Dame, par foi,  
Bien li dirai si le secroi."
- 3315 Perinis part de la roïne;  
El bois, par mié une gaudine,  
Entre, tot sos par le bois vet;  
A l'avesprer vient au recet  
Ou Tristran ert, el bel celier.
- 3320 Levé estoient du mengier.  
Liez fu Tristran de sa venue:  
Bien sout, noveles de sa drue  
Li aporte li vaslet frans.
- 3325 Il dui se tienent par les mains,  
Sor un sige haut sont monté.  
Perinis li a tot conté  
Le mesage de la roïne.
- 3330 Tristran vers terre un poi encline  
Et jure quant que puet ataindre:  
Mar l'ont pensé; ne puet remaindre,  
Il en perdront encor les testes  
Et as forches pendront, as festes.
- 3335 "Di la roïne mot a mot:  
G'irai au terme, pas n'en dot.  
Face soi lie, saine et baude!  
Ja n'avrai mais bain d'eve chaude  
Tant qu'a m'espee ai venjance
- 3340 De ceus qui li ont fait pesance:  
Il sont traître fel prové.  
Di li que tot ai bien trové  
A sauver soi du soirement.  
Je la verrai assez briment.
- 3345 Va, si li di que ne s'esmait,  
Ne dot pas que je n'alle au plet,  
Atapiné comme tafurs.  
Bien me verra li rois Artus  
Soier au chief sor le Mal Pas,
- 3350 Mais il ne me connoistra pas.  
S'aumosne avrai, se l'en pus traire.  
A la roïne puez retraire  
Ce que t'ai dit el sozterrín  
Que fist fere si bel, perrin.
- 3355 De moi li porte plus saluz\*  
Qu'il n'a sor moi bocés menuz."  
"Bien li dirai," dist Perinis;  
Lors s'est par les degrez fors mis.  
"G'en vois au roi Artus, beau sire.
- 3360 Ce mesage m'i estuet dire:  
Qu'il vienge oïr le soirement,  
Ensenble o lui chevaliers cent,

24d

25a

Perinis said, "Lady, on my word,  
I will tell him all that, in confidence."

Perinis left the queen.

3315

He went into the forest at a thicket  
and proceeded alone through the woods.

At evening, he came to the refuge  
where Tristran was, in the cellar.

They had just finished eating.

3320

Tristran was happy to see him:  
he knew that the noble young man  
had brought him news of his mistress.

They grasped each other's hands,  
and they sat together at a high seat.

3325

Perinis related to him

the queen's message.

Tristran bowed his head

and swore by everything within his power  
that they would regret this, and they could not fail

3330

to lose their heads

and hang high from the gallows!

"Tell the queen this, word for word:

I will go at the appointed time; she should not worry.

3335

Let her rejoice and be healthy and happy.

Before I again bathe in hot water,

I will have taken revenge with my sword

on those who have made her suffer:

their evil treachery is exposed!

Tell her that I have arranged everything

3340

to save her when she swears her oath.

I will see her very soon.

Go, and tell her not to despair

and not to worry that I might not be at the trial,

disguised as a beggar.

3345

King Arthur will see me there,

seated at the entry to Mal Pas,

but he will not recognize me.

I will have alms from him if I can.

You can tell the queen

3350

what I have related to you here in the cellar,

which was finely constructed in stone.

Take her more greetings from me\*

Than there will be small tumors on my body."

"I will tell her," said Perinis;

then he started to leave by the stairs.

3355

"Good sir, I am going to King Arthur,  
for I have to give him this message:

he is to come to hear the oath,

and a hundred knights with him

3360

- Qui puis garant li porteroient,  
 Se li felon de rien greignoient  
 A la dame de loiauté.  
 Donc n'est ce bien?" "Or va a DÉ."  
 3365 Toz les degrez en puie a orne,  
 El chaceor monte et s'en torne;  
 N'avra mais pais a l'esperon,  
 Si ert venu a Cuerlion.  
 Molt out cil poines por servir,  
 3370 Molt l'en devroit mex avenir.  
 Tant a enquis du roi novele  
 Que l'en li a dit bone et bele,  
 Que li rois ert a Isneldone.  
 Cele voie qui l'a s'adone  
 3375 Vet li vaslez Yseut la bele.  
 A un pastor qui chalemele  
 A demandé, "Ou est li rois?"  
 "Sire," fait il, "il sit au dois.  
 Ja verroiz la Table Reonde,  
 3380 Qui tornoie comme le monde.  
 Sa mesnie sit environ."  
 Dist Perinis, "Ja en iron."  
 Li vaslet au perron decent,  
 Maintenant s'en entra dedanz.  
 3385 Molt i avoit filz a contors  
 Et filz a riches vavasors,  
 Qui servoient por armes tuit.  
 Uns d'eus s'en part, con s'il s'en fuit;  
 Il vient au roi, et il l'apele:  
 3390 "Va, dont viens tu?" "J'aport novele:  
 La defors a un chevauchant,  
 A grant besoin te va querant."  
 Atant estes vos Pirinis:  
 Esgardez fu de maint marchis;  
 3395 Devant le roi vint a l'estage  
 Ou scoient tuit li barnage.  
 Li vaslet dit tot a seür:  
 "Dex saut," fait il, "le roi Artur,  
 Lui et tote sa compaignie,  
 3400 De par la bele Yseut s'amie!"  
 Li rois se lieve sus des tables:  
 "Et Dex," fait il, "esperitables  
 La saut et gart, et toi, amis!  
 Dex!" fait li rois, "tant ai je quis  
 3405 De lié avoir un sol mesage!  
 Vaslet, voiant cest mien barnage,  
 Otroi a li qant que requiers.  
 Toi tiers seras fet chevaliers,

who can assure her protection  
 if the traitors ever again complain  
 about the lady's loyalty.  
 Is that not a good idea?" "God be with you!"

Perinis ran up the stairs,  
 jumped on his horse, and rode away.

3365

He did not stop spurring  
 until he came to Caerleon.

He took great pains to carry out his duty,  
 and he should have been better rewarded.

3370

He asked for news of the king  
 and he was informed  
 that the king was at Stirling.\*

So the servant of fair Iseut  
 set out on the road that led that way.  
 He asked a shepherd who was playing pipes,  
 "Where is the king?"

3375

"Sir," he said, "he is sitting at the table.  
 There you will see the Round Table,  
 which rotates like the earth.\*

3380

And his men are seated around it."

Perinis said, "Let us go there."

There, the young man dismounted by a stone slab  
 and went in.

3385

There were many sons of counts  
 and of rich vassals,  
 who served others in order to earn their armor.  
 One of them left the others very quickly;  
 he came to the king, who said to him,  
 "Where have you come from?" "I bring you news:  
 out there is a rider  
 who is urgently looking for you."

3390

Then Perinis appeared;  
 watched by many nobles,  
 he came before the king at the dais  
 where all his knights were seated.

3395

The young man spoke with assurance.  
 He said, "From his friend, the fair Iseut,  
 may God save King Arthur  
 and all his company."

3400

The king rose from the table.  
 He replied, "And may God in heaven  
 save and protect her, and you too, friend.  
 God," said the king, "I have wanted  
 to hear from her for so long!  
 Young man, here in the presence of my barons,  
 I grant her whatever you may request.  
 And I will knight you, along with two others,

3405

- Por le mesage a la plus bele  
 3410 Qui soit de ci jusq'en Tudele."  
     "Sire," fait il, "vostre merci!  
 Oiez por qui sui venu ci;  
 E s'i entendent cil baron,  
 Et mes sires Gauvain par non.
- 3415 La roïne s'est acordee  
 O son seignor, n'i a celee:  
 Sire, la ou il s'acorderent,  
 Tuit li baron du reigne i erent.  
 Tristran s'offri a esligier
- 3420 Et la roïne a deraisnier,  
 Devant le roi, de loiauté.  
 Ainz nus de tele loiauté  
 Ne vout armes saisir ne prendre.  
 Sire, or font le roi Marc entendre
- 3425 Que il prenge de lié deraisne.  
 Il n'a frans hon, François ne Sesne,  
 A la roi cort, de son linage.  
 Ge oi dire que souef nage  
 Cil qui on sostient le menton.
- 3430 Rois, se nos ja de ce menton,                  25c  
 Si me tenez a losengier.  
 Li rois n'a pas coraige entier,  
 Senpres est ci et senpres la.  
 La bele Yseut respondu l'a
- 3435 Que ele en fera droit devant vos.  
 Devant le Gué Aventuros  
 Vos requiert et merci vos crie,  
 Conme la vostre chiere amie,  
 Que vos soiez au terme mis,
- 3440 Cent i aiez de vos amis.  
 Vostre cort soit atant loial,  
 Vostre mesnie natural.  
 Dedevant vos iert alegiee,  
 Et Dex la gart que n'i meschiee!
- 3445 Que, pus li seriez garant,  
 N'en faudriez ne tant ne quant.  
 D'hui en huit jors est pris le termes."  
     Plorer en font o grosses lermes:  
 N'i a un sol qui de pitié
- 3450 N'en ait des eUILZ le vis mollié.  
 "Dex!" fait chascun, "que li demandent?  
 Li rois fait ce que il commandent,  
 Tristran s'en vet fors du païs.  
 Ja ne voie il saint paradis,
- 3455 Se li rois veut, qui la n'ira  
 Et qui par droit ne l'aidera!"

for bringing me a message from the most beautiful woman  
from here to Tudela."

3410

"Sir," he said, "thank you.

Now hear why I have come,  
and may these barons hear it too,  
and Sir Gawain in particular.

The queen has been reconciled  
with her lord; that is not a secret.

3415

Sir, all the barons of the kingdom were present  
where the reconciliation took place.

Tristran offered to defend his honor  
and prove the queen's fidelity  
before the king.

3420

No one wanted to dispute that fidelity  
by taking up arms.

But now, sir, they have convinced Mark  
that she must take an oath.

3425

But there is at court no nobleman  
of her lineage, either Frenchman or Saxon.  
I have heard it said that he swims easily  
whose chin is supported by someone else!

King, if we are lying about all this,  
you can punish me for slander.

3430

The king constantly changes his mind,  
now believing one thing, now another.

The fair Iseut answered him  
that she would take an oath before you.

3435

She asks that you take pity on her,  
as your dear friend,  
and come at the designated time,  
to the Perilous Ford,

and that a hundred of your friends be with you.

3440

She knows that your court is loyal  
and your company sincere;  
she will be proven innocent before you,  
and may God save her from misfortune.

Then you would be her protection,  
and you would surely not fail her in any way.

3445

The date has been set for a week from today."

People wept bitterly at this;

there was not a one of them

who did not shed tears of pity.

3450

They all said, "God! What do they want from her?

Mark does whatever they require,  
and Tristran is leaving the country.

May no one enter Heaven

who, if the king wishes it,

3455

does not go there and give her such help as is needed."

- Gauvains s'en est levé en piez,  
 Parla et dist comme afaitiez,  
 "Oncle, se j'ai de toi l'otrise,  
 3460 La deresne qui est assise  
 Torra a mal as trois felons.  
 Li plus coverz est Guenelons:  
 Gel connois bien, si fait il moi.  
 Gel boutai ja a un fangoi,  
 3465 A un bohort fort et plenier.                           25d  
 Se gel retien, par Saint Richier,  
 N'i estovra Tristran venir.  
 Se gel pooie as poins tenir,  
 Ge li feroie asez ennui  
 3470 Et lui pendrë an un haut pui."  
 Gerflet s'en lieve enprés Gauvain  
 Et si s'en vindrent main a main:  
 "Rois, molt par heent la roïne  
 Denaalain et Godoïne  
 3475 Et Guenelon, molt a lonc tens.  
 Ja ne me tienge Dex en sens,  
 Se vois encontre Goudoïne,  
 Se de ma grant lance fresn-nine  
 Ne pasent outre li coutel,  
 3480 Ja n'en embras soz le mantel  
 Bele dame desoz cortine."  
 Perinis l'ot, le chief li cline.  
 Dit Evains, li filz Uriën,  
 "Asez connois Dinoalain:  
 3485 Tot son sens met en acuser,  
 Bien set faire le roi muser,  
 Tant li dirai (que il le croie!)  
 Se je l'encontre enmié ma voie,  
 Con je fis ja une autre foiz,  
 3490 Ja ne m'en tienge lois ne fois,  
 S'il ne se puet de moi defendre,  
 S'a mes deus mains ne le fais pendre.  
 Molt doit on felon chastier.  
 Du roi joent si losengier."  
 3495 Dist Perinis au roi Artur,  
 "Sire, je sui de tant seür  
 Que li felon prendront colee,  
 Qui la roïne ont quis meslee.  
 Ainz a ta cort n'ot menacié  
 3500 Home de nul luintain reigné                           26a  
 Que n'en aiez bien trait a chief:  
 Au partir en remestrent grief  
 Tuit cil qui l'ourent deservi."  
 Li rois fu liez, un poi rougi:

- Gawain stood up  
and said graciously,  
“Uncle, if I have your permission,  
the trial that is to take place  
will turn out badly for the three traitors.  
The worst of them is Ganelon;  
I know him well, and he knows me.  
I once knocked him into a mudhole  
during a violent joust. 3460
- If I met him again, by St. Richier,  
there would be no need for Tristran to be there!  
If I could get my hands on him,  
I would make him suffer,  
and then I would have him hanged on the highest hill!” 3465
- Girflet stood up after Gauvain,  
and they stepped forward, hand in hand.  
“King, Denoalen and Godoine  
and Ganelon have bitterly hated the queen  
for a long time. 3475
- May God deprive me of reason  
if I ever meet Godoine  
and the point of my lance  
does not pierce his body,  
and may I never again embrace\*  
a beautiful woman in private.” 3480
- Perinis listened, his head bowed.
- Yvain, the son of Urien, said,  
“I know Denoalen well.  
He is interested only in slander,  
and he knows how to manipulate the king. 3485
- I warn him (let him believe this!)  
that if our paths ever cross,  
as happened once before,  
may I be cast out of our faith  
if I am able to defeat him  
and yet do not hang him with my own two hands!  
Traitors deserve to be punished.  
Those hypocrites are deceiving the king.” 3490
- Perinis said to King Arthur,  
“Sir, I am confident  
that the traitors who caused trouble  
for the queen will be punished for it.  
Never was any man from a distant land  
threatened at your court  
but that you soon put the matter to rest;  
in the process, all those who deserve it  
are punished.” 3500
- The king was pleased; he blushed a little.

- 3505     "Sire vaslez, alez mangier.  
           Cist penseront de lui vengier."  
           Li rois en son cuer out grant joie;  
           Parla, bien vout Perinis l'oei:  
           "Mesnie franche et honoree,  
 3510     Gardez qu'encontre l'asenblee  
           Soient vostre cheval tuit gras,  
           Vostre escu nuef, riche vos dras.  
           Bohorderons devant la bele  
           Dont vos oiez tuit la novele.  
 3515     Molt porra poi sa vie amer  
           Qui se faindra d'armes porter."  
           Li rois les ot trestoz semons:  
           Le terme heent qui'st si lons,  
           Lor vuel fust il a l'endemain.  
 3520     Oiez du franc de bone main:  
           Perinis le congié demande.  
           Li rois monta sor Passelande,  
           Qar convoier veut le meschin.  
           Contant vont par mié le chemin:  
 3525     Tuit li conte sont de la bele  
           Qui metra lance par astèle.  
           Ainz que parte li parlemenz,  
           Li rois offre les garnemenz  
           Perinis d'estre chevalier,  
 3530     Mais il nes vout encor ballier.  
           Li rois convoié l'out un poi,  
           Por la bele franche au chief bloi,  
           Ou il n'a point de mautalent:  
           Molt en parloient an alent.  
 3535     Li vaslez out riche convoi                26b  
           Des chevaliers et du franc roi.  
           A grant enviz sont departiz.  
           Li rois le claime, "Beaus amis,  
           Alez vos en, ne demorez.  
 3540     Vostre dame me salüez  
           De son demoine soudoier,  
           Qui vient a li por apaier.  
           Totes ferai ses volentez,  
           Por lié serai entalentez.  
 3545     El me porra molt avancier.  
           Menbre li de l'espifié lancier,  
           Qui fu en l'estache feru:  
           Ele savra bien ou ce fu.  
           Prié vos que li diez einsi."  
 3550     "Rois, si ferai, gel vos afi."  
           Adonc hurta le chaceor.  
           Li rois se rest mis el retor.

- "Young man, go eat now.  
These men will plan to avenge her."  
In his heart the king felt great joy.  
He spoke, wanting Perinis to hear him:  
"Noble and honored company,  
take care to see that, for the gathering,  
your horses are well fed,  
your shields new, your clothing rich.  
We will joust before the fair lady  
of whom you have heard news.  
He does not value his life  
who shrinks from bearing arms."  
The king exhorted all of them.  
They regretted that the day was still far off;  
they would have preferred that it be the next day!
- Now hear about the noble squire:  
Perinis asked permission to leave.  
The king mounted Passelande,  
for he wanted to escort the young man.  
They rode along, deep in conversation,  
talking only about the beautiful woman  
for whom lances would be splintered.
- Before the conversation ended,  
the king offered Perinis  
the equipment a knight should have,  
but he did not want to accept it.
- The king rode with him a while longer,  
in honor of the beautiful, blond, noble woman  
in whom there was no ill will.  
They spoke of her at length as they rode along.
- The young man had a fine escort,  
made up of knights and the noble king.
- They separated with regret,  
and the king said to him "Good friend,  
go now; do not delay.  
Greet your lady  
on behalf of her faithful servant,  
who will come to make peace for her.  
I will do her will;  
for her sake I am eager to do so.  
And I will gain glory by serving her.  
Remind her about the incident in which  
a thrown spear remained stuck in a post;\*  
she will know where that was.  
I ask you to tell her that."
- "King, I will do it, I assure you."  
Then he spurred his horse,  
and the king turned back.

3505

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3550

- Cil s'en vient; son mesage a fait  
 Perinis qui tant mal a trait  
 3555 Por le servise a la roïne.  
 Conme plus puet, et il chemine:  
 Onques un jor ne sejorna  
 Tant qu'il vint la don il torna.  
 Reconté a sa cehvauchie  
 3560 A celi qui molt en fu lie,  
 Du roi Artur et de Tristran.  
 Cele nuit furent a Lidan.  
 Cele nuit fu la lune dime.  
 Que diroie? Li terme aprime  
 3565 De soi alegier la roïne.  
 Tristran, li suens amis, ne fine,  
 Vestu se fu de mainte guise:  
 Il fu en legne, sanz chemise;  
 De let burel furent les cotes  
 3570 Et a quarreaus furent ses botes.                   26c  
 Une chape de burel lee  
 Out fait tallier, tote enfumee.  
 Affublez se fu forment bien,  
 Malade senble plus que rien;\*  
 3575 Et nequeden si ot s'espee  
 Entor ses flans estroit noee.  
 Tristran s'en part, ist de l'ostal  
 Celeement, a Governal,  
 Qui li enseigne et si li dit,  
 3580 "Sire Tristran, ne soiez bric.  
 Prenez garde de la roïne,  
 Qu'el n'en fera senblant et signe."  
 "Maistre," fait il, "si ferai bien.  
 Gardez que vos faciez mon buen.  
 3585 Ge me criem molt d'aperchevance.  
 Prenez mon escu et ma lance,  
 Ses m'aportez et mon cheval  
 Enreignez, Mestre Governal,  
 Se mestier m'est; que vos soiez  
 3590 Au pasage, prez, enbuschiez:  
 Vos savez bien le buen passage,  
 Pieç'a que vos en estes sage.  
 Li cheval est blans conme flor:  
 Covrez le bien trestot entor,  
 3595 Que il ne soit mes conneüz  
 Ne de nul home aperceüz.  
 La ert Artus atot sa gent,  
 Et li rois Marc tot ensement.  
 Cil chevalier d'estrange terre  
 3600 Bohorderont por los aquerre;

- Perinis left; he had delivered his message  
and had taken pains  
to serve the queen well. 3555  
He rode on at full speed;  
he did not have a day's rest  
until he returned to the place he had left.  
He recounted his journey  
to the lady, who was pleased about it,  
and talked about Arthur and Tristran. 3560  
They spent that night at Dinan.
- It was the tenth night of the moon.  
What is there to say, but that the day  
was approaching when the queen would exculpate herself? 3565  
Tristran, her friend, was not idle.  
He had pieced together a costume  
and was dressed in rough wool, without a shirt.  
His tunic was of ugly coarse cloth,  
and his boots made from patches. 3570  
He had had a cloak made  
of coarse, threadbare wool.  
He had a marvelous disguise,  
and he looked exactly like a leper.  
However, he had his sword 3575  
girded tightly around his waist.  
Tristran departed, leaving his lodging  
secretly with Governal,  
who gave him instructions and said,
- "Lord Tristran, do not do anything foolish.  
Pay close attention to the queen,  
for she will make no sign to you." 3580  
"Master," he said, "I will do that.  
Now take care to do what I want.  
I am afraid of being recognized. 3585  
Take my shield and lance;  
bring them and my saddled horse  
to me, Master Governal,  
in case I need them.  
Be at the ford, hidden but nearby.  
You know the right ford,  
for you have long been familiar with it.  
Since the horse is as white as flour,  
cover him entirely  
so that he cannot be recognized  
or seen by anyone. 3595  
Arthur and his entourage will be there,  
and King Mark also.  
Knights from foreign lands  
will joust to win praise; 3600

- Et, por l'amor Yseut m'amie,  
 I ferai tost une esbaudie.  
 Sus la lance soit le penon  
 Dont la bele me fist le don. 26d
- 3605 Mestre, or alez, pri vos forment  
 Que le faciez molt sauvement."  
 Prist son henap et son puiot,\*  
 Le congié prist de lui, si l'ot.  
 Governal vint a son ostel,
- 3610 Son hernois prist, ainz ne fist el,  
 Puis si se mist tost a la voie.  
 Il n'a cure que nus le voie.  
 Tant a erré que enbuschiez s'est  
 Pres de Tristran, qui au Pas est.
- 3615 Sor la mote, au chief de la mare,  
 S'asist Tristran sanz autre afaire.  
 Devant soi fiche son bordon:  
 Atachié fu a un cordon  
 A quei l'avet pendu au col.
- 3620 Entor lui sont li taier mol.  
 Sor la mote forment se tret.  
 Ne senbla pas home contret,  
 Qar il ert gros en corporuz,  
 Il n'ert pas nains, contrez, boçuz.
- 3625 La rote entent, la s'est asis.  
 Molt ot bien bocelé son vis.  
 Quant aucun passe devant lui,  
 En plaignant disoit, "Mar i fui!  
 Ja ne quidai estre aumosnier
- 3630 Ne servir jor de cest mestier,  
 Mais n'en poon or mais el faire."  
 Tristran lor fait des borses trere,  
 Que il fait tant chascun li done.  
 Il les reçoit, que mot ne sone.
- 3635 Tex a esté set anz mignon  
 Ne set si bien traire guignon,  
 Meïsmes li corlain a pié  
 Et li garçon li mains proisié,  
 Qui vont mangant par le chemin,
- 3640 Tristran, qui tient le chief enclin,  
 Lor aumosne por Deu lor quiert.  
 L'un l'en done, l'autre le fier.  
 Li cuvert gars, li desfaé  
 Mignon, herlot l'ont apelé. 27a
- 3645 Escoute Tristran, mot ne sone:  
 Por Deu, ce dit, le lor pardone.  
 Li corgel, qui sont plain de rage,  
 Li font ennui, et il est sage.

- and for the love of my friend Iseut,  
 I may do something reckless.  
 Attach to my lance the pennon  
 given to me by my fair lady.  
 Now go, master, and I beg you  
 to do all of this discreetly." 3605  
 He picked up his goblet and crutch,  
 and he took leave of him.
- Governal came to his lodging,  
 gathered Tristran's equipment but did nothing else,  
 and then set out. 3610  
 He took care that no one saw him.  
 He rode on until he could hide  
 near Tristran at Mal Pas.  
 On the mound at the edge of the marsh,  
 Tristran sat down immediately. 3615  
 He placed his crutch in front of him;  
 it was attached to a cord  
 by which he had suspended it from his neck.  
 The ground was marshy all around him. 3620  
 He climbed the hill vigorously;  
 he did not appear to be sick,  
 for he was large and solidly built:  
 he was certainly not a dwarf, invalid, or hunchback!  
 He heard the people approaching, and he sat down. 3625  
 He had lumps all over his face,  
 and whenever someone passed him,  
 he moaned, "Woe is me!  
 I did not want to be a beggar  
 and take up this profession. 3630  
 But there is nothing else we can do."  
 Tristran made them take out their purses,  
 for he managed to make everyone give him something.  
 He accepted the alms without comment.  
 Even a man who had been another's minion seven years  
 could not have extracted money so well! 3635  
 Even from messengers on foot  
 and from the humblest youths,  
 who were eating as they walked along,  
 Tristran, keeping his head bowed,  
 begged alms in God's name. 3640  
 Some gave him something; others struck him.  
 Cowardly and unsavory people  
 called him parasitic and worthless.  
 Tristran listened but had no retort,  
 except to say that he forgave them in God's name. 3645  
 Insolent people, enraged,  
 insulted him, but he behaved prudently.

- |      |  |
|------|--|
|      | Truant le claument et herlot.<br>Il les convoie o le puiot,<br>Plus de quatore en fait saigner,<br>Si qu'il ne puient estanchier.<br>Li franc vaslet de bone orine<br>Ferlin ou maalle esterline |
| 3650 | Li ont doné: il les reçoit.<br>Il lor dit que il a toz boit,<br>Si grant arson a en son cors<br>A poine l'en puet geter fors.<br>Tuit cil qui l'orient si parler                                 |
| 3655 | De pitié prenent a plorer;<br>Ne tant en quant pas nu mescroient<br>Qu'il ne soit ladres cil quil voient.<br>Pensent vaslet et escuier<br>Qu'il se hastent de soi logier                         |
| 3660 | E des tres tendre lor seignors,<br>Pavellons de maintes colors:<br>N'i a riche home n'ait sa tente.<br>A plain erre, chemin et sente,<br>Li chevalier viennent aprés.                            |
| 3665 | Molt a grant presse en cel marchés;<br>Esfondré l'ont, mos est li fans.<br>Li cheval entrent jusq'as flans,<br>Maint en i chiet, qui que s'en traie.<br>Tristran s'en rist, point ne s'esmaie,   |
| 3670 | Par contraire lor dit a toz,<br>"Tenez vos rengnes par les noz,<br>Si hurtez bien de l'esperon;<br>Par Deu, ferez de l'esperon,<br>Qu'il n'a avant point de taier."                              |
| 3675 | 27b<br>Qant il pensent outre essaier,<br>Li marois font desoz lor piez.<br>Chascun qui entre est entaiez:<br>Qui n'a hueses, s'en a soffrete.<br>Li ladres a sa main fors traite,                |
| 3680 | Qant en voit un qui el tai voitre,<br>Adonc flavele cil a cuite.<br>Qant il le voit plus en fangoi,<br>Li ladres dit, "Pensez de moi,<br>Que Dex vos get fors du Mal Pas!"                       |
| 3685 | Aidiez a noveler mes dras."<br>O sa botele el henap fier.<br>En estrange leu les requiert;<br>Mais il le fait par lecherie.<br>Qant or verra passer s'amie,                                      |
| 3690 | Yseut, qui a la crine bloie,<br>Que ele an ait en son cuer joie.   |
| 3695 |  |

They accused him of being vagrant and worthless.

3650

He helped them on their way with his crutch,  
making more than fourteen of them bleed  
so profusely that they could not stop the blood.

Well-bred young men

gave him farthings and silver half-pennies,  
and he accepted them.

3655

He told them that he would drink to them,  
and that he had such a burning in his body  
that he could scarcely relieve it.

All who heard him speak that way

were moved to tears of pity;

they could have no doubt

that the man they were looking at was a leper.

Servants and squires thought

they should hurry to find lodgings for themselves

and to set up their lords' tents

3665

and pavilions of many colors.

Every wealthy man there had his own tent.

Knights came after them

at full speed over the roads and paths.

There was a great crowd on the marshy ground.

3670

They had trampled it heavily, and the mud was soft.

The horses sank up to their flanks;

many of them fell in and struggled to free themselves.

Tristran laughed and remained unconcerned about it;

instead, he told all of them,

3675

"Hold your reins by the knots,

and use your spurs.

In God's name, spur sharply,

for there is no mud up ahead."

But when they tried to advance,

3680

the marshy ground gave way under their feet;

all who entered sank into the mud:

those who had no boots regretted it!

The leper would hold out his hand

when he saw someone fall into the mud,

3685

and he would shake his rattle vigorously.

And when he saw them sink farther,

the leper would cry, "Think of me

(may God save you from Mal Pas!)

and buy me new clothes!"

3690

He struck his goblet with the bottle.

It was a strange place to beg alms,

but he was doing it mischievously.

When he saw his lady,

the fair Iseut, pass by,

3695

he wanted her to be pleased.

- |      |  |
|------|--|
|      | Molt a grant noise en cel Mal Pas.<br>Li passeor sollent lor dras,<br>De luien puet l'om oïr les huz<br>De ceus qui solle la paluz.<br>Cil qui la passe n'est seûrs.             |
| 3700 | Atant es vos le roi Artus:<br>Esgarder vient le passeor,<br>O lui de ses barons plusor.  |
| 3705 | Criement que li marois ne fonde.<br>Tuit cil de la Table Reonde<br>Furent venu sor le Mal Pas,<br>O escus fres, o chevaus cras,<br>De lor armes entreseigné.                     |
| 3710 | Tuit sont covert, que mens que pié;<br>Maint drap de soie i ot levé.<br>Bohordant vont devant le gé.   |
| 3715 | Tristran connoisoit bien le roi<br>Artus, si l'apela a soi:<br>"Sire Artus, rois, je sui malades,<br>Bociez, meseaus, desfaiz et fades.<br>Povre est mon pere, n'out ainz terre. |
| 3720 | Ça sui venuz l'aumosne querre,<br>Molt ai oï de toi bien dire,<br>Tu ne me doiz pas escondire.<br>Tu es vestu de beaus grisens<br>De Renebors, si con je pens.                   |
| 3725 | Desoz la toile renciène<br>La toue char est blanche et plaine.<br>Tes janbes voi de riche paile<br>Chaucies et o verte maile,<br>Et les sorchauz d'une escarlate.                |
| 3730 | Rois Artus, voiz con je me grate?<br>J'ai les granz froiz, qui que ait les chauz.<br>Por Deu me donne ces sorchauz."   |
| 3735 | Li nobles rois an ot pitié:<br>Dui damoisel l'ont deschaucié.<br>Li malades les sorchauz prent,<br>Otot s'en vet isnelement,<br>Asis se rest sor la muterne.                     |
| 3740 | Li ladres nus de ceus n'esperne<br>Qui devant lui sont trespassé;<br>Fins dras en a a grant plenté<br>Et les sorchauz Artus le roi.<br>Tristran s'asist sor le maroi.            |

There was great tumult at Mal Pas.  
 Those who crossed soiled their clothes,  
 and from far away could be heard the cries  
 of those dirtied by the mud.  
 No one who crossed was safe.

3700

And then Arthur arrived.  
 He looked warily at the ford,  
 he and a good number of his barons alike.  
 They feared that the marsh would give way beneath them.  
 All the knights of the Round Table  
 had come to Mal Pas,  
 with new shields and strong horses,  
 and displaying their coats of arms.  
 They were fully equipped from head to foot.  
 Many silk banners were raised there,  
 and the knights began to joust near the ford.

3705

Tristran recognized King Arthur  
 and called him over:  
 "Good King Arthur, I am sick—  
 a weak, deformed leper covered with sores.  
 My father is poor and never had anything.  
 I came here to seek alms.  
 I have heard many good things about you,  
 and you should not refuse me.  
 You are dressed in fine gray cloth  
 from Regensburg, I believe,  
 and underneath the Reims linen  
 your skin is white and smooth.  
 I see your legs covered  
 with rich brocade and green net  
 and leggings of scarlet.  
 King Arthur, do you see how I scratch myself?  
 I have chills even when others are hot.  
 In God's name, give me your leggings!"

3710

3715

King Arthur, do you see how I scratch myself?  
 I have chills even when others are hot.  
 In God's name, give me your leggings!"

3720

The noble king took pity on him.  
 Two young men took off his leggings;  
 the leper took them  
 and then immediately went back  
 and sat down on the hill.

3725

The leper spared no one  
 who passed before him,  
 and soon he had many fine clothes,  
 including King Arthur's leggings.

3735

Tristran sat near the marsh.  
 While he was seated there,  
 King Mark, regal and imposing,  
 came riding rapidly toward the ford.  
 Tristran decided that he would try

3740

- 3745 S'il porra rien avoir du suen.  
 Son flavel sonë a haut suen,  
 A sa voiz roe crie a paine,  
 O le nes fait subler l'alaine,  
 "Por Deu, roi Marc, un poi de bien!" 27d
- 3750 S'aumuce trait, si li dit, "Tien,  
 Frere, met la ja sus ton chief:  
 Maintes foiz t'a li tens fait grief."  
 "Sire," fait il, "vostre merci!  
 Or m'avez vos de froit gari."
- 3755 Desoz la chape a mis l'aumuce,  
 Qant qu'il puet le trestorne et muce.  
 "Dom est tu, ladres?" fait li rois.  
 "De Carloon, filz d'un Galois."  
 "Qanz anz as esté fors de gent?"
- 3760 "Sire, troiz anz i a, ne ment.  
 Tant con je fui en saine vie,  
 Molt avoie cortoise amie.  
 Por lié ai je ces boces lees;  
 Ces tartaries plain dolees
- 3765 Me fait et nuit et jor soner  
 Et o la noisé estoner  
 Toz ceus qui je demant du lor  
 Por amor Deu le criator."  
 Li rois li dit, "Ne celez mie
- 3770 Conment ce te donna t'amie."  
 "Dans rois, ses sires ert meseaus,  
 O lié faisoie mes joiaus,  
 Cits maus me prist de la comune.  
 Mais plus bele ne fu que une."
- 3775 "Qui est ele?" "La bele Yseut:  
 Einsi se vest con cele seut."  
 Li rois l'entent, riant s'en part.  
 Li rois Artus de l'autre part  
 En est venuz, qui bohordot;
- 3780 Joios se fist, que plus ne pout. 28a  
 Artus enquist de la roïne.  
 "El vient," fait Marc, "par la gaudine,  
 Dan roi, ele vient o Andret:  
 De lié conduire s'entremet."
- 3785 Dist l'un a l'autre, "Ne sai pas  
 Conment isse de cest Mal Pas.  
 O eston ci, si prenon garde."  
 Li troi felon (qui male feu arde!)  
 Vindrent au gué, si demanderent
- 3790 Au malade par ont passerent  
 Cil qui mains furent entaié.  
 Tristran a son puiot drecié

- to obtain something of his. 3745  
 he shook his rattle loudly  
 and cried out in a hoarse,  
 nasal voice,  
 "In God's name, King Mark, give me something!"
- Mark took off his hood and said, "Here, 3750  
 brother, put this on your head;  
 you have suffered too often from the weather."
- "Sir," he responded, "thank you.  
 Now you have protected me from the cold."  
 He put the hood under his cloak, 3755  
 folding and concealing it as best he could.
- "Where are you from, leper?" asked Mark.  
 "From Caerleon, the son of a Welshman."  
 "How long have you been an outcast from society?"  
 "Truthfully, sir, three years.\* 3760  
 While I was healthy,  
 I had a most courtly lady.  
 Because of her, I now have these ugly sores,  
 and thus I have to use this rattle  
 day and night, 3765  
 making noise that startles  
 those from whom I ask something  
 for the love of God the Creator."
- The king said, "Tell me  
 how your lady did this to you." 3770  
 "Good King, her husband was a leper;  
 I made love to her,  
 and I contracted the disease from our union.  
 But there is only one woman more beautiful than she."
- "Who is that?" "The beautiful Iseut! 3775  
 She even dresses as the other one does."
- The king listened and went away laughing.  
 King Arthur, who had been jousting,  
 came to meet him.  
 He was exceedingly happy. 3780  
 Arthur inquired about the queen.
- Mark replied, "She is coming through the woods,  
 good king; she is with Andret,  
 whose duty it is to escort her."
- Then they said to each other, "I do not know 3785  
 how she will be able to cross Mal Pas.  
 Let us stay here and watch."
- The three traitors—may they burn in hell!—  
 came to the ford and asked  
 the leper where those 3790  
 who were least soiled had crossed.  
 Tristran raised his crutch

- Et lor enseigne un grant molanc:  
 "Vez la cel torbe apr s cel fanc,  
 3795 La est li droiz asseneors;  
 G'i ai ve u passer plusors."  
 Li felon entrent en la fange.  
 La ou li ladres lor enseigne,  
 Fange troverent a merveille  
 3800 Desi q'as auves de la selle.  
 Tuit troi chient a une flote.  
 Li malade fu sus la mote,  
 Si lor cria, "Poigniez a fort,  
 Se vos estes de tel tai ort.  
 3805 Alez, seignor! Par saint apostre,  
 Si me done chascun du vostre!"  
 Li cheval fondent el taier;  
 Cil se prenent a esmaier,  
 Qar ne trovent rive ne fonz.  
 3810 Cil qui bohordent sor le mont  
 Sont acoru isnelement.  
 Oiez du ladre com il ment:  
 "Seignors," fait il a ces barons,  
 "Tenez vos bien a vos archons.  
 3815 Mal ait cil fans qui si est mos!  
 Ostez ces manteaus de vos cox,  
 Si bra oiez parmi  le tai.  
 Je vos di bien (que tres bien sai),  
 G'i ai hui ve u gent passer."  
 3820 Qui donc ve st henap casser!  
 Quant li ladres le henap loche,  
 O la coroie fier la boche  
 Et o l'autre des mains flavele.  
 Atant es vos Yseut la bele!  
 3825 El taier vit ses ainemis,  
 Sor la mote sist ses amis.  
 Joie en a grant, rit et envoise,  
 A pi  decent sor la faloise.  
 De l'autre part furent li roi  
 3830 Et li baron qu'il ont o soi,  
 Qui esgarden ceus du taier  
 Torner sor coste et ventrellier.  
 Et li malades les arg e:  
 "Seignors, la roine est venue  
 3835 Por fere son aresnement,  
 Alez o r cel jugement!"  
 Poi en i a joie n'en ait.  
 Oiez del ladre, du desfait,  
 Donoalen met a raison:  
 3840 "Pren t'a la main a mon baston,

28b

and pointed to a large quagmire.

"See the peat-bog at the end of the marsh?

That is the best way:

I have seen a good many people cross there."

The traitors entered the marsh,  
and where the leper had indicated,  
they encountered a great deal of mud,  
up to their saddle-bows.

3795

All three of them fell in a heap.

The leper, on the hill,  
cried to them, "Use your spurs  
if you are getting dirty in there!

Come on, lords! By the holy apostle,  
give me something of yours."

3800

The horses became mired in the soft mud,  
and they began to panic,  
unable to reach the bank or get their footing.

Those who were jousting on the hill  
came running quickly.

3805

Now listen to the leper's lie:

"Lords," he said to the barons,  
"hold on to your saddle-bows firmly.

May this soft marsh be cursed!

3815

Take off your mantles

and paddle through the mud.

I tell you (for I am sure of it)  
that I saw people cross here today."

You could easily have seen a goblet broken then!

3820

When the leper shook the goblet,

he struck the bottle with the thong,

and he used his other hand to shake his rattle.

And then the fair Iseut arrived!

She saw her enemies in the mud

3825

while her friend sat on the hill.

That made her happy, and she laughed and rejoiced.

She dismounted near the bank.

Across from her were the kings

3830

and the barons they had with them,

and they watched those

who were flailing and wallowing in the mud.

And the leper was urging them,

"Lords, the queen has come

to swear her oath;

3835

go hear the trial."

There were few people there who did not enjoy that!

Now hear how the leper, the sick man,

spoke to Denoalen:

"Grab my stick

3840

- |      |   |
|------|---|
|      | Tire a deus poinz molt durement."   |
|      | Et cil li tent tot maintenant.  |
|      | Li baston li let li degiez:   |
| 3845 | Ariere chiet, tot est plungiez,<br>N'en vit on fors le poil rebors.   |
|      | Et qant il fu du tai trait fors,<br>Fait li malades, "N'en poi mes.   |
|      | J'ai endormi jointes et ners,<br>Les mains gourdes por le mal dagre,*   |
| 3850 | Les piez enflez por le poacre.<br>Li maus a empirez ma force,   |
|      | Ses sont mi braz com une escorce."  |
|      | Dinas estoit o la roïne,<br>Aperçut soi, de l'uel li cline.   |
| 3855 | Bien sout Tristran ert soz la chape,<br>Les trois felons vit en la trape;<br>Molt li fu bel et molt li plot<br>De ce qu'il sont en lait tripot. |
|      | A grant martire et a dolor<br>Sont issu li encuseor   |
| 3860 | Du taier defors: a certain,<br>Ja ne seront mais net sanz bain.<br>Voint le pueple, se despollent,<br>Li dras laisent, autres racuellent.       |
| 3865 | Mais or oiez du franc Dinas,<br>Qui fu de l'autre part du Pas:<br>La roïne met a raison.<br>"Dame," fait il, "cel siglaton                      |
|      | Esteria ja forment laidiz.  |
| 3870 | Cist garez est plain de rouiz:<br>Marriz en sui, forment m'en poise,<br>Se a vos dras point en adoise."<br>Yseut rist, qui n'ert pas coarde,    |
|      | De l'uel li guigne, si l'esgarde.   |
| 3875 | Le penser sout a la roïne.<br>Un poi aval, lez une espine,<br>Torne a un gué lui et Andrez,<br>Ou trepasserent auques nez.                      |
|      | De l'autre par fu Yseut sole.   |
| 3880 | Devant le gué fu grant la fole<br>Des deus rois et de lor barnage.<br>Oiez d'Yseut com el fu sage!<br>Bien savoit que cil l'esgardoient         |
|      | Qui outre le Mal Pas estoient.  |
| 3885 | Ele est au palefroi venue,<br>Prent les langues de la sanbue,<br>Ses noua desus les arçons:<br>Nus escuiers ne nus garçons                      |

- and pull hard with both hands."
- He immediately held it out toward him.
- But the leper let go of the stick,
- and Denoalen fell back and sank into the mud,
- so that only his hair could be seen. 3845
- And when he was pulled out of the mud,
- the leper said, "I could not help it!
- My joints and nerves are numb,
- my hands have been stiffened by disease,\*
- and my feet are swollen from gout. 3850
- Sickness has drained my strength,
- and my arms are weak and shriveled."
- Dinas was with the queen;
- he understood the ruse and winked at him.
- He knew it was Tristran beneath the cloak,
- and he saw the three scoundrels caught in the trap;
- he was delighted 3855
- that they were so discomfited.
- With great difficulty and pain,
- the accusers climbed out
- of the mudhole; surely 3860
- it would require a bath to make them clean again!
- In front of everyone, they undressed,
- left their clothes and put on others.
- But now hear about the noble Dinas,
- who was on the other side of Mal Pas. 3865
- He spoke to the queen:
- "Lady," he said, "your silk garment
- will be heavily soiled.
- This marsh is full of filth,
- and I would be most distressed
- if any of it got on your clothes."
- Iseut laughed, for she was not afraid;
- she winked and looked at him,
- and he knew what the queen had in mind. 3870
- A little farther down, beside a thorn bush,
- he and Andret found a ford,
- where they crossed without getting dirty.
- Iseut was now alone on the other side.
- Across the ford was a great crowd
- composed of the two kings and all their barons. 3880
- Now hear how crafty Iseut was!
- She knew that those who were
- on the other bank of Mal Pas were watching her.
- She walked over to her horse,
- lifted the fringes of the rich saddle-cloth,\* 3885
- and knotted them together above the saddle-bows;
- no squire or servant

- Por le taier mex nes levast  
 3890 Ne ja mex nes aparellast.  
 Le lorain boute soz la selle,  
 Le poitral oste Yseut la bele,  
 Au palefroi oste son frain.  
 Sa robe tient en une main,  
 3895 En l'autre la corgie tint.  
 Au gué o le palefroi vint,  
 De la corgie l'a feru,  
 Et il passe outre la palu.  
 La roïne out molt grant esgart  
 3900 De ceus qui sont de l'autre part.  
 Li roi prisié s'en esbahirent,  
 Et tuit li autre qui le virent.  
 La roïne out de soie dras:  
 Aporté furent de Baudas,  
 3905 Forré furent de blanc hermine.  
 Mantel, bliaut, tot li traïne.  
 Sor ses espaules sont si crin,  
 Bendé a ligne sor or fin.  
 Un cercle d'or out sor son chief,  
 3910 Qui empare de chief en chief,  
 Color rosine, fresche et blanche.  
 Einsi s'adrece vers la planche:  
 "Ge vuel avoir a toi afere!"  
 "Roïne franche, debonere,  
 3915 A toi irai sanz escondire,  
 Mais je ne sai que tu veus dire."  
 "Ne vuel mes dras enpalüer:  
 Asne sera de moi porter  
 Tot souavet par sus la planche."  
 3920 "Avoi!" fait il, "roïne franche,  
 Ne me requerez pas tel plet:  
 Ge sui ladres, boçu, desfait."  
 "Cuite," faite ele, "un poi t'arenge.  
 Quides tu que ton mal me prenge?  
 3925 N'en aies doute, non fera."  
 "A, Dex!" fait il, "ce que sera?  
 A lui parler point ne m'ennoie."  
 O le puiot sovent s'apioie.  
 "Diva! Malades, molt es gros!  
 3930 Tor la ton vis et ça ton dos:  
 Ge monterai comme vaslet."  
 Et lors s'en sorrist li deget,  
 Torne le dos, et ele monte.  
 Tuit les gardent, et roi et conte.  
 3935 Ses cuises tient sor son puiot:  
 L'un pié sorlieve et l'autre clot,

could have protected them better from the mud  
or prepared them better.

3890

She tucked the stirrup-strap under the saddle;  
then the fair Iseut took off the harness  
and the horse's reins.

She lifted the hem of her dress with one hand,  
holding the whip in the other.

3895

She approached the ford with the horse;  
then she struck him with the whip,  
and he crossed over the marsh.

The queen had been watched closely  
by those on the other side.

3900

The great kings marveled at her,  
as did all the others who saw her.

The queen was wearing garments of silk,  
brought from Baghdad;

they were trimmed with white ermine.

3905

Her mantle and tunic formed a train behind her.

Her hair fell to her shoulders

and was tied in linen ribbons over a fine gold net.

She wore on her head a golden band

that encircled it entirely,

and her face was rosy, fresh, and fair.

3910

She stepped toward the little bridge and said,

"I have a proposition for you."\*

"Noble and worthy queen,

I will come to you willingly,

3915

but I do not know what you want."

"I do not wish to stain my clothes.

You will be my pack-horse and carry me  
carefully across the planks."

"What?" he exclaimed. "Noble queen,  
do not ask such a service from me!

3920

I am a sick, deformed leper."

"Hurry," she said, "and get in position!

Do you think your illness will infect me?

Have no fear: it will not."

3925

"Oh, God!" he said. "What will come of this?

I never tire of talking with my lady."

He leaned heavily on his crutch.

"My goodness, leper, you are large!

Turn your face away and your back toward me,  
and I will straddle you like a man."

3930

Then the leper smiled.

He turned around, and she mounted.

Everyone watched them, kings and counts alike.

3935

She kept her thigh pressed against his crutch.\*

He plodded on,

- Sovent fait senblant de choier,  
 Grant chiere fai de soi doloir.  
 Yseut la bele chevaucha,  
 3940 Janbe deça, janbe dela.  
 Dist l'un a l'autre, "Or esgardez  
 ....  
 Vez la roïne chevauchier  
 Un malade qui seut clochier.  
 3945 Pres qu'il ne chiet de sor la planche,  
 Son puiot tient desoz sa hanche.  
 Alon encontre cel mesel  
 A l'issue de cest gacel."  
 La corurent li damoisel  
 3950 ....  
 Li roi Artus cele part torne,  
 Et li autre trestot a orne.  
 Li ladres ot enclin le vis,  
 De l'autre part vint el païs.  
 3955 Yseut se lait escolorgier.  
 Li ladres prent a reperier,  
 Au departir li redemande,  
 La bele Yseut, anuit viande.  
 Artus dist, "Bien l'a deservi.  
 3960 Ha, roïne, donez la li!"  
 Yseut la bele dist au roi:  
 "Par cele foi que je vos doi,  
 Forz truanz est, asez en a,  
 Ne mangera hui ce qu'il a.  
 3965 Soz sa chape senti sa guige.  
 Rois, s'aloiere n'apetiche:  
 Les pains demiés et les entiers  
 Et les pieces et les quartiers  
 Ai bien parmié le sac sentu.  
 3970 Viande a, si est bien vestu.  
 De vos sorchauz, s'il les veut vendre,  
 Puet il cinc soz d'esterlins prendre,  
 Et de l'aumuce mon seignor.  
 Achat bien lit, si soit pastor,  
 3975 Ou un asne qui past le tai.  
 Il est herlot, si que jel sai.  
 Hui a suï bone pasture,  
 Trové a gent a sa mesure.  
 De moi n'en portera qui valle  
 3980 Un sol ferlinc n'une maalle."  
 Grant joie en meinent li dui roi.  
 Amené ont son palefroi,  
 Montee l'ont; d'iluec tornerent.  
 Qui ont armes lors bohorderent.

29b

pretending to stumble several times.  
 He made a great pretense of suffering.  
 The fair Iseut was riding him like a horse,  
 with one leg on each side!

3940

People said to one another, "Just look!"

.....  
 See the queen astride  
 a leper who is limping along.  
 He is nearly falling off the plank,  
 with his crutch against her thigh.  
 Let us go meet this leper  
 when he gets across the marsh."  
 The young men ran toward him.

3945

King Arthur went in that direction,  
 and the others followed along.  
 The leper kept his head down  
 and reached solid ground on the other side.  
 Iseut let herself slide to the ground.  
 The leper prepared to leave,  
 and as he turned away, he again asked  
 the fair Iseut for food for that night.

3950

Arthur said, "He deserves it."

Queen, give it to him."

3960

The fair Iseut said to the king,  
 "By the faith I owe you,  
 he is a complete scoundrel; he has enough.  
 He will not be able to eat what he has today.  
 I felt his belt under his cloak!  
 King, his pouch is hardly empty!"

3965

In his bag I felt  
 loaves of bread, and half-loaves  
 and quarter-loaves and pieces.

He has food and is well clothed.  
 If he can sell your leggings,  
 he can have five pennies sterling.  
 And with my husband's hood,

3970

he can buy a good bed and become a shepherd,  
 or buy a donkey to carry people across the marsh.

3975

He is no good; I know it.

He had a good harvest today,  
 for he found people who are to his liking.

But from me he will get nothing  
 worth even a farthing."

3980

The two kings laughed at that.

They brought her horse  
 and helped her into the saddle. Then they rode off.  
 Those who were armed began to joust.

- 3985 Tristran s'en vet du parlement,  
Vient a son mestre, qui l'atent.  
Deus chevaus riches de Castele  
Ot amené, o frain, o sele,  
Et deus lances et deus escuz.
- 3990 Molt les out bien desconneüz.  
Des chevaliers que vos diroie?  
Une guinple blanche de soie  
Out Gouvernal sor son chief mise:  
N'en pert que l'uel en nule guise.
- 3995 Arire s'en torne le pas,  
Molt par out bel cheval et cras.  
Tristran rot le Bel Joeor:  
Ne puet on pas trover mellor.  
Coste, silie, destrier et targe
- 4000 Out couvert d'une noire sarge,  
Son vis out covert d'un noir voil,  
Tot ot covert et chief et poil.  
A sa lance ot l'enseigne mise  
Que la bele li ot tramise.
- 4005 Chascun monte sor son destrier,  
Chascun out çaint le brant d'acier.  
Einsi armé, sor lor chevaus,  
Par un vert pré, entre deus vaus,  
Sordent sus en la Blanche Lande.
- 4010 Gauvains, li niés Artus, demande  
Gerflet, "Vez en la deus venir,  
Qui molt viennent de grant aîr.  
Nes connois pas: ses tu qu'il sont?"  
    "Ges connois bien," Girflet respont;
- 4015 "Noir cheval a et noire enseigne:  
Ce est li Noirs de la Montaigne.  
L'autre connois as armes vaires,  
Qar en cest païs n'en a gaires.  
Il sont faé, gel sai sanz dote."
- 4020 Icil vindrent fors de la rote,  
Les escus pres, lances levees,  
Les enseignes as fers fermees.  
Tant bel portent lor garnement  
Conme s'il fusent né dedenz.
- 4025 Des deus parolent assez plus  
Li rois Marc et li rois Artus  
Qu'il ne font de lor deus compaignes,  
Qui sont laïs es larges plaignes.  
Es rens perent li dui sovent,
- 4030 Esgardé sont de mainte gent.  
Parmié l'angarde ensenble poignent,  
Mais ne trovent a qui il joignent.
- 29c
- 29d

- Tristran left the crowd  
and came to his master, who was waiting for him.  
He had brought two fine Castilian horses  
with saddle and bridle,  
and two lances and two shields;  
and he had disguised them well. 3985
- And what can I say about the knights?  
Governal had covered his head  
with a hood of white silk,  
so that only his eyes were visible.  
He rode along slowly; 3990  
he had a fine, strong horse.
- Tristran had Bel Joeor,  
the best horse there was.  
He had covered his tunic, saddle, horse, and shield  
with black wool. 4000
- His face was covered by a black mask,  
and his head and hair were covered, too.  
He had attached to his lance  
the banner that his lady had given to him.  
Each mounted his horse 4005  
and girded on his steel sword.  
Thus armed and mounted,  
they passed through a green meadow between two valleys  
and arrived at the White Heath.
- Gauvain, the nephew of Arthur, asked Girflet, 4010  
"See those two approaching,  
riding toward us at full speed.  
I do not recognize them; do you know who they are?"  
"I know them well," responded Girflet.
- "The one with the black horse and black pennon  
is the Black Knight of the Mountain. 4015  
I recognize the other by his mottled arms,  
for there are few like them in this country.  
They are bewitched; I am sure of it."
- The two rode out of the crowd,  
shields ready, lances raised,  
banners fastened to the metal. 4020  
They wore their equipment as easily  
as if they had been born in it.
- King Mark and King Arthur  
spoke far more of these two  
than of their own companies  
down on the wide plain. 4025
- The two knights appeared often in the ranks,  
and many people were watching them.  
They rode together through the front lines,  
but found no one to joust with them. 4030

- La roïne bien les connut:  
 A une part du renc s'estut,  
 4035 Ele et Brengain. Et Andrez vint  
 Sor son destrier, ses armes tint;  
 Lance levee, l'escu pris,  
 A Tristran saut en mié le vis.  
 Nu connoisoit de nule rien,  
 4040 Et Tristran le connoisoit bien.  
 Fiert l'en l'escu, en mié la voie  
 L'abat et le bras li peçoie.  
 Devant les piez a la roïne  
 Cil jut sanz lever sus l'eschine.  
 4045 Governal vit le forestier  
 Venir des tres, sor un destrier,  
 Qui voul Tristran livrer a mort  
 En sa forest, ou dormoit fort.  
 Grant aleüre a lui s'adrece,  
 4050 Ja ert de mort en grant destrece.  
 Le fer trenchant li mist el cors,  
 O l'acier bote le cuir fors.  
 Cil chaï mort, si c'onques prestre  
 N'i vint a tens ne n'i pot estre.  
 4055 Yseut, qui ert et franche et simple,  
 S'en rist doucement soz sa gingle.  
 Gerflet et Cinglor et Ivain,  
 Tolas et Coris et Gauvain  
 Virent laidier lor compaignons.  
 4060 "Seignors," fait Gauvains, "que ferons?  
 Li forestier gist la baé.  
 Saciez que cil dui sont faé.  
 Ne tant ne quant nes connoisons:  
 Or nos tienent il por bricons.  
 4065 Brochons a eus, alons les prendre."  
 "Quis nos porra," fait li rois, "rendre  
 Molt nos avra servi a gré."  
 Tristran se trait aval au gé  
 Et Governal, outre passerent.  
 4070 Li autre sirre nes oserent,  
 En pais remestrent, tuit estoit;  
 Bien penserent fantosme soit.  
 As herberges vuelent torner,  
 Qar laisié ont le bohorder.  
 4075 Artus la roïne destroie.  
 Molt li senbla brive la voie  
 ....  
 Qui la voie aloignast sor destre.  
 Decendu sont a lor herberges.\*  
 4080 En la lande ot assez herberges;

- The queen recognized them.  
 She and Brangain stood  
 off to one side. And Andret rode up 4035  
 on his horse; he was armed,  
 with his lance raised and his shield in hand.  
 He charged headlong at Tristran.  
 He did not recognize Tristran,  
 but Tristran knew who he was. 4040  
 He struck Andret on the shield and knocked him  
 off his horse onto the road, breaking his arm.  
 At the queen's feet  
 he lay on his back and did not get up.  
 Governal saw, 4045  
 riding forth from the tents,  
 the forester who had tried to have Tristran killed  
 while he was sleeping in the woods.  
 Governal attacked him without hesitation;  
 the man was in mortal danger! 4050  
 Governal thrust his sharp blade into his body,  
 and the shaft emerged from his back.\*  
 He fell dead so quickly that a priest  
 could not have been summoned or arrive in time.  
 Iseut, who was noble and candid, 4055  
 smiled with satisfaction beneath her wimple.  
 Girflet, Cinglor, Yvain,\*  
 Taulas, Coris, and Gauvain  
 saw their companions humbled.  
 "Lords," said Gauvain, "what can we do? 4060  
 The forester is lying here dead.  
 Those two knights obviously have magical powers.  
 We have no idea who they are,  
 but they are making fools of us.  
 Let us attack and capture them." 4065  
 The king added, "Whoever can deliver them to us  
 will have served us well indeed!"  
 Tristran and Governal rode down  
 to the ford and crossed it.  
 The others did not dare follow them, 4070  
 but stayed where they were, afraid.  
 They thought this was sorcery.  
 They wanted to return to their lodgings,  
 for they had had their fill of jousting.  
 Arthur rode at Iseut's right, 4075  
 and the journey seemed very short to him.  
 .....  
 The road branched off to the right.  
 They dismounted at their lodgings.  
 Many tents stood on the heath; 4080

- Molt en costerent li cordel.  
 En leu de jonc et de rosel,  
 Glagié avoient tuit lor tentes.  
 Par chemins vienent et par sentes;
- 4085 La Blanche Lande fu vestue,  
 Maint chevalier i out sa drue.  
 Cil qui la fu enz en la pree  
 De maint grant cerf ot la menee.  
 La nuit sejornent a la lande.
- 4090 Chascun rois sist a sa demande.  
 Qui out devices n'est pas lenz:  
 Li una a l'autre fait presenz.  
 Ly rois Artus, aprés mengier,  
 Au tref roi Marc vait cointoier,
- 4095 Sa privee maisnie maine.  
 La ot petit de dras de laine,  
 Tuit li plusor furent de soie.  
 Des vesteüres que diroie?  
 De laine i out, ce fu en graine,
- 4100 Escarlate cel drap de laine;  
 Molt i ot gent de riche ator,  
 Nus ne vit deus plus riches corz:  
 Mestier nen est dont la nen ait.  
 Es pavellons ont joie fait.
- 4105 La nuit devisent lor afaire,  
 Comment la franche debonere  
 Se doit deraisnier de l'outrage,  
 Voiant les rois et lor barnage.  
 Couchier s'en vait li rois Artus
- 4110 O ses barons et o ses druz.  
 Maint calemel, mainte troïne,  
 Qui fu la nuit en la gaudine  
 Oïst an pavellon soner.  
 Devant le jor prist a toner:
- 4115 A fermeté, fu de chalor.  
 Les gaïtes ont corné le jor;  
 Par tot commencent a lever,  
 Tuit sont levé sanz demorer.  
 Li soleuz fu chauz sor la prime,
- 4120 Choiete fu et nielle et frime.  
 Devant les tentes as deus rois  
 Sont asenblé Corneualois:  
 N'out chevalier en tot le reigne  
 Qui n'ait o soi a cort sa feme.
- 4125 Un drap de soie a paile bis  
 Devant le tref au roi fu mis.  
 Ovrez fu en bestes, menuz.  
 Sor l'erbe vert fu estenduz.

30b

even the tent-cords were very expensive,  
and the tent floors were strewn with flowers  
instead of reds and rushes.

By the roads and paths the people came;  
the Blanche Lande was crowded,  
and many of the knights had brought their ladies.

4085

Those who were on the meadow  
heard the sounds of stag hunts.

They spent the night on the heath.

Each of the kings held an audience,  
and all those who were wealthy  
willingly exchanged gifts.

4090

After eating, King Arthur

went to visit King Mark in his tent,  
and he took his closest associates with him.

4095

Very few of them were wearing woolen clothes;  
most were dressed in silk.

What can I say about their clothing?

What wool there was had been dyed  
a rich scarlet color.

4100

There were many finely dressed people there.

Never had anyone seen two richer courts:  
they could have satisfied any need.

There was much celebration in the pavilions,  
and that night everyone spoke about the matter at hand:  
how the noble lady  
was about to exonerate herself  
before the kings and all their barons.

4105

King Arthur, his barons, and his friends  
retired for the night.

4110

Anyone in the woods that night  
could have heard the music of pipes and trumpets  
coming from the pavilions.

Before dawn, it began to thunder,  
no doubt because of the heat.

4115

The sentinels' horns announced the new day;  
all around, people began to wake up,  
and everyone rose without delay.

The sun shone hot soon after daybreak.\*

The fog and the dew had disappeared.

4120

The Cornishmen gathered  
before the two kings' tents;  
every knight of the kingdom  
had his lady with him at this court.

A silken cloth, lined with dark brocaded material  
was placed in front of the king's tent;  
it was embroidered delicately with figures of animals.  
It was spread out on the green grass.

4125

- Li dras fut achaté en Niques.  
 4130 En Cornoualle n'ot reliques  
     En tresor ne en filatieres,  
     En aumaires n'en autres bieres,  
     En fiertres n'en escrinz n'en chases,         30c  
     En croiz d'or ne d'argent n'en mases,  
 4135 Sor le paile les orent mises,  
     Arengies, par ordre asises.  
     Li roi se traient une part,  
     Faire i volent loial esgart.  
     Li roi Artus parla premier,  
 4140 Qui de parler fu prinsautier:  
     “Rois Marc,” fait il, “qui te conselle  
     Tel outrage si fait merveille:  
     Certes,” fait il, “sil se desloie.  
     Tu es legier a metre en voie,  
 4145 Ne dois croire parole fause.  
     Trop te fesoit amere sause  
     Qui parlement te fist joster.  
     Molt li devroit du cors coster  
     Et ennuier, qui voloit faire.  
 4150 La franche Yseut, la debonere,  
     Ne veut respit ne terme avoir.  
     Cil püent bien de fi savoir,  
     Qui vendront sa deresne prendre,  
     Que ges ferai encore pendre,  
 4155 Qui la reteront de folie  
     Pus sa deresne, par envie:  
     Digne seroient d'avoir mort.  
     Or oiez, roi: qui ara tort,  
     La roïne vendra avant,  
 4160 Si qel veront petit et grant,  
     Et si jurra o sa main destre,  
     Sor les corsainz, au roi celestre  
     Qu'el onques n'ot amor commune  
     A ton nevo, ne deus ne une,  
 4165 Que l'en tornast a vilanie,  
     N'amor ne prist par puterie.  
     Dan Marc, trop a ice duré:  
     Qant ele avra eisi juré.         30d  
     Di tes barons qu'il aient pes.”  
 4170 “Ha, sire Artus, q'en pus je mes?  
     Tu me blasmes, et si as droit,  
     Quar fous est qui envieus croit.  
     Ges ai creüz outre mon gré.  
     Se la deraisne est en cel pré,  
 4175 Ja n'i avra mais si hardiz,  
     Se il après les escondiz

- The cloth had been bought in Nicaea.  
 All the relics in Cornwall—4130  
 whether treasures or phylacteries,  
 in chests or other trunks,  
 in reliquaries or jewel-cases or shrines,  
 in gold or silver crosses or maces—  
 were set out on the cloth  
 and arranged in order. 4135
- The kings withdrew to one side,  
 for they wanted to render a proper judgment.  
 King Arthur spoke first,  
 for he was always quick to speak: 4140  
 "King Mark," he said, "whoever recommends  
 this outrage to you is committing a terrible offense;  
 he is certainly disloyal!  
 You are easily manipulated.  
 You should not believe slander! 4145
- Whoever caused you to convene this gathering  
 made you swallow a bitter pill;  
 whoever tried to arrange this  
 should pay for it and suffer.
- The noble and good Iseut 4150  
 does not want any delay or postponement.  
 Those who have come to witness her defense  
 should know beyond a doubt  
 that I will have anyone hanged  
 who jealously accuses her of infidelity 4155  
 once her trial is finished;  
 such a person would deserve to die.  
 Now listen, King: whoever is at fault,  
 the queen will come forward,  
 so that all will see her, great and small, 4160  
 and she will raise her right hand and swear  
 on relics, to God in heaven,  
 that never was there any love between her  
 and your nephew—not even once—  
 that could bring dishonor upon her, 4165  
 and that she never had a disgraceful affair.  
 Lord Mark, this has gone on too long;  
 when she has sworn her oath,  
 command your barons to leave her in peace."
- "Oh, Lord Arthur, what can I do? 4170  
 You are right to reproach me,  
 for only fools listen to jealous people.  
 I believed them in spite of myself.  
 If she is exonerated in this meadow,  
 anyone so foolish 4175  
 as to question her honor

- En disoit rien se anor non,  
 Qui n'en eüst mal gerredon.  
 Ce saciez vos, Artus, frans rois,  
 C'a esté fait, c'est sor mon pois.  
 4180 Or se gardent d'ui en avant!"  
 Li conseil departent atant.
- Tuit s'asistrent par mié les rens,  
 Fors les deus rois. C'est a grant sens:  
 4185 Yseut fu entre eus deus as mains.  
 Pres des reliques fu Gauvains;  
 La mesnie Artus, la proisie,  
 Entor le paile est arengie.
- Artus prist la parole en main,  
 4190 Qui fu d'Iseut le plus prochain:  
 "Entendez moi, Yseut le bele,  
 Oiez de qui on vos apele:  
 Que Tristran n'ot vers vos amor  
 De putee ne de folor,  
 4195 Fors cele que devoit porter  
 Envers son oncle et vers sa per."
- "Seignors," fait el, "por Deu merci,  
 Saintes reliques voi ici.  
 Or escoutez que je ci jure,  
 4200 De quoi le roi ci aseüre:  
 Si m'ait Dex et Saint Ylaire,  
 Ces reliques, cest saintuaire,  
 Totes celes qui ci ne sont  
 Et tuit icil de par le mont,  
 4205 Qu'entre mes cuises n'entra home,  
 Fors le ladre qui fist soi some,  
 Qui me porta outre les guez,  
 Et li rois Marc mes esposez.  
 Ces deus ost de mon soirement,  
 4210 Ge n'en ost plus de tote gent.  
 De deus ne me pus escondire:  
 Du ladre, du roi Marc mon sire.  
 Li ladres fu entre mes janbes
- .....
- 4215 Qui voudra que je plus en face,  
 Tote en sui preste en ceste place."
- Tuit cil qui l'ont oï jurer  
 Ne püent pas plus endurer.  
 "Dex!" fait chascuns, "si fiere en jure:  
 4220 Tant en a fait après droiture!  
 Plus i a mis que ne disoient  
 Ne que li fel ne requeroient:  
 Ne li covient plus escondit  
 Qu'avez oï, grant et petit,

- after the trial  
 will be punished for it.
- Arthur, noble king, I assure you  
 that this was done against my will;  
 and from now on, let them beware." 4180
- Their conversation ended there.
- Everyone sat down in rows,  
 except the two kings—and for good reason:  
 Iseut stood between the two, who held her by the hand. 4185
- Gauvain was beside the relics,  
 and the members of Arthur's illustrious household  
 surrounded the cloth.
- hur, who was closest to Iseut,  
 spoke first: 4190
- "Listen to me, fair Iseut.  
 This is what you are accused of:  
 swear that Tristran had no love for you  
 that was debauched or carnal,  
 but only the kind that one should have  
 for an uncle and his wife." 4195
- "Lords," she said, "praise be to God;  
 I see many holy relics here.  
 Now hear my oath—  
 and may the king be reassured by it— 4200  
 that, in the name of God and St. Hilaire,  
 and on these relics and this reliquary  
 and all the relics that are not here  
 and all those throughout the world,  
 no man has ever been between my thighs,  
 except the leper who made himself a beast of burden 4205  
 and carried me over the ford  
 and my husband King Mark.  
 I exclude these two from my oath,  
 but I except no one else. 4210
- I cannot swear it about those two:  
 the leper and my lord, King Mark.  
 The leper was between my legs
- .....
- If anyone requires further proof from me,  
 I am ready to provide it here and now." 4215
- All who heard her swear the oath  
 could bear it no more  
 and cried, "God! She swore such a confident oath.  
 She has conducted herself correctly,  
 even adding more to the oath than they told her to,  
 and more than the traitors demanded. 4220
- She has no need for any denial  
 except the one heard by everyone, great and small,

- 4225 Fors du roi et de son nevo.  
 Ele a juré et mis en vo  
 Qu'entre ses cuises nus n'entra  
 Que li meseaus qui la porta  
 Ier, endroit tierce, outre les guez,  
 4230 Et li rois Marc, ses espousez.  
 Mal ait jamais l'en mesquerra!"  
 Li rois Artus en piez leva,  
 Li roi Marc a mis a raison,  
 Que tuit l'oïrent li baron:  
 4235 "Rois, la deraisne avon veüe  
 Et bien oïe et entendue.  
 Or esgarden li troi felon,  
 Donoalent et Guenelon,  
 Et Goudoïne li mauvés,  
 4240 Que il ne parlent sol jamés.  
 Ja ne seront en cele terre  
 Que m'en tenist ne pais ne gerre,  
 Des que j'orroie la novele  
 De la roïne Yseut le bele,  
 4245 Que n'i allons a esperon  
 Lui deraisnir par grant raison."  
 "Sire," fait el, "vostre merci!"  
 Molt sont de cort li troi hâï.  
 Les corz departent, si s'en vont.  
 4250 Yseut la bele o le chief blont  
 Mercie molt le roi Artur.  
 "Dame," fait il, "je vos asur:  
 Ne trouverez mais qui vos die,  
 Tant con j'aie santé ne vie,  
 4255 Nis une rien se amor non.  
 Mal le penserent li felon.  
 Ge prié le roi vostre seignor,  
 Et felement, molt par amor,  
 Que mais felon de vos ne croie."  
 4260 Dist li roi Marc: "Se jel faisoie  
 D'or en avant, si me blasmez."  
 Li uns de l'autre s'est sevrez,  
 Chascun s'en vient a son roiaume:  
 Li rois Artus vient a Durelme,  
 4265 Rois Marc remest en Cornoualle.  
 Tristran sejourne, poi travalle.  
 Li rois a Cornoualle en pes,  
 Tuit le criement et luin et pres.  
 En ses deduiz Yseut en meine,  
 De lié amer forment se paine.  
 Mais, qui q'ait pais, li troi felon  
 Sont en esgart de traïson.

31b

- concerning the king and his nephew. 4225  
 She swore and vowed  
 that no one has ever been between her legs  
 except the leper who carried her  
 across the ford yesterday at the hour of tierce,  
 and her husband King Mark. 4230  
 May anyone be cursed who ever again doubts her!"
- King Arthur rose  
 and spoke to King Mark  
 in the hearing of all the barons:  
 "King, we have witnessed her defense 4235  
 and listened to it and heard it well.  
 Now let the three traitors  
 Denoalen, Ganelon,  
 and the evil Godoine  
 take care never to speak of this again. 4240  
 As long as they are in this country,  
 whether I am at peace or war,  
 if ever I receive a message  
 from the fair Queen Iseut,  
 we will come immediately 4245  
 to defend her honor."
- She said, "Thank you, sir."  
 The three villains were now detested at court.  
 The two courts separated, and the people left.  
 The beautiful, blonde Iseut 4250  
 repeatedly thanked King Arthur.
- "Lady," he said, "I guarantee you  
 that you will never find anyone,  
 as long as I am alive and well,  
 who will ever say a hostile word to you. 4255  
 The traitors' thoughts were evil.  
 I ask the king, your husband,  
 with respect and affection,  
 never to believe slander about you."
- King Mark replied, "If I ever do it again, 4260  
 I will be blameworthy."  
 They separated,  
 and each one returned to his kingdom;  
 King Arthur went to Durham,  
 King Mark remained in Cornwall. 4265  
 Tristran stayed where he was, his mind at ease.
- The king now had peace in Cornwall,  
 and he was feared by all, from far and near.  
 He included Iseut in his activities  
 and took care to show his love for her. 4270  
 But in spite of this harmony, the three villains  
 were eager for more treachery.

- |      |   |     |
|------|---|-----|
|      | A eus fu venue une espie,<br>Qui va querant changier sa vie.  | 31c |
| 4275 | "Seignors," fait il, "or m'entendez.<br>Se je vos ment, si me pendez.<br>Li rois vos sout l'autrier mal gré<br>Et vos en acuelli en hé,<br>Por le deraisne sa mollier.                |     |
| 4280 | Pendre m'otroi ou essillier,<br>Se ne vos mostre apertement<br>Tristran, la ou son aise atent<br>De parler o sa chiere drue.<br>Il est repost, si sai sa mue.                         |     |
| 4285 | Qant li rois vait a ses deduis—*<br>Tristran set molt de Malpertuis!—*<br>En la chanbre vet congé prendre.<br>De moi faciez en un feu cendre,<br>Se vos alez a la fenestre            |     |
| 4290 | De la chanbre, derier a destre,<br>Se n'i veez Tristran venir,<br>S'espee çainte, un arc tenir,<br>Deus seetes en l'autre main.<br>Enuit verrez venir, par main."                     |     |
| 4295 | "Comment le sez?" "Je l'ai veü."<br>"Tristran?" "Je, voire, et conneü."<br>"Qant i fu il?" "Hui main l'i vi."<br>"Et qui o lui?" "Cil son ami."<br>"Ami? Et qui?" "Dan Governal."     |     |
| 4300 | "Ou se sont mis?" "En haut ostal<br>Se deduient." "C'est chiés Dinas?"<br>"Et je que sai?" "Il n'i sont pas<br>Sanz son seü!" "Asez puet estre."<br>"Ou verron nos?" "Par la fenestre |     |
| 4305 | De la chanbre; ce est tot voir.<br>Se gel vos mostre, grant avoir<br>En doi avoir, quant l'en ratent."*<br>"Nomez l'avoir." "Un marc d'argent."<br>"Et plus assez que la pramesse,    |     |
| 4310 | Si nos ait iglise et messe.<br>Se tu mostres, n'i puez fallir<br>Ne te façon amanantir."<br>"Or m'entendez," fait li cuvert,<br>"A un petit pertus overt*                             | 31d |
| 4315 | Endroit la chanbre la roïne.<br>Par dede avant vet la cortine.<br>Triés la chanbrë est grant la doiz<br>Et bien espesse li jagloiz,<br>L'un de vos trois i aut matin;                 |     |
| 4320 | Par la fraite du nuef jardin  |     |

- A spy came to them,  
seeking to improve his lot.  
"Lords," he said, "listen to me,  
and if I lie to you, you can have me hanged." 4275  
The king was angry with you the other day  
and hated you  
because of his wife's trial.  
You can hang me or otherwise punish me  
if I cannot clearly show you 4280  
Tristran as he waits  
to speak to his dear mistress!  
He is hidden, but I know where.  
When the king's activities take him elsewhere, 4285  
Tristran is as sly as a fox:  
he goes into the royal chamber to say farewell.  
You can have me burned to death  
if you go to the window of the room,  
in the back, on the right side, 4290  
and do not see Tristran come in,  
wearing his sword, holding a bow,  
with two arrows in the other hand.  
You can see him early tomorrow morning."  
"How do you know this?" "I have seen him." 4295  
"Tristran?" "Yes, and I recognized him clearly."  
"When was that?" "I saw him this morning."  
"And who was with him?" "His friend."  
"What friend? Who?" "Lord Gouvernal."  
"Where are they staying?" "They are enjoying 4300  
fine lodgings." "With Dinas?"  
"How do I know?" "They are not there  
without his knowledge!" "That may well be."  
"Where will we see him?" "Through the window  
of the room, and I am telling you the truth. 4305  
If I show him to you, I should have  
a generous reward, and I expect to."  
"Name your price." "One silver mark."  
"And much more than is promised,  
so help us Church and Mass! 4310  
If you show him to us, then without fail  
we will make you wealthy."  
"Now listen to me," said the scoundrel.  
"There is a small opening  
in the wall of the queen's chamber; 4315  
it is covered by a curtain.  
Outside the room there is a wide stream,  
and rushes grow thickly there.  
One of you should go there in the morning.  
Take the path through the new garden, 4320

- Voist belement tresque au pertus.  
 Fors la fenestre n'i aut nus.  
 Faitez une longue brochete,  
 A un coutel, bien agucete;  
 4325 Poigniez le drap de la cortine  
 O la broche poignant d'espine.  
 La cortine souavet sache  
 Au pertuset (c'on ne l'estache),  
 Que tu voies la dedenz cler,  
 4330 Quant il venra a lui parler.  
 S'eissi t'en prenz sol trois jorz garde,  
 Atant otroi que l'en m'en arde  
 Se ne veez ce que je di."  
 Fait chascun d'eus, "Je vos afi  
 4335 A tenir nostre convenant."  
 L'espie font aler avant.  
 Lors devisent li queus d'eus trois  
 Ira premier voier l'orlois  
 Que Tristran a la chanbre maine  
 4340 O celié qui seue est demeine.  
 Otroié ont que Goudoïne  
 Ira au premerain termine.  
 Departent soi, chascun s'en vet,  
 Demain savront con Tristran sert.  
 4345 Dex! La franche ne se gardoit  
 Des felons ne de lor tripot.  
 Par Perinis, un suen prochain,  
 Avoit mandé que l'endemain  
 Tristran venist a lié matin:  
 4350 Li rois iroit a Saint Lubin.  
     Oez, seignors, quel aventure!  
     L'endemain fu la nuit oscure.  
     Tristran se fu mis a la voie  
     Par l'espesse d'un' espinoie.  
 4355 A l'issue d'une gaudine  
     Garda, vit venir Gondoïne:  
     Et s'en venoit de son recet.  
     Tristran li a fet un aget,  
     Repost se fu a l'espinoi.  
 4360 "Ha, Dex!" fait il, "regarde moi,  
     Que cil qui vient ne m'aperçoive  
     Tant que devant moi le reçoive!"  
     En sus l'atent, s'espee tient.  
     Goudoïne autre voie tient.  
 4365 Tristran remest, a qui molt poise.  
     Ist du buison, cele part toise,  
     Mais por noient; quar cil s'esloigne,  
     Qui en fel leu a mis sa poine.

32a

- and go directly to the opening;  
 be sure no one is passing by the window.  
 Cut a long stick  
 with a knife, and sharpen it.
- Catch the curtain  
 with the sharp point of the stick  
 and pull it back carefully  
 from the opening—it is always left unfastened—  
 so that you will be able to see clearly  
 when he come to talk with her.
- If you keep watch that way for three days,  
 I agree to be burned to death  
 if you do not see what I have described."
- Each of them said, "I promise you  
 that we will keep our agreement."
- Then they sent the spy on his way.  
 Then they discussed which one of the three  
 would go first to witness Tristran's rendezvous  
 in the chamber  
 with the lady who loved him.
- They agreed that Godoine  
 would go first.  
 Then they separated and went their own ways.  
 They would soon know what Tristran was up to!  
 God! The noble lady was not on her guard  
 against the villains and their scheme.  
 By Perinis, one of her servants,  
 she had sent word that on the following day  
 Tristran was to come to her early;  
 the king was going to St. Lubin.
- Lords, now listen to what happened!  
 The next night was very dark.  
 Tristran had set out  
 through the middle of a thorny thicket.  
 As he emerged from the woods,  
 he looked and saw Godoine  
 coming out into the open.  
 Tristran lay in wait for him,  
 hiding in the thicket.  
 He said, "Oh, God, look after me,  
 that the man coming this way may not see me  
 until he is upon me."
- He waited with his sword drawn.  
 But Godoine turned off on another path;  
 Tristran was left there, distressed and angry.  
 He came out of the brush and ran in that direction,  
 but to no avail, for the man  
 who had evil intentions was already far away.

4325

4330

4335

4340

4345

4350

4355

4360

4365

- |      |  |
|------|--|
|      | Tristran garda au luien, si vit<br>(Ne demora que un petit)  |
| 4370 | Denoalan venir anblant,<br>O deus levriers, merveilles grant.<br>Afustez est a un pomier.  |
| 4375 | Denoalent vint le sentier<br>Sor un petit palefroi noir.<br>Ses chiens out envoié mover<br>En une espoise un fier sengler.<br>Ainz qu'il le puisen desangler,                |
| 4380 | Avra lor mestre tel colee<br>Que ja par mire n'ert sanee.  |
|      | 32b<br>Tristran li preuz fu desfublez.   |
|      | Denoalen est tost alez;<br>Ainz n'en sout mot, quant Tristran saut.<br>Fuir s'en veut: mais il i faut:   |
| 4385 | Tristran li fu devant trop pres.<br>Morir le fist. Q'en pout il mes?<br>Sa mort queroit: cil s'en garda,<br>Que le chief du bu li sevra.<br>Ne li lut dire, "Tu me blesces." |
| 4390 | O l'espee trencha les treces,<br>En sa chauce les a boutees,<br>Qant les avra Yseut mostrees,<br>Qu'ele l'en croie qu'il l'a mort.<br>D'iluec s'en part Tristran a fort.     |
| 4395 | "Ha, las!" fait il, "que est devenuz<br>Goudouïnë? Or s'est toluz,<br>Que vi venir orainz si tost.<br>Est il passez? Ala tanstost?<br>S'il m'atendist, savoir peüst          |
| 4400 | Ja mellor gerredon n'eüst<br>Que Donalan, le fel, enporte,<br>Qui j'ai laisié la teste morte."   |
|      | Tristran laisse le cors gesant<br>Enmié la lande, envers, sanglent.  |
| 4405 | Tert s'espee, si l'a remise<br>En son fuerre, sa chape a prise,<br>Le chaperon el chief sei met,<br>Sor le cors un grant fust atret,<br>A la chanbre sa drue vint.           |
| 4410 | Mais or oiez con li avint.<br>Goudoïne fu acoruz<br>Et fu ainz que Tristran venuz.<br>La cortine ot dedenz percie;<br>Vit la chanbre, qui fu jonchie,                        |
| 4415 | Tot vit quant que dedenz avoit,<br>Home fors Perinis ne voit.  |

Tristran looked off into the distance and  
almost immediately saw

4370

Denoalen coming toward him  
with two enormous hounds.

He hid behind an appletree.

Denoalen came down the path  
on a small black horse.

4375

He had sent his dogs to flush out  
a wild boar in a thicket.

But before they could chase it out,  
their master would receive a blow  
from which no physician could cure him!

4380

The valiant Tristran had removed his cloak.

Denoalen came along soon;  
he had no warning before Tristran jumped out.

Denoalen wanted to flee, but could not:

Tristran was right in front of him  
and killed him. What else could he have done?

The man sought his death, and he protected himself  
by cutting off his enemy's head.

He did not even have time to say, "I am wounded!"

With his sword, Tristran cut off the man's hair  
and put it in his waistband.\*

When he showed it to Iseut,  
she would believe that he had killed him.  
Tristran left the place without delay.

"Alas," he said, "what became  
of Godoine? He just disappeared  
after I saw him coming this way so quickly.  
Where did he go? Is he gone?

If he had waited for me, he would have found  
that he would meet no better fate

4395

than the traitor Denoalen,  
whom I left there dead."

Tristran left the body lying  
on its back on the heath, bleeding.  
He wiped his sword and replaced it  
in his scabbard. He picked up his cloak  
and put his hood over his head.  
He covered the corpse with a large branch  
and left for his mistress's chamber.

4400

Now hear what happened to him!

4405

Godoine had hurried  
and had arrived before Tristran.  
He had pierced the curtain inside;  
he could see the room, which was strewn with rushes.  
He saw everything in the room,  
and Perinis was the only man he saw.

4410

4415

- Brengain i vint, la damoisele,  
 Ou out pignié Yseut la bele:  
 Le piegne avoit encor o soi.
- 4420 Le fel qui fu a la proi  
 Garda, si vit Tristran entrer,  
 Qui tint un arc d'aubor enter.  
 En sa main tint ses deus seetes,  
 En l'autre deus treces longuetes.
- 4425 Sa chape osta, pert ses genz cors.  
 Iseut, la bele o les crins sors,  
 Contre lui lieve, sil salut.  
 Par sa fenestre vit la nue  
 De la teste de Gondoïne.
- 4430 De grant savoir fu la roïne,  
 D'ire tresue sa persone.  
 Yseut Tristran en araisone.  
 "Se Dex me gart," fait il, "au suen,  
 Vez les treces Denoalen.
- 4435 Ge t'ai de lui pris la venjance:  
 Jamais par lui escu ne lance  
 N'iert achatez ne mis en pris."  
 "Sire," fait ele, "ge q'en puis?  
 Mes prié vos que cest arc tendez,
- 4440 Et verron com il est bendez."  
 Tristran s'esteut, si s'apensa.  
 Oiez! En son penser tensa;  
 Prent s'entente, si tendi l'arc.  
 Enquierit noveles du roi Marc:
- 4445 Yseut l'en dit ce qu'ele en sot.
- .....
- S'il en peüst vis eschaper,  
 Du roi marc et d'Iseut sa per  
 Referoit sordre mortel gerre.
- 4450 Cil, qui Dex doinst anor conquerre,  
 L'engardera de l'eschaper.
- Yseut n'out cure de gaber:  
 "Amis, une seete encorde,  
 Garde du fil qu'il ne retorde.
- 4455 Je voi tel chose dont moi poise.  
 Tristran, de l'arc nos pren ta toise."
- Tristran s'estut, si pensa pose,  
 Bien soit q'el voit aucune chose  
 Qui li desplaist. Garda en haut:
- 4460 Grant poor a, tremble et tresaut.  
 Contre le jor, par la cortine,  
 Vit la teste de Godoïne:  
 "Ha! Dex, vrai roi, tant riche trait  
 Ai d'arc et de seete fait:

- The maid Brangain came in.  
 She had just combed Iseut's hair,  
 and she still had the comb in her hand.
- The traitor, who was at the wall,  
 looked and saw Tristran enter,  
 holding a laburnum bow. 4420
- In one hand he held his two arrows;  
 in the other were two long braids of hair.  
 He removed his cloak, revealing his handsome body. 4425
- The beautiful, blonde Iseut  
 rose and came to greet him.  
 Then, through the window, she saw the shadow  
 of Godoine's head.
- The queen responded very wisely,  
 though she was sweating in anger. 4430
- Tristran spoke to Iseut:  
 "May God protect me," he said;  
 "here is Denoalen's hair.  
 I avenged you on him. 4435  
 He will no longer be buying  
 or using shields and lances!"
- "Sir," she said, "what is that to me?  
 But I ask you to stretch your bow  
 and let us see how it is strung." 4440
- Tristran drew it and began to think.  
 Listen well! He considered matters carefully,  
 made up his mind, and drew the bow.  
 He asked news of King Mark,  
 and Iseut told him what she could. 4445
- If Godoine could escape from there alive,  
 he would incite a deadly war  
 between King Mark and his wife Iseut.  
 But Tristran (may God grant him honor!)  
 would prevent him from escaping. 4450
- Iseut had no desire to make idle talk:  
 "Friend, put an arrow in your bow,  
 and be sure that the cord is not twisted.  
 I see something that disturbs me greatly. 4455  
 Tristran, stretch your bow as far as possible."
- Tristran stood thinking for a moment.  
 He knew that she had seen something  
 that displeased her. He looked up;  
 he was trembling with fear. 4460  
 Against the light, through the curtain,  
 he saw Godoine's head.  
 "Oh, God, true King, I have made  
 wondrous shots with bow and arrow;

- 4465 Consentez moi qu'a cest ne falle!  
Un des trois feus de Cornoualle  
Voi, a grant tort, par la defors.  
Dex, qui le tuen saintisme cors  
Por le pueple meïs a mort,
- 4470 Lai moi venjance avoir du tort  
Que cil felon muevent vers moi!"  
Lors se torna vers la paroi,  
Sovent ot entesé, si trait.  
La seete si tost s'en vait,
- 4475 Rien ne peüst de lui gandir.  
Par mié l'uel la li fait brandir,  
Trencha le teste et la cervele:  
Esmerillons ne arondele  
De la moitié si tost ne vole.
- 4480 Se ce fust une pome mole,  
N'issist la seete plus tost.  
Cil chiet, si se hurte a un post,  
Onques ne piez ne braz ne mut.  
Seulement dire ne li lut:
- 4485 "Bleciez sui! Dex! Confession\*  
....."

grant that this one not fail!  
 I see one of the three Cornish villains  
 hiding outside treacherously.  
 God, who put Your most holy body  
 to death for all people,  
 let me take vengeance for the evil  
 these traitors are directing at me."

4465

Then he turned toward the wall;  
 he stretched the bow vigorously and shot.  
 The arrow flew so swiftly  
 that nothing could have escaped it.

4470

It struck Godoine squarely in the eye,  
 piercing his head and brain.  
 Neither merlins nor swallows  
 could fly half as fast.

4475

Even if it had been a ripe apple,  
 the arrow would not have penetrated it any faster.  
 The man fell and hit a post  
 and did not move hand or foot again.  
 He did not even have the time to cry out,  
 "I am injured! God! Confession

4480

4485

\*\*



## REJECTED READINGS

43 nel a. 70 pas u. 75 ia m. 76 son *lacking* 78 v. diret 104 vee 138 adoul 156 q. o b.  
208 fol a. 230 c. se ie s. 231 que ce 238 s. s. eutol 239 t. sainte 243 dex *lacking* 263  
auoir mistra g. 318 fuires 329 de ceus d. 338 t. si en 346 b. doit e. 350 estoit 364 ia a  
toi ne 366 compainz 379 na core de 382 s. oncle c. 383 q. gotier 404 sor c. 407  
tristrain 413 fole et *lacking* 418 ie dis lui 419 non *lacking* 421 li cuuent 430 doige  
439 ne mentirez 468 nenterra m. 470 dame le f. 504 ne nes 555 onche 559–60  
*inverted* 603 ce consis 610 fus un 620 iamais ne r. 621 nos nos 624 nes p. 629  
meuergondeait 645 frociz 651 conviene q. 652 un deus e. 658 p. deu 687 saluer 688  
seiorner 697 parleret 698 a la roine parleroit al aiorner se il pooit (*in two lines*) 716 le  
roi de 732 s. quienn i. 756 qui es 763 gegoit 819 ne se vout vers 825 poqoi 835 d. que  
t. 838 seras 846 q. ce seroit 850 si tos t. 857–8 *inverted* 867 e. quiet 878 tibois 888  
p. ice 892 nel a. 894 laisie *with bar over e* 916 c. et s. 922 aaise 956 saut sus l. 957 s.  
en ligliglise 974 s. la ou estoit 981 m. qui c. 997 nencontrez v. 1003 quoi est 1022  
ocient 1030 lui *lacking* 1035 q. toi 1039 m. sait g. 1074 m. sesfroierent 1083 dmenee  
1106 en v. 1116 lohierreigne 1128 quant ce fu ne sont 1138 le fruit 1164 crient 1167  
a. nen s. 1171 en ceste prise 1173–4 *inverted* 1175–6 *inverted* 1176 qui v. 1183 geten  
saura 1187 q. ensauroit 1190 iuiains r. 1198 au drap a. 1209 hues 1212 uerrez 1227  
genz 1257 ost r. 1283 enpenes 1287 d. sont 1311 li nan e. 1318 ma soi 1325 de s.  
1326 p. soi 1354 sot letertrier 1361 testourne 1386 bele de 1392 souz penitance 1398  
delugement 1403 t. avoit li 1424 lez les 1438 a a n. 1443 e. beaus I. 1444 husganz  
1486 chien crient 1504 et apris 1505 li p. 1505–6 *inverted* 1511 li blans 1524 traallier  
1530 tenti 1535 s. en esfroi 1538 esmaie 1543 laquerre la que crole 1544 con de ioes  
1552 et chien 1553 a h. hai 1574 sa bste pnt 1576 uns s. 1584 le gaut 1598 q. ie p.  
1626 isnele ne r. 1629 ne dais 1642 li bois est 1643 l. pendre 1650 quar lun 1655 quil  
r. 1693 soz un arbre 1698 de lauenture 1726 fu puis chacie 1728 et pus u gaut 1748  
esfree 1767 maistierres est de la 1785 ne se s. 1807 yseut *lacking* 1812 des con le  
1814 le rois gentiz 1827 .i. rain 1834 *followed by line* en ot mene le bon destrier  
1850 nest pa m. 1862 a. il a 1877 home 1879–80 *inverted* 1883 si mesconte 1892  
poie e. 1935 sens sanz m. 1952 de d. ces g. 1974 gasconigne 2032 uns granz devoirre  
ai 2034 li rois q., f. blanche 2075 le g. 2117 d. voist 2138 loucuendris 2142 en prima  
q. 2170 onclers 2177 autres terres 2178 querres 2191 acorder 2192 quest esposer  
2220 p. il p. 2242 le soufrist 2249 toine f. 2253 g. soufrance 2276 a la ioie 2297 c.  
dura u. 2310 en orlenois 2321 se saint 2322 se p. 2324 ia jor 2332 ce que li 2391 t.  
pus l. 2405 serez vos s. 2408 de pise 2411 mis beau *lacking* 2413 en moi f. 2419 arni  
la tende 2423 b. que ie 2433 t. li tent 2449 qanuit 2456 merveille 2458 t. enz en 2468  
senestrier 2484 que il pooit 2492 tresqua, et eus les 2496 pas pole 2507 ro menz  
2508 s. ent 2512 t. qui en 2528 lit furet li escrit 2536 facent 2566 q. los entra en 2573  
qi onques 2577 adonc me 2582 uos u. 2583 p. gnt p. 2599 a p. 2604 m. fort e. 2608  
se buen uos 2622 quest p. 2632 r. cornoz 2637 b. a la 2642 le bief m. 2661  
reprena 2664 li rois 2683 poi lai souferte 2684 fors t. 2700 mert a. 2708 et .i. s.  
2736 de *lacking* 2737 blans chailil 2749 oi avez p. 2755 t. q. tel s. 2759 quies 2772

b. et soz s. 2783 porroit m. 2797 que ie r. 2799 f. tost 2822 q. ert de 2824 gisent  
 2839 moi et 2847 d. qui de 2852 m. ps r. 2877 uains et loiaus 2908 conseil 2948 vos  
 foi 2968 pertendue 2974 t. li b. 2983 lautel 3000 vee 3003 ont li roi t. 3005 nen f.  
 3009 et .xx. 3011 sa tente 3012 lez le c. lez .i. 3016 premierement 3021 hais 3025  
 son terrin 3029 qui o t. auoit alez 3051-2 *inserted after 3044* 3056 cortnot 3072 si  
 taise 3073 et il est f. 3074 nauet c. 3085 le barbon v. 3095 fins 3097 t. nuz de 3102  
 vit son neuo 3113 consentir tu 3121 cest m. 3140 t. ont 3165 s. li dit 3171 qentre  
 3177 lot si l. 3193 r. des c. 3220 p. quel r. 3227 i. met a. 3231 l. apres e. 3245 se il,  
 de iude 3246 u. loi de iuice 3263 ce est 3266 p. eure t. 3286 de sa mesnie le 3294  
 un *lacking* 3296 ie s. 3301 botele 3306 jl soi 3354 m. boces m. 3365 en plez a  
 3365-6 *inverted* 3375 vez li 3396 ou soient t. 3404 t. a requis 3406 uolez c. 3426  
 h. francier ne 3437 requier 3448 p. len f. 3450 d. euil le 3454 voist il sanz p. 3455  
 quil larara 3457 g. sest l. 3462 e. plus felons 3480 iannenbraz s. 3483 et d., f. dinan  
 3484 dinoalan 3494 de r. ioiant 3501 a chies 3518 q. est si lonc 3527 p. de p. 3531  
 c. senble li p. 3544 p. uc s. des alentez 3560 a celui q. 3582 quil 3583 f. ie 3587 sel  
 3596 de uiel h. 3607-8 *inserted after 3574* 3616 safist t. 3619 p. an c. 3634 que  
 nus nen s. 3638 li plus p. 3643 c. gras 3653 de franc o. 3659 o. a p. 3664 hast de  
 nus alegier 3674 sen ist 3680 p. estre e. 3683 quil na 3694 u. parler s. 3696 ele  
 auoit an 3701 q. les p. nest seuez 3710 c. et m. 3714 apela o s. 3725 riches 3731 r.  
 auoit p. 3733 l m. 3735 a. se se r. 3738 fait d. 3751 fre m. 3752 fait gief 3760 anz  
 .i. arrement 3773 la couine 3783 u. orendroit 3800 gas leues 3823 m. flatele 3839  
 donolen 3843 let tot de grez 3849 m. dagres 3850 poacres 3872 d. posen a. 3877 g.  
 lie et 3892 la pointure o. 3919 p. soz la 3922 l. bociez d. 3932 li degret 3935 t. soz  
 s. p. 3944 q. set c. 3963 frorz t. 3966 r. saloier nest pas petite 3975 q. port le 3978  
 sa mesire 3992 dune g. 4000 n. targe 4002 t. ait c. 4004 que sa 4017 a. a. uoires  
 4022 e. au fers 4033 ja r. 4046 des tre s. 4049 gran a. a 4058 vauvain 4060 gaugains  
 4063 connoison 4065 e. si les prenons 4066 quies uos p., rois prendre 4081 corbel  
 4082 de lonc et 4083 logie auoit totes l. 4086 o. uestue 4098 uoteure 4102 n. ni u.,  
 r. cort 4103 maistre n. e. 4107 de lenseigne 4116 ot corner 4132 autres ceres 4135  
 pailes l. 4145 d. trouer p. 4146 te feroit a. 4171 as tort 4183 quit s. 4186 r. fait  
 gauuais 4187 a le p. 4204 et tout celes de 4206 f. sor s. 4208 mes esporez 4219 f.  
 chascune si 4229 t. entre l. 4232 li mes a. 4242 quil maintenist 4255 n. nue (*with titulus over u*) r. 4285 a son d. 4286 malpertis 4300 quil se 4307 q. leuratin 4310 si  
 u. a 4314 p. fenestre o. 4317 la clanbre e. 4331 se il se tenpnz s., i. iarde 4378  
 poisen 4401 doalan 4422 daubor ancer 4441 sestent 4458 ne temorde 4465 m. que  
 c. 4472 l. atornera

## NOTES

I have used asterisks in the text to indicate that the line in question is discussed in a note. The asterisk is inserted into the Old French text if the note deals with textual or philological matters, into the English text if it treats matters of interpretation or translation or explains terms or customs.

Béroul's text preserves a great many more problematical readings than are discussed below. Full textual notes would require a separate volume, and several of those already exist (see Bibliography). Questions treated in the following notes are of three kinds: particularly complex textual problems; instances in which the emendation (or decision not to emend) is determined by stylistic or literary, not simply philological, considerations; and cases where I rely on evidence (often provided by Sandqvist) not available to previous editors. Finally, the notes include discussions of a number of interpretive problems.

I have identified scholarly studies by the author's last name (full references are included in my bibliography); the only exception is Reid's article in the *Mélanges Vinaver*, so identified because citations that give his name only are to his *The "Tristran" of Béroul: A Textual Commentary*.

9–15. Successive editors have deciphered, sometimes tentatively, certain of the words made indistinct by damage to the manuscript. Here and in other similar cases (e.g., 45–49), I have sometimes drawn on other editors, especially Muret-Defourques or Ewert, for confirmation of questionable readings. When only a word or two can be read in a line, I have not found it useful to translate them into English.

25. Iseut makes an affirmation that is deceitful but literally true: it was in fact Tristran, and not Mark, who took her virginity. She is here practicing a technique (speaking equivocally and allowing her husband to believe what he will) that she will later use (4197–4216) to establish her innocence to the satisfaction of everyone but the reader.

28. The Morholt was an Irish giant earlier slain by Tristran. He was also the brother of the queen of Ireland and thus Iseut's uncle (see 53).

59. The translation given here follows the original, which is less than clear. The intent apparently is: should they come before God for judgment, they would be damned.

75. It is characteristic of the scribe, throughout the work, to pick up and repeat words from a preceding or following line, or sometimes even from a passage several lines distant. Moreover, it is unusual (as Ewert notes, II, 85) to find *ja* repeated in the same clause. I have thus emended *ia moillier to la m.*

86. The French *courtois* (or *courtoise* of 102, referring to Iseut) is literally "courtly" or "courteous." The former is often too vague or general a translation; the latter, too limited and misleading. The word describes a person who possesses all

the attributes—social, moral, and physical—expected of a properly cultivated noble at court.

90. The MS. reading *fare le mal et bien laisier* was emended by Muret (beginning with his second edition) to *faire mal faire et bien laisier*. Ewert retains the original, and Sandqvist (15) argues for it as well, noting (unnecessarily, in my view) that the preceding line must however be followed by a colon.

104. The modern concern for privacy is largely our own invention: During the Middle Ages it was not uncommon for several persons—related or not, of the same or opposite sex—to share sleeping quarters. Whenever Tristran is in the king's good graces, he has free access to the bed chamber; when suspicions are aroused, Mark banishes Tristran from his quarters.

The final word in this line is clearly *vee*. The feminine *chanbre* requires *veee*. Sandqvist (15–16) notes that scribes (and presumably authors) tended to avoid the use of *-eee* and that the MS. also has *vee* for *veee* in 3000 and *esfree* for *esfreee* in 1748. He suggests that *vee* can stand, but following all other editors except Gregory, I emend.

119. In medieval courtly literature, *losengiers* was the term designating the lover's enemies at court. The word, meaning "obsequious or false flatterers," is both more general and harsher than the definition indicates; it suggests jealousy, deviousness, and evil intent. Tristran's three enemies are described as evil (*felons*) and treacherous, even though their accusations are consistently accurate. I translate, less than satisfactorily, as "liars" or "slanderers."

131. The opportunity to prove one's innocence (*escondire*), whether in combat or in another form of trial, is a central concern in Béroul's text. Much of the poem's drama turns not on the question of the lovers' moral guilt or innocence, but rather on their contention that Mark, believing slander about them, wants to punish them without allowing them any defense. See especially 885–87 and 1097–99, in which other characters insist on the lovers' right to trial. On the legal question, see R. Howard Bloch, *Medieval French Literature and Law* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), p. 56, n. 92 and passim.

146. This line has sometimes been understood as a criticism of Mark, the question "does he think he is without blame?" being answered affirmatively in the next line. However, the lovers' strategy in this conversation precludes accusations directed at the king. If 145 is taken as parenthetical, 146 can then follow logically from the preceding passage, constituting thus an indictment of Tristran's enemies. The king is blamed only for listening to evil advisors.

161–62. Muret-Defourques suggests that there is a lacuna after 161, but Ewert (II, 90) defends the MS. reading as an example of Béroul's elliptical style. His interpretation is that Tristran wishes to return to his own land in the same way he left it; i.e., in lordly fashion, with his arms having been returned to him. This explanation accurately depicts Tristran's concern for his arms and his honor, but in fact he has not mentioned the prospect of returning to his own land, and moreover, as Reid (17) objects, Béroul does not elsewhere use *tourner* to mean "return." My reading agrees largely with Reid's, although it requires us to take *vol* as a preterite rather than a present.

207–10. Ewert (II, 92) notes the awkward parallelism of 207–08 and 209–10 and suggests that either the two couplets may be variants of one another, one of which should not have been written, or else there is an omission between 208–9.

Given the repetition of *bien sai* (201, 203, 207, 209) in this passage, and given also the hero's purpose, I am not persuaded that these lines represent anything more than Tristran's melodramatic posturing.

211–15. This is a problematical passage. Tristran seems to say: "If I ever had anything of his, he would regret having thought it" (or "suspected it"). The problem is that the passage sounds suspiciously like a threat against Mark, if not like a confession of Tristran's guilt. Tristran has however been careful thus far to *deny* unequivocally that he ever had anything (that is, Iseut) belonging to Mark, and it is unlikely that he would suggest even the possibility. It is even more improbable that he would threaten the king in any way. My solution (unlike that of other editors, who place a full stop after 210) is to see the passage as a continuation of earlier lines and thus as a prediction of regret rather than a threat: the hero says that if he had to leave, he would be welcomed in any kingdom in the world, and Mark would thereafter regret his suspicions, *even if* Tristran had taken something of his.

230–31. Editors have considered both lines defective. The MS. reads *certes se je sui pas si osse/que ce vos di....* Muret-Defourques emends to *Certes, je ne sui pas si osse, / ne ce vos di;* Ewert follows him, as does Gregory for 230. Reid (20–21) questions the emendation in the second line, offering suggestions such as *que ce n'os di* or *ne nel vos di.* I accept the latter but do not find any of the suggestions entirely satisfactory.

238. The MS. has *eutol*, a form that editors agree should be *eurol* (Evrol or Saint Ebrulfus).

263. The MS. has *a. nistra g.*, assumed by Ewert (II, 97) to be an "inept transliteration" of *ml't a* of the scribe's model.

280. Segoncin (or Segestes), a character in a story well known during the Middle Ages, was a dwarf reputed to be the lover of the emperor's wife.

317. The scribe and perhaps the author as well frequently use the preposition *a* where we might expect *an* or *en.* See Ewert's note (II, 99). With *entrer*, the scribe writes *en* (339, 551, 597); otherwise he is inconsistent: *a la (ma, sa) chanbre* in 317, 387, 549, 570, 757, 805, etc., but *en la chanbre* 701, 762, 771. Sandqvist generally defends the use of *a* throughout Béroul's work; and although he points out (92–93) that the usual preposition before *Dieu* and *lit* would be *an*, the *Tristran* offers both *el* (= *en le*) *lit*, 730, and *a son lit*, 765, 772. Sandqvist cites, from another text, the example *créussent au Sauvëor.* The scribe's use of prepositions is often idiosyncratic but not inadmissible, and I retain the preposition given in the text.

320. Ewert (II, 100–01) points out that in Eilhart's romance, both Mark and the dwarf hide in the tree. Since, for whatever reason, the dwarf Frocin is absent from the scene in Béroul, the French text must introduce him at this point and describe the powers that permit him to know the danger facing him.

323. *Orient* is Orion. *Lucifer*, as Ewert notes, is a reference to Venus, "when it appears above the eastern horizon before sunrise and sometimes when it appears above the western horizon after sunset" (II, 103).

329. The MS. has *ceus*, emended here to *cel* to agree with the singular (*feroit*) of the following line. Sandqvist (21–22) cites several cases, from this text and others, in which such a change of number occurs within a sentence, and it might be permissible to leave *ceus* were it not that the narrative logic requires a singular: it will be Mark alone who eventually kills the dwarf.

330. Béroul is not particularly concerned with the creation of narrative suspense. There is rarely much doubt about how events will turn out, and in fact the poet often announces events well in advance. In this line, he notes that Mark will kill the dwarf, and in 1310 he repeats the prediction, but in the past tense. The use of a past to predict the future (also found in Béroul's announcement of the fate of Tristran's enemies, 2755–64) is not unusual in French romance. The effect is to emphasize not the gradual unfolding of a story, but its status as a narrative: these events have already occurred, and the telling is at least as important as the occurrences themselves.

344. Muret-Defourques's edition includes, within brackets, the line *Se li demande ce que doit*, suggested by Gaston Paris. The line is reasonable, since Iseut then *responst*, but purely speculative.

345. Brangain is both Iseut's servant and her advisor and confidant. The queen refers to her as *magistre* ("mistress" or "teacher"). Gouvernal's relationship to Tristran is equivalent; he is both the hero's teacher and his squire, and Tristran calls him "master."

381. See note to 345.

412–14. Editors disagree about the punctuation and the precise meaning of these lines. Ewert interprets as "I have told you the truth, and yet you do not believe me." Reid (23–24) notes that the queen has no reason yet to think that Mark does not believe her words, and he further suggests that 414 "as an independent sentence seems curiously isolated." He thus follows Muret-Defourques in taking *si* as the conjunction *se*: "If you do not believe me, but rather believe foolish and empty talk, my good faith will save me." Against his argument we could set 401, in which Iseut, before recounting the meeting with Tristran, says that she will tell the truth but that Mark will not believe her. Thus it is perfectly consistent for her now to insist that he does not. These statements, along with her apparent resignation before the prospect of unjust punishment (405: "kill me if you wish"), are a clever ploy by which she places the burden more firmly on Mark to make amends for his suspicions. See also Sandqvist, 22–23.

413. *Fole et* is lacking in the MS., but is a reasonable emendation accepted by all editors.

418–19. My translation follows Reid (24) rather than Ewert (II, 110). The emendation in 418 and the addition of *non* in 419 follow those of other editors.

439. Ewert (II, 111) defends the MS. reading *mentirez*, but his consequent interpretation of the line as "you will not be in any way mistaken (if you accept my statement that) there was nothing more" is forced. I follow Muret-Defourques's emendation (defended by Reid, 24).

470. The scribe, by writing *dame*, has the king address Iseut directly; however, the *com* in 472 confirms that the sentence is indirect discourse and that the scribe has misread *9me* as *dame*. The emendation to *conme* follows other editors.

483–85. Muret-Defourques emends *li* to *vos*, and Ewert follows him, while questioning the validity of the emendation (II, 112). I see no necessity to emend. Ewert notes too that the infection (*mal*) caused by the dragon's tongue carried by Tristran (485) is not earlier mentioned in Béroul's text, although 112–16, now illegible, could have referred to it. Nonetheless, the problem is not so serious as to justify the emendation made in Muret's original edition, when he removed all reference to the *serpent*, replacing the word by *plaie* (restoring *serpent* in later

editions). In neither 483 nor 485 do I see any reason not to let the text say what it says.

533. A line is lacking here. Muret-Defourques supplies *D'or en avant aura loisir*, "From now on he will be free" (or "will have the opportunity").

547. The scribe first wrote *ala cole*, then expunctuated the first *a*.

559–60. I have inverted these two lines, following a suggestion made by Tanquerey. The order in which they stand in the MS. has Tristran apparently accuse Mark of *felonie* ("outrage" or "insult"). Such insolence, as Ewert notes (II, 116), is uncharacteristic of Tristran's attitude toward the king. In addition, the inversion provides a direct object noun with which the pronoun (*nu = ne le*) stands in apposition; without it, the elliptical "we never had a thought about it" (with "it" referring presumably to the commission of adultery) is less than satisfactory, although by no means impossible for Béroul,

604. The scribe often uses a nominative article with a noun in the oblique case. As this practice is characteristic of his language, I follow the usual, though not universal, practice of editors and allow the forms to stand. See Sandqvist, 62 (n. to 1403), 122 (n. to 3843); in discussing this phenomenon, he identifies examples in 604, 1403, 1474, 1486, and 1706.

609. The scribe added *sofrir* in the margin after expunctuating an illegible word (apparently *endormir*).

629. The scribe wrote *meuergonderoit* and then corrected to *meuergondeait*. The emendation follows Muret-Defourques. See also Sandqvist, 28.

651. The MS. has *conviene*, leaving a hypermetric line. I follow Muret's original edition, although his later editions and most other editors keep *conviene* and emend *alle* to *aut*. For a discussion of the line see Sandqvist, 29–30.

658. Although the MS. reading *por deu* is not impossible, it strains both style and substance. Muret-Defourques's *por ceu que* and Reid's *por ce que* are preferable.

665. As Ewert notes (II, 123–24), this line is "suspect." The dwarf says that if Tristran comes to the queen and is not caught, Mark may kill him (Frocin) and Tristran's men; but he says nothing about the fate of Tristran himself. Without emending, Ewert suggests that adding *il* at the beginning of the line would resolve the problem. I have seen no necessity for emendation, although logic does indeed demand information about the treatment Tristran may expect if caught *in flagrante delicto*.

677. The *gueron* or *giron* referred to a flap or fringe on a tunic, extending from the waist to the knees. The dwarf may have placed the flour in or beneath this part of his attire, or he may have slung it from his belt.

713. Although various scholars have suggested that *iroit* be emended to *aloit*, Sandqvist (30) defends the conditional.

719–22. The two couplets are inverted in the MS., but the letters *a* and *b* have been added in the margin to indicate the proper order.

771–72. The problematic rhyme *chanbre / prenent* has led to various emendations and to the assumption (in Muret's original edition) that there is a lacuna here. Of the proposed emendations, one of the most tempting is Sandqvist's suggestion (33–34) that *sont* in 771 is a scribal error for *font* (a causative *faire*) and that *prenent* can then be emended to *prendre*. That double emendation would still leave an imperfect, though less bothersome, rhyme, and Reid (32) notes that if the

assonance *chanbre* and *prendre* can stand, so could *chanbre* and *prenent*. He further points out that most editors admit such readings as, for example, *asente/ensle* in 331–32. Since proposed emendations do not in any case restore a perfect rhyme, I let the reading stand.

774. This line illustrates what Sandqvist (33–34) calls the “loose structure of the Béroulian sentence.” The words *et la royne* (“and the queen”) may follow from the first part of that line, so that the barons hate Tristran out of jealousy for his prowess and for his relationship with the queen; or they may be part of a compound direct object: they hate Tristran, because of his prowess, and (they also hate) the queen. Both are defensible, grammatically and thematically.

778–88. In this instance, unlike earlier cases, Mark’s suspicions are confirmed beyond a doubt, and he insists that there is no need for trial. See note to 131; see also Bloch, 54–59.

873. The Old French reference is to the hour of prime, one of the canonical hours by which time was commonly marked in the Middle Ages. It is about 6:00 a.m., but Béroul’s intent is to indicate not a specific hour, but rather a general time of day: early in the morning.

887. The scribe writes, then expunctuates, *plus after destrui*.

916. The emendation of *et to a* (= *il y a*), rather than to the *est* accepted by most editors, is suggested by Sandqvist (40), who points out other instances of the same confusion, both in Béroul and generally in manuscripts from eastern France.

921–22. I follow Ewert in emending *aaise* to *atoise* “slate” in 922. Muret-Defourques’s emendation of *aaise* to *alise* (cf. *terre alisse* “barren ground”) is itself acceptable, but it requires him further to emend *faloise* to *falise*.

955–58. These problematic lines have been the object of some extended commentaries. The MS. has *la chapele en plaine de pueple / Tristran saut sus l’araine ert moble / toz a genoz en ligliglise / cil l’attendent defors l’iglise*. Muret-Defourques emends 957 to *chiet en la glise* “falls in the mud,” thus avoiding the identical rhyme, and he suggests that *sus* “up” may be an error for *jus* “down.” Reid (37–38) questions the rhyme (preferring Muret-Defourques’s emendation) and suggests also that the scribe may have inverted 955–56. Gregory too emends to *en la glise* and *jus*. In my original edition I inverted 955–56 and left the identical rhyme, but I now find the Muret-Defourques emendation simpler and more satisfactory.

1055. I follow most other editors in assuming a lacuna between 1055 and 1056; if that is correct, the sense of the passage suggests that Iseut is saying that she should never feel pity for herself or resent her fate: her lover is free and will exact vengeance. Reid (43) does not agree that there is a lacuna, noting that since these two lines rhyme, the assumption of a lacuna presupposes four lines on the identical rhyme (unless four or more lines are lacking). He suggests instead that 1055 is corrupt and that *mes jor* should be emended to *m’esplore*. Sandqvist (44–45) favors emendation but points out correctly that the syntax of the passages remains highly problematical nonetheless. Under the circumstances, and given that any available emendation is highly conjectural, I do not emend.

1070. The scribe often writes out *que* before a vowel even when it is intended to be elided. This is a common phenomenon in medieval texts, and I have seen no reason to follow the practice of editors who indicate elision by emending, for example, to *qu’il*. Examples occur in 1070 and also in 1545, 1576, 1725, 1831,

2904, 3048, 3294, 3435, 3613, 3729, 4240, 4395. On the other hand, I have written *s'il* rather than *se il* in 3245, *c'est* rather than *ce est* in 3263, and *dhui* rather than *de hui* in 3447.

1083. The scribe wrote *Dmenee*, but the correct *a* appears as a guide-letter in the margin.

1093. The seneschal is the person holding primary administrative responsibility in the lord's household, arranging for feasts and ceremonies but also tending to the day-to-day functions of running the household.

1095. A *beauveisine* is a coin of small denomination, part of the currency of Beauvais. Although the translation as "cent" is both anachronistic and inaccurate, the intent of the line is very close to that of the expression "no one ever gave me a penny" (or "a red cent").

1156. Two characters bear this name. This one, *Ivein* (1156) or *Ivain* (1219) is a leper; the second one, first named (as *Evain*, son of *Urien*) in 3483, is a knight of King Arthur's court and the hero of a romance by *Chrétien de Troyes*.

1163. The *tartarie* was a bowl-shaped clapper or rattle; lepers were required to carry them and to make noise in order to warn others of their approach.

1164. The MS. offers a plural subject. It is normal, in this text and others, to have the views of a group crystallized in dialogue that appears to be spoken by one person. In this case, however, the ensuing discussion makes it clear that the conversation is between *Yvain* himself and *Mark*. I thus emend to the singular.

1173–76. We must assume either a lacuna after 1174 (as do both Muret-Defourques and Ewert) or a corruption (as does B. Blakey, who suggests that 1173 and 1174 have been inverted). However, reversing the order of these two lines still leaves other difficulties, and various commentators have proposed either to emend *et que* of 1175 to *qu'ele* or to invert also 1175 and 1176. Sandqvist (51–52) defends the order of 1175–76, noting that *et* is not problematic; he cites several examples of an expletive *et* introducing consecutive clauses in Old French. The sense of the passage is however much clearer if 1175–76 (as well as 1173–74) are inverted; the leper thus says that the queen will be able to live but will wish she were dead. As Reid notes, it is hardly unusual for the scribe to invert lines, and there is no reason why he might not have done so twice in succession. For a discussion of the entire passage, see Reid, 48–49.

1183. Sandqvist offers a defense of the MS. reading *savrā* rather than the usual emendation *savrai* (and similarly of *a* rather than *ai* in 3404). I follow Muret-Defourques and Ewert in emending. See Sandqvist, 53, 107.

1220. Most editors transcribe this line (and the same expression in 3157) as *prist l'a la main*; Mermier emends 1220 to *pris li a la main*. Sandqvist (54–55) notes that *paris* is the usual preposition with *la main* and that, more important, the use of a double direct object (where Modern French would use an indirect object pronoun along with the noun) is common in Old French. I follow his suggestion and write *la la*.

1307 ff. This curious episode, paralleled in no other text of the time, appears to involve a pun on *Mark*'s name and Celtic *marc* meaning "horse." The revelation of the king's anatomical curiosity provides the occasion for the dwarf to be killed, thus fulfilling the textual prophecy of line 330. As frequently happens in this text, however, expected events occur in unexpected fashion, and *Mark* kills the dwarf

not because the latter is evil, but because he mischievously revealed the king's secret.

1406. Otrant was a Sarrasin king of Nimes in the William of Orange cycle of Old French epics.

1445. A *landon* is a clog, a weight attached to an animal to hinder motion. It was most likely a large block of wood.

1449. *Past* was a mash or paste, of varying composition, used as animal food.

1502. The line is obscure and possibly corrupt. For a discussion, see Reid, 58–59.

1606. The MS. has an expunctuated *entrer* after *bois*.

1631. This line is repeated after 1632 but then expunctuated.

1648. Morrois, a large forest in Mark's kingdom, is perhaps to be identified with Moresc in Cornwall.

1650. The emendation is suggested by Reid, 62 and in the *Vinaver Miscellany*, 281.

1655. *Folie* (literally folly, foolishness, or insanity) is both a very common word in courtly texts and a most difficult word to translate adequately. In ecclesiastical contexts, it often referred to a failure to obey God's law; adapted to courtly vocabulary, it most often reflected a disregard for the rules of courtliness. In the case of Tristran and Iseut, it identifies their love (and their indulgence of that love) as an act of folly, a crime, and perhaps a sin. Yet, any single word used to translate *folie*—folly, irresponsibility, sin, or illicit love—distorts the meaning by limiting it.

1710. Thus does one of Tristran's enemies meet his death. This is a problematical passage—perhaps an interpolation—because all three of his enemies reappear together later; see note to 2755.

1771. Some editors and commentators consider the subject of *fu* to be Tristran; the line would then mean that he had long endured this exile (or fugitive life). Discussing alternative possibilities, Reid (67) insists that *dechaz* cannot be a hunting term, and yet he cites one example where it clearly is that. As the subject of the entire passage is the bow, it is reasonable to conclude that 1771–72 refer to it as well: by killing game during Tristran's absence, the bow provides well for the lovers.

1796. A line is missing in the MS.

1834. Between 1834 and 1835 is the line: *en ot mene le bon destrier*.

1846. The scribe wrote, then expunctuated *que* after *sot*.

1905. Following this line, three lines have been erroneously inserted; they are repeated in their proper place as 1910–12. Apparently, the cause of the scribe's error was the recurrence of *cors* in both 1906 and 1910.

1916. Literally, "may the terrible drop destroy his eyes." The reference, as Ewert notes (II, 183), is to the *gutta serena* (or amaurosis), a disease of the optic nerve. The sense is a generalized "May he be damned" or (in Fedrick's translation, 91) "May he be blinded." I have opted for the former, though neither is as precise or as colorful as the original.

1939. The reference to Cato (MS: *chastons* with the first *s* expunctuated) is presumably to the *Disticha Catonis* ("Cato's Distichs"), a third-century collection of moral pronouncements attributed, doubtless incorrectly, to Cato the Elder. The

Distichs were repeatedly translated into Old French and also into most European languages. The advice alluded to here is however lacking from the texts.

1945. The scribe wrote *la cortoifise*, then expunctuated the *s*.

1999. The MS. has *deseuroit* with *i* expunctuated.

2146. This is a problematical line, and previous editors have emended *los men fui* to *las n'en sui*. Ewert (II, 196) defends the change by noting that the original (meaning "Wretched, I flee!") does not fit the context, which requires an indication of "their contentment with their lot." The phrase could indeed be a scribal error, perhaps influenced by *s'en essille* (2142), which could mean either "he suffered as a result" or "he went into exile as a result"—either of which accurately reflects Tristran's situation. Justification for emending may be provided by the insistence, on two previous occasions, that the lovers suffer privations but are insulated from pain by their love; thus, while the potion remains in effect, each of them can insist that "je n'en suis nullement malheureux" (Braet), "I am not sorry for it" (Mermier), "cette vie ne me pèse pas" (Jonin), "I am not weary" of this life (Fedrick), or "I grow not weary of this" (Gregory).

But there is also an argument to be made to the contrary: the waning of the potion gives them the desire, above all, to return to the court and to the life they had earlier led. The potion's power, thus, did indeed lead to exile and, conceivably, to their lamenting the need to flee. In my original edition, and against other editors and translators, I retained the original reading. In the present revision, I have reconsidered the choice and joined other editors: the emendation offers a more logical text. However, I find "I have no regrets" slightly preferable to the more common translation referring to a lack of weariness with the life they are leading.

2196. The scribe wrote and then expunctuated *sa* after *sovent*.

2217. The scribe first wrote *grant enor*, then expunctuated *enor* and wrote *error*.

2220. Previous editors have agreed that the subject of the line is Brangain, but most have allowed the *il* to stand; Gregory points to other examples of *il* as the feminine pronoun. I emend however to *el*. See Sandqvist 83.

2232. In Eilhart von Oberge's poem, Tinas is the lord of Litan. As Tinas is clearly the Dinas of Béroul's poem, Lidan is doubtless to be identified with Dinan. See 1085.

2242. Ewert (II, 198) defends the MS. reading *soufrist*, but Reid (82) suggests plausibly that the scribe erred, writing *soufrist* under the influence of 2238.

2246. The identification of *Frise* with Dumfries is uncertain but reasonable.

2249. The MS. reading is *toine*, but the *r* (added in the margin as a guide for the rubricator) is visible.

2345–47. Both Ewert and Reid reject Muret-Defourques's emendation of *sanz* (2346) to *s'aus*, arguing that *anz* is a graphy of *ainz* "first" or "previously." Reid, however, suggests (86) that if 2346 is not *aus* (= *eus*, a strong oblique form used as a subject), Ewert is doubtless wrong to accept that same form in 2347. Reid thus takes the *saus* of 2347 as an error, perhaps for *pus*, *puis*. I find his argument unconvincing and retain *s'aus* (= *s'eus*).

2385. The identification of Costentin/Constantine is uncertain. It may be a Cornish town located between Falmouth and Helston. See Ewert, II, 203.

2411. I follow Muret-Defourques and Ewert in assuming the missing material to be *mis beau*.

2487. An *e* is written and then expunctuated before *il*.

2495. There is an evident lacuna after this line.

2496. Noting 2344 and 2805, in which *sole* is applied negatively to the queen, Reid (89–90) suggests the emendation of *pole* to *sole* (rather than the *parole* of Muret-Defourques and Ewert). I follow the suggestion, but the lacuna preceding the line makes either emendation purely speculative.

2566. Between *ton* and *reigne* the scribe wrote and then expunctuated *barne*.

2569. The scribe wrote *u. gage doner*, expunctuated the last two words, and wrote *blasme leuer* on the following line.

2575–80. This passage remains problematical. The first difficulty is *fai* (2577), taken by Muret-Defourques as imperative of *faire*, requiring emendation to provide a dependent infinitive (*ardoir* in his original edition, *jugier* later: “have me burned” or “have me condemned”). *Laisier* (2575) is also obscure, and Muret-Defourques (following a suggestion by Acher) emended to *plaisier* “to humble.” Gregory maintains *laisier*. My emendations, in general agreement with Muret-Defourques’s, afford a degree of narrative logic, but I do not claim to have solved the textual problem. See Ewert, II, 206; Reid, 91; Gregory (1981), 11–13.

2600. Muret-Defourques supplies a conjectural line here: *vos feistes un ban criér*, “you had a proclamation announced” (or “published”).

2664. See note to 317.

2733. The “Mont” is usually identified with St. Michael’s Mount in Cornwall.

2755. In referring to the fate of the *four*, the text obviously includes the forester with the three barons as enemies of Tristran and Iseut. Even so, the passage presents one of the text’s several internal inconsistencies, since one of the barons was earlier killed by Governal (in 1708–11). See following note.

2759–62. Although the text here announces that the forester will die at the hand of Perinis, he will in fact be killed by Governal (see 4045–54). This discrepancy and the reappearance of the baron whose death had already been recounted have frequently been cited as evidence of dual authorship.

2807. Most editors have placed this line in Tristran’s mouth, assuming that the *me fai a entendre* means “make me understand” (i.e., speak clearly). However, Sandqvist (95–96) correctly notes that they may well have been spoken by Iseut; they would mean instead “be sure to understand me.” Iseut thus says (2806–07): “Listen to me and mark my words well.” My interpretation accords with his (as does Gregory’s).

2822–36. The passage is clearly corrupt, presenting difficulties of rhyme and sense, but the remedy is not apparent. Muret-Defourques conjectured that 2822–27 were originally situated after 2836. Reid (98–99) suggests the somewhat imaginative emendation of *de moleste* (2822) to *demalaire* (“wicked”), thus restoring an acceptable rhyme and making it presumably unnecessary to suppose a lacuna—although he himself admits that the lines still present an “abrupt transition.” Ewert (II, 6) tentatively suggests that *faire / moleste* may have been an assonance originally introduced by Béroul.

Editors have generally assumed a lacuna also after 2836, although it would necessarily consist of at least two lines. Reid points out correctly that no such assumption is required if we take Tristran’s *non fera il* of 2837 as a response not to

the lines immediately preceding, but rather to 2833. Thus "Do not let it irk you to stay there" elicits the assurance, "It will not."

2847. My emendation follows Muret's original edition and Sandqvist's recommendation.

2866. Literally, "whether with hair or bald." Although Ewert (II, 216) suggests that this line may be intended as an elliptical exclamation, I follow Muret-Defourques in assuming a lacuna after the line.

2944. Literally, "more than seven times."

2947. A problematical line. Ewert (II, 218) interprets it as, "He declares that this is a noble leave-taking." Reid criticizes this interpretation but correctly admits that the problem is not easily solved even by emendation.

3048. Ewert reads *qu(e)on* and takes *on* as a spelling of *onc* ("never"), while Muret-Defourques corrects to *qu'o*. Sandqvist notes that, if the word is to be taken as a preposition, *ou* is an entirely acceptable western form.

3114. Literally, not "heart," but "what is beneath his sword-belt" (or baldric). The expression is otherwise unattested, and the free rendering as "heart" is suggested by Reid.

3115. I follow Muret's original edition (and Reid's advice) in assuming that the scribe inverted 3115–16. I restore what must have been the original order, since, as Reid notes (108), it is most unlikely that the sentence "Mal ait quant qu'a soz son baudré cil qui te het" would have been interrupted by the exclamation that the scribe wrote as 3115 (i.e., 3116 in my edition).

3167. Literally, her blood "was not so distant that it did not rush to her face."

3171. Acher suggested the emendation of *gentre* to *entre*, making it unnecessary to assume a lacuna after 3170 (as do most editors); I have followed that suggestion. Reid (in *Mélanges Vinaver*, 276) proposes that, instead of emending *gentre*, we should invert 3169 and 3170. Sandqvist, on the other hand, argues (101) that *q'* is an elided relative pronoun whose antecedent is *le roi* of 3169 and that the lines do not require any emendation; Gregory accepts that suggestion.

3224. There is obviously a lacuna after 3224 (unless 3225 is corrupt instead). The missing material doubtless indicated that the three were urging Mark to require Iseut to stand trial.

3231. The MS. has an expunctuated *estre* before *eure*.

3232 ff. See Jonin (79–105) for a discussion of the judgment scene and, in particular, its accurate reflection of actual legal practices.

3300. Sandqvist (103) notes that the MS. reading *sai* is a spelling of the western form *sei*. Since *ai* (or *e*) alternates quite freely with *oi* in the Béroul MS., emendation is not required.

3301. Reid (112) suggests that *botele* is an error for *bocele* ("keg" or leather bottle").

3312. The scribe writes, then expunctuates, *rai* before *en*.

3353–54. This is one of the most intriguing textual and interpretive problems in Béroul's *Tristran*. The MS. reading has Tristran instruct Perinis to give the queen more greetings *qu'il n'a sor moi boces menuz*. *Boces* suggests "tumors," a logical reference to the marks of Tristran's simulated leprosy. The problem is that *boces* (fem.) is followed by the masculine adjective *menuz*, which, standing in rhyme, is presumably correct. Some editors have concluded that *boces* is an error for *botons* ("buds") and that *moi* is a variant spelling of *mai* ("May," here may-tree or

hawthorn). Thus, Tristran is sending his lady *either* as many greetings as he has tumors or as many as there are buds on a hawthorn. The latter could be established by a very simple emendation, and it might furthermore be appealing as a lyrical expression of his love. However, it is also, in my view, stylistically uncharacteristic of Béroul—and of Tristran, whose language is never notably lyrical and whose playfulness would likely lead him to make reference to the affliction he is assuming for deceitful purposes. I have thus kept the idea of *boces*, although the problem of gender requires me to accept also Reid's tentative suggestion (114) that *boces* "represents *bocés* as the oblique plural of either *bocet* or *bocel*," diminutives of *boce*. That suggestion, while in accord with my interpretation of the passage, is less than entirely satisfactory, because neither *bocet* nor *bocel* is an attested forms.

3373. Most often Isneldone is identified with Stirling, although a minority view, championed by R.S. Loomis, insists instead that it is Snowdon. See Ewert, II, 231.

3380. The curious notion of a Round Table that rotates is not explained. If the characteristic of the table reflects early legends, they have not survived.

3384. The scribe writes *deuant*, then corrects to *dedanz*.

3480. It is unclear what to make of *soz le mantel*. The literal meaning is "beneath her cloak," and the expression occurs with some frequency in other medieval texts, where it clearly means a sexual caress or fondling. Reid (118) suggests however that the phrase means no more than "in secret."

3547. The event mentioned by Arthur is obscure; however, we do not need to understand the reference, since Iseut does so.

3574. In the interest of narrative logic, I move the two lines that follow this one. They have become 3607–08, and Tristran's farewell to Governal thus occurs after he tells the latter to go and to act prudently.

3607–08. See note to 3574.

3651. An expunctuated *q* stands before .*xviii*.

3760. Tristran playfully toys with Mark, his reference to a three-year separation from society being literally true (the reason being given as leprosy, not a love potion). His game might be thought dangerous when he compares his lady to the queen (3675), whose husband, he says, was a leper (3771). In Béroul's world, however, the deck is stacked in favor of the lovers, and any sense of danger that might pervade this scene is submerged in a festive spirit and an impression of Tristran's slightly malicious fun.

3849. In my original edition I emended *mal dagres* to *mal dacre*, following previous editors. The assumption, which I hesitantly accepted at that time, has been that this line may refer to the epidemic that overtook the Crusaders at Acre during the winter of 1190–91; in that case the reference would be invaluable in efforts to establish the date of Béroul's poem. The validity of this interpretation has been questioned by Merritt Blakeslee and others. (See my introduction, section on "Authorship.") Gregory, accepting a suggestion made by G. Whitteridge that *acre* (from Greek, then Latin ACRA) refers to the extremities of the body, concludes that "The *mal d'acre* is likely to be another name for leprosy, since excessive swelling at the extremities" is "a feature associated with that disease" (see Gregory, ed., xxviii). Although I no longer accept the association with the Crusaders' illness, I have not been entirely persuaded by alternative explanations.

3886. A *sanbue*, often of very costly material, was a cloth placed over the saddle.

3913–69. Throughout the following sequence, the lovers (and Béroul) indulge their playfulness in an ambiguous and slightly racy conversation. The sexual innuendo seems unmistakable. In 3913 the listeners will understand Iseut to say, "I have a matter to discuss with you" or "I have a job for you to do." To Tristran, however, her words would carry a different meaning: "I want you." In 3928 she leans frequently against his staff (crutch) and exclaims, "How large you are!" Lines 3965–66 have the queen comment that she has felt what Tristran has beneath his cape, and her remarks that "his pouch is far from empty" (3566) and that she has felt of all the food and money he has in his purse (*sac*, 3969) may even play on the traditional equivalence of purse and scrotum in erotic literature.

3935. There is disagreement about this line (and about 3946). Some editors and translators assume that *ses cuises* is "his thighs" (i.e., Tristran, pretending to be cripple, is supporting his leg with the crutch) or, alternatively, that he is carrying the crutch horizontally to support Iseut's weight. See Ewert, II, 244–45. Surely, given her position astride her lover, the references are to Iseut's thighs. In any event, the precise position of the staff or crutch is less important than the general impression and tone of the scene. In addition, the lines doubtless contribute further to the sexual innuendo throughout the passage: would not Béroul's audience have interpreted the details of her thigh pressing against his staff as something more than a description of an improvised system of transportation?

4001. The scribe wrote *uoile*, then expunctuated the *e*.

4044. A word (*fur?*) is written and then deleted after *leuer*.

4052. The specific meaning is unclear, *Cuir* ("leather") can sometimes refer to human skin, but the line is weak if it suggests merely a blade removing some of his skin, I assume that it refers, as Reid suggests (131), to "a part of the lance below the blade."

4057–58. Cinglor and Coris (as Ewert remarks, II, 247) are unknown elsewhere as Arthurian knights.

4079–80. Owing largely to the identical rhyme, editors have generally assumed either a corruption or a lacuna here. Again, however, it should be noted that identical rhymes are not rare in Béroul's text. Whether all of them represent corruptions or lacunae cannot be determined.

4087. The expunctuated letters *la* precede the *ee* of *pree*.

4119. Literally, at prime; see note to 873.

4172. The MS. has *q. felons e.*, with the *e* expunctuated.

4235. The scribe wrote and then expunctuated *oie* before *ueue*.

4285–86. Muret's original edition assumed a lacuna between these lines, while Ewert inverts them. Although reversing the lines would satisfactorily clarify the passage, the problem can also be solved by taking 4486 as a parenthetical explanation or exclamation, a characteristic of Béroul's style. Among the closest parallels are doubtless 2342 and 3247, but see also 506, 748, 976, 1074, 1232, 2029, 2572, and *passim*.

4286. *Malpertis* is a reference to the fox's lair in the *Roman de Renart*, the popular "animal epic" dating from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries and consisting of more than twenty branches. This reference and a study of the date at which the name probably made its first appearance in the *Renart* led Merritt

Blakeslee to conclude (165) that Béroul could have composed his romance as early as 1176 or 1180.

4307. The meaning is uncertain. The original line is corrupt, and the emendation is Muret-Defourques's. Even so, it is unclear whether it means "as much as may be expected" or "for I expect it" or something else. Reid (144) proposes a different emendation (*quant ert rataint*), meaning "when he (Tristan) is caught," but surely the man wanted his reward in exchange for information, regardless of the outcome.

4314. Some editors either suppose a lacuna after 4313 or suggest the emendation of *et* to *est*. My emendation to *a* (= *il y a*) is proposed by Sandqvist (133); see note to 916.

4391. I take a small liberty with the translation. *Chauce (chausse)* is defined, as Ewert notes (II, 258), as "long hose" or "drawers." It goes without saying that neither will work in English.

4472. The scribe wrote and then expunctuated *le roi* after *uers*.

4485. This line is not given in the text itself; it represents the catch-words for the following folio, which is lacking.

Les Folies Tristan

Edited and Translated

by

Samuel N. Rosenberg



## INTRODUCTION

The title *Les Folies Tristan* refers to two short twelfth-century texts that recount Tristan's brief return to court to see Iseut. The two compositions are customarily identified further by reference to the location of the manuscripts: Oxford and Bern. *Le Folie Tristan d'Oxford* is the longer (at about 1000 lines) and generally more polished. It is related to the "courtly" version of the Tristan story as narrated by Thomas. It informs us that Tristan, who had been exiled from court, disguises himself as a fool and returns to court. There he makes repeated references to his relationship with the queen, but he is recognized neither by Mark nor, for some time, by the queen herself.

*Le Folie Tristan de Berne* (some 600 lines) offers much the same story as the preceding, but it is a less polished version, and its character and tone relate it more closely to the Béroul version than to that of Thomas.

Samuel N. Rosenberg offers here new editions and translations of both poems; the following prefatory note and bibliography are his.

### PREFATORY NOTE

I have prepared the text of the Berne *Folie* with constant reference to the editions by Hoepffner (=H), Payen (=P), Lacroix-Walter (=W), and Lecoy (=L), and to the Dean-Kennedy edition of the Cambridge fragment (=C); and the text of the Oxford *Folie* with constant reference to the editions by Hoepffner (=H), Payen (=P), Lacroix-Walter (=W), Short (=S), and Lecoy (=L). Behind all of these editions stands the work of Joseph Bédier.

In the Rejected Readings and Variants, I have combined all ms. readings and most readings in the modern editions that diverge from mine. Emendations not of my devising are credited by implication.

Aside from the customary departures from the mss. in the expansion of abbreviated forms, punctuation, capitalization, and the like, I have normalized a few spellings. In Berne, except in the passages adopted from C, the name of the hero thus appears regularly as *Tristan(z)* and never as *Tritan(z)* and the heroine is not *Ysiaut* but always *Yseut*. In a few instances, I have also resorted to rhyme-words to make the rhyming obvious. In Oxford, the name of the king, which occurs as *Marc'* in the original, is here *Marc* when monosyllabic and *Markes* when dissyllabic. The very numerous Anglo-Norman spellings of the ms., especially when they have grammatical implications, may prove somewhat confusing to readers. I have tended to correct for grammar (chiefly in the case of -e agreements) though not for rhyme, but for the sake of clarity have systematically replaced s- in the following instances: *so* ('ce') > *ſo*; *si* ('ici') > *ci*; *ſa* ('ça') > *ſa*.

It is clear that the meter of the Berne narrative is meant to be octosyllabic, and regularly so. I have therefore not hesitated to fill the occasional syllabic lacunae of the manuscript. The Oxford *Folie*, like many Anglo-Norman redactions of verse, is studded with lines that are metrically irregular. It is clear, however, that the underlying pattern is octosyllabic and that most of the lines which are either too short or too long lend themselves to ready correction. The irregularities are easily attributed to scribal ignorance or indifference rather than any compositional intention, and I have therefore chosen, as in Berne, to restore a uniform syllable-count. In both texts, whole words added are presented in brackets; partial-word additions, like any and all deletions, are signaled only in the Rejected Readings. As for other emendations, I have taken a minimally interventionist approach.

The division of the edited Oxford text into sections of unequal length reflects the spacing in the manuscript.

The translation of the *Folie* texts is close but not literal, preferring clarity of meaning to syntactic and lexical fidelity. For the notorious Old French mixture of present and past tenses in narrative I have substituted the systematic use of the past, which is the normal way in English. In general, the English version follows the progress of the French, but for the sake of idiom I have often enough moved away from the basic line-to-line correspondence. Finally, despite its verse-like lineation, the fact is that the translation has been done into prose; if not for its usefulness as a guide to the facing French text, it would be printed in paragraphs.



## La Folie Tristan (Berne)

Mout est Tristanz mellez a cort, [151v]  
Ne set o aille ne ou tort.

.....  
Formant redoute Marc lo roi,  
Que rois Mars formant lou menace,  
5 Si viaut bien que Tristanz lou sache:  
Se de lui puet avoir saisine,  
Mout li vaudra po san n'orine  
Que par lui ne reçoive mort.  
De sa fame li a fait tort.

10 Clamez s'an est a son barnage  
Et de la honte et de l'outrage  
Que Tristanz, ses niés, li a fait.  
Honte a de ce qu'il li a fait,  
Ne pot mais aler sanz celer.

15 Ses barons fait toz asanbler  
Et lor a bien montree l'ovre; [152r]  
Lo mesfait Tristan lor descovre.  
"Seignor," fait il, "que porrai faire?  
Mout me torné a grant contraire  
20 Que de Tristan ne pris vangence,  
Se.l me torne l'an a enfance.  
Foïz s'an est de ceste terre,  
Que je no sai o jamais querre.  
Car mout l'avrai totjorz salvé,  
25 Se poise moi, par saint Odé!

.....  
Se nus de vos lou puet parçoivre,  
Faites lou moi savoir sanz faille.  
Par saint Sanson de Cornoaille,  
Qui.l me randroit, gré l'an savroie  
30 Et totjorz plus chier l'an avroie."  
N'i a celui ne li promete  
Que a lui prandre entante mete.  
Dinas li senechaus sopire,  
Por Tristan a au cuer grant ire;  
Formant l'an poise en son corage.  
35 Erramant a pris un mesage  
Par cui a fait Tristan savoir  
Con a perdu par nonsavoir  
L'amor del roi, qui.l het de mort.  
Mar vit Tristanz son bel deport!

## La Folie Tristan (Berne)

Tristan was in danger at court,  
and did not know where to go, where to turn.

.....  
He was in dire fear of king Mark,  
who had threatened dire measures  
and wanted Tristan to know it:  
if he could once get hold of him,  
neither cleverness nor noble birth  
would save him from death.

5

He had, after all, stolen Mark's wife!  
The king brought the outrage before his barons,  
pleading the dishonor  
that his nephew had caused him.  
He was shamed by Tristan's behavior  
and he could hardly go on concealing it.

10

He called all his barons together  
and gave them the particulars  
of Tristan's wrongdoing.

15

"Lords," he said, "what can I do?  
It has turned out harmful to me  
that I did not take immediate revenge,  
and people are calling me a fool for it.  
He has run away from this land,  
and I do not know where to look for him.  
To think how often I spared him!  
Now I regret it, by Saint Odet!"

20

.....  
If anyone here can locate him,  
you must not fail to let me know.  
By Saint Samson of Cornwall,"  
should one of you surrender him to me, I would  
hold him dear and be forever grateful."

30

Everyone was quick to promise  
that he would try hard to capture him.  
Dinas<sup>\*</sup> the steward sighed;  
he was worried about Tristan  
and heavy-hearted.

35

He wasted no time in finding a messenger  
who could let Tristan know  
how his carelessness had made him lose  
the love of the king, who now hated him to death.  
What a price Tristan would pay for his pleasure!

40

Par envie est aparceüz,  
 Mout en a esté deceüz.  
 Qant Tristanz oï la novele,  
 Sachiez ne li fu mie bele;  
 45 N'ose repairier ou païs,\*  
 Sovant en a esté fuitis.  
 Sovant sopire et mout se deut  
 De ce c'o lui nen a Yseut.  
 Yseut a il, mais nen a mie  
 50 Celi qui primes fu s'amie.  
 Porpanse soi qu'il porra faire,  
 Con la porra a soi atraire,  
 Car n'ose aler en sa contree.  
 "Ha! Deus, fait il, quel destinee!  
 55 C'ai je sofert en tel amor!  
 Onques de li ne fis clamor  
 Ne ne me plains de ma destrece.  
 Por quoi m'asaut? Por quoi me blece?  
 Deus, ce que doi? [et] qui me sanble"  
 ....  
 50 Don ne fai je ce que demande?  
 Nenil, qant celë ai laissiee  
 Qui a por moi tant de hachiee,  
 tant mal, tant de honte, d'anui.  
 Las!" fait il, "con je sui"  
 65 Malaürous et con mar fui!  
 ....  
 Soferte et tante poine aüe.\*  
 Ainz si bele ne fu veüe.  
 Ja n'an soit mais nul jor amez,  
 Ainz soit totjorz failliz clamez  
 70 Qui de li amer ja se faint!  
 Amors, qui totes choses vaint,  
 Me doint encor que il avaigne  
 Que a ma volanté la taigne!  
 Si ferai je, voir, se Deu plait.  
 75 A Deu pri ge qu'il ne me laist  
 Morir devant [ce] que je l'aie.\*  
 Mout me gari soëf ma plaie  
 Que je reçui en Cornuaille  
 Qant al Morhot fis la bataille  
 80 En l'ile ou fui menez a nage  
 Por desfandre lo treüssajje  
 Qui cil devoient de la terre;  
 A m'espee finé la guerre.  
 Et Deus me doint encore tant vivre  
 85 Que la voie saine et delivre!  
 Encor avroie je mout chier

[152v]

Envious men had taken him by surprise  
and he was badly betrayed.  
When Tristan heard the news,  
you can be sure it didn't please him;  
he dared not return home  
but long remained a fugitive.  
He often sighed and ached  
for the absent Yseut.  
He had an Yseut, but not the one  
who was his first love.\*  
He wondered what he could do,  
how he could get her to come to him,  
since he dared not go to her.  
"Oh, God," he said, "what a fate!  
Look how my love has made me suffer!  
I have never railed against it  
and won't now complain of my distress.  
Why am I attacked and injured?  
God, what am I to do?"

.....

Am I not doing what [love] asks?  
No, I am not, for I have abandoned the woman  
who because of me is suffering such torment,  
such harm, such shame and hardship.  
What a sorry wretch I am!" he said.  
"What luck to have born for this!"

.....

suffered and felt such pain.  
When did anyone ever see such beauty?  
Any man who is not captivated by her  
should never know what it is to be loved  
and should be reviled forever!

Love conquers everything:  
may it yet grant me the chance  
to hold her in my arms!  
It will happen, I know, God willing.  
I pray that God let me not die  
before I have her back.  
She tenderly nursed me back to health  
after I had been wounded  
battling the Morholt.

I had sailed to that island off Cornwall  
to put an end to the tribute  
that the people of the land had to pay;  
I ended the war with my sword.\*  
May God let me live long enough  
to see her healthy and untroubled!  
I would dearly wish, besides,

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S'a li me pooie accointier.  
 Et Deus li doint joie et santé,  
 S'il vialt, par sa doce bonté,  
 90 Et il me doint enor et joie  
 Et si me tort en itel voie  
 Que ancor la puisse aviser  
 Et li veoir et encontrer!  
 Deus, con sui maz et confonduz  
 95 Et en terre mout po cremuz!  
 Las! que fera qant ne la voi?  
 Que por li sui en grant efroi  
 Et nuit et jor et tot lo terme.  
 Qant ne la voi, a po ne derve.  
 100 Las, que fera? Ne sai que faire,  
 Que por li sui en grant afaire.  
 Tenir me porroit por mauvais  
 Se por nule menace lais  
 Que je n'i aille en tapinaje  
 105 O en abit de fol onbrage.  
 Por li me fera rere et tondre,  
 S'autremant ne me puis repondre.  
 Trop sui el païs coneüz;  
 Sampres seroie deceüz,  
 110 Se je ne puis changier a gré  
 Ma vesteüre et mon aé.  
 Ne finerai onques d'errer  
 Tant con porrai nes point aler."  
 Quant ce ot dit, plus ne demore,  
 115 Ainz s'an torne meïsmes l'ore,  
 Guerpi sa terre et son roiaume;  
 Il ne prinst ne hauberc ne hiaume.  
 D'errer ne fine nuit et jor,  
 Jusq'a la mer ne prist sejor.  
 120 A mout grant poine vint [il] la,  
 Et si vos di qu'il a pieça  
 Tel poine soferte por li  
 Et mout esté fol, je vos di.  
 Change son non, fait soi clamer  
 125 Tantris. Qant il ot passé mer,  
 Passez est outre lo rivage.  
 Ne vialt pas qu'en lo taigne a sage:  
 Ses dras deront, sa chiere grate,  
 Ne voit home cui il ne bate;  
 130 Tondrë a fait sa bloie crine;  
 N'i a un sol en la marine  
 Qui ne croie que ce soit rage,  
 Mais ne sevent pas son corage.  
 En sa main porte une maçue,

[153r]

- that I could speak with her.  
 May God, in His goodness, have the will  
 to grant her happiness and health,  
 and may He grant me honor and happiness  
 and put me on the right path  
 to gaze at her again,  
 to see her and speak with her!  
 God, how burdened and disheartened I am,  
 and how little respect I command! 90  
 What can I do without a chance to see her?  
 Because of her I live day and night  
 in constant torment.  
 Not seeing her, I stand to lose my mind.  
 What can I do? I don't know what to do,  
 I am so disturbed because of her. 100  
 She might well consider me a coward  
 if I let some threat stop me  
 from going to her in disguise  
 or dressed like an ominous madman.\*  
 For her I'll shave off beard and all my hair  
 unless I can find some other concealment.  
 I am too well known in the land  
 and would soon be betrayed,  
 unless I could choose some other dress  
 and make myself look older. 105  
 [To return to Yseut] I will travel on  
 as long I can possibly move."  
 Once he had spoken, he waited no longer  
 but set out at once 110  
 and left his land and kingdom;  
 he took neither hauberk nor helmet.  
 He kept traveling night and day,  
 with no rest till he reached the sea.  
 It took a great effort to arrive there,  
 but, I tell you, he had already  
 undergone great trials for Yseut  
 and had already gone mad, I tell you. 115  
 He changed his name, claiming to be  
 Tantris. Once he had crossed the sea,  
 he did not linger on the shore.  
 Wanting to be thought deranged,  
 he tore his clothes, scratched his face,  
 and picked a fight with every man he saw;  
 he cut off his blond hair. 120  
 Everyone on the coast  
 was convinced he was mad,  
 but no one knew what was in his heart.  
 He went like a madman, carrying a club,\* 125  
 130

- 135      Conme fous va, chascuns lo hue,  
           Gitant li pierres a la teste.  
           Tristanz s'en va, plus n'i areste.  
           Ensinc ala lonc tans par terre  
           Tot por l'amor Yseut conquerre.
- 140      Mout li ert boen ce qu'il faisoit,  
           Nule rien ne li desplaisoit,  
           Fors ce qu'il n'estoit o Yseut:  
           Celi desirre, celi veut.  
           N'a encor pas esté a cort,
- 145      Mais or ira, a quel qui tort,  
           Et se fera por fol sambler,  
           Que a Yseut viaut il parler.  
           Droit a la cort en est venuz,  
           Onques huis ne li fu tenuz.
- 150      Qant Tristanz vint devant lo roi,\*  
           Auques fu de povre conroi:  
           Haut fu tonduz, lonc ot lo col,  
           A meroille sambla bien fol,  
 153a      *Megres, ateynt et neir et payl.*
- 153b      *Ne se perçut nul de la sale*
- 153c      *Ke ce fut Tritran le magin*
- 153d      *Ke pris ot la sore Kardin.*
- 155      Mout s'est mis por amor en grande.  
           Mars l'apele, si li demande:  
           "Fous, con as non?" "G'é non Picous."\*\*  
           "Qui t'angendra?" "Uns galerous."  
           "De que t'ot il?" "D'une balaine.  
           Une suer ai, que vos amoine.
- 160      La meschine a non Bruneheut.  
           Vos l'avroiz, et j'avrai Yseut."  
           "Se nos chanjon, que feras tu?"  
           Et dit Tristanz: "O bees tu?"  
           Entre les nues et lo ciel,
- 165      De flors et de roses, sans giel,  
           Iluec ferai une maison  
           O moi et li nos deduiron.  
           A ces Galois, cui Deus doint honte,  
           Encor n'ai pas finé mon conte.
- 170      Rois Mars, demoisele Brangain  
           Traist, je t'en afi en ta main,  
           Del boivre don dona Tristan,  
           Don il sofri puis grant ahan.  
           Moi et Yseut, que je voi ci,
- 175      En beümes, demandez li.  
           Et se lo tient or a mançonge,  
           Don di je bien que ce fu songe,  
           Car je lo songé tote nuit.

- and everyone jeered at him  
and threw stones at his head. 135
- But Tristan never stopped along the way.  
For a long time he thus continued on his road  
in order to win the love of Yseut.
- He was happy with what he was doing,  
and there was nothing to displease him  
except that he was still far from Yseut,  
Yseut his love, Yseut his one desire. 140
- He had not yet been to court,  
but now he would go, at whatever risk,  
passing for a madman:  
he was intent on speaking to Yseut. 145
- He came right to court  
and found no door closed to him.
- When Tristan stood before the king,  
he was a sorry sight: 150
- With hair gone and long' neck showing,  
he was the very image of a madman.
- He was gaunt, blotched with dirt, and pale. 153a
- No one in the great hall realized  
that this was Tristan, the young man 153b
- who had married the sister of Caherdin. 153c
- 153d
- He had gone to great lengths for the sake of love.  
Mark turned to him and asked: 155
- "Fool, what is your name?" "It's Picol."  
"Who is your father?" "A walrus."  
"And your mother?" "A whale.  
I have a sister, whom I've brought with me;"  
Bruneheut is her name. 160
- You can have her, and I'll take Yseut."  
"If we make this exchange, what will you do?"  
Tristan said: "Well, what do you think?  
In the sky, among the clouds,  
with flowers and roses, far from frost, 165
- I'll build a house  
where she and I can take our pleasure.  
As for these Welshmen of yours, Devil take them!"
- I haven't yet finished what I have to say.  
King Mark, it was lady Brangain\* 170
- who, I swear to you, prepared  
the potion that she gave to Tristan  
and that led him into such great suffering.  
Yseut and I both drank of it.
- She is right here: ask her! 175
- And if she says I'm telling a lie,  
then I'll say it was a dream;  
in fact, I dreamt it all night long.

- Rois, tu n'iés mie encor bien duit.  
 180 Esgarde [moi] en mi lo vis:  
 Don ne sanble je bien Tanris?  
 181a *Metet li "tris" dewaunt la "tran"*  
 181b *E vus y truveret "Triran".*  
 Je ai sailli et lanciez jons  
 Et sostenu dolez bastons"  
 Et en bois vescu de racine,  
 185 Entre mes braz tenu raine. [153v]  
 Plus diré se m'an entremet."  
 "Or te repose, Picolet."  
 187a *Et dit Ysout, k'en out hunte:*  
 187b *"Ici poet ben finir tun cunte.*  
 Ce poise moi que tant fait as.  
 Lai or huimais ester tes gas."  
 190 "A moi que chaut s'il vos en poise?  
 Je n'i donroie un po de gloise."  
 Or dient tuit li chevalier:  
 "N'a fol baer, n'a fol tancier!"\*\*  
 193a *Tristanz parole cum il veut;*  
 193b *Munt ameyt [la raine] Yseut.*  
 193c *"O reis!" dit [il] tut an oyant,*  
 "Manbre vos d'une peor grant,  
 194a *Kant [vus] an bois chacier alastes?*  
 195 *Dormant ansemble nus trovastes*  
 Dedanz la foilliee, estandu  
 Entre nos deus mon branc tot nu.  
 La fis je sanblant de dormir,  
 Car je n'osoie pas foir.  
 200 Chaut faisoit con el tans de mai.  
 Par mi la loje vi un rai;  
 Li rais sor sa face luisoit:  
 Mout faisoit Deus ce qu'il voloit.  
 Tes ganz botas enz el partuis,  
 205 Si t'an alas, il n'i ot plus,  
 Ne je ne voil outre conter,  
 Car il li devroit bien manbrer."  
 Marc en esgarde la raine,  
 Et cele tint la chiere encline,  
 210 Son chief covri de son mantel:  
 "Fol, mal aient li marinel  
 Qui ça outre vos amenerent,  
 Qant en la mer ne vos giterent!"  
 Adonques a Tristanz parlé:  
 215 "Dame, cist couz ait mal dahé!  
 Se estoiez certe de moi,  
 Se par vos m'avoiez secroi  
 Et vos saüssiez bien mon estre,

- King, you haven't yet learned everything.  
 Take a good look at my face:  
 don't I look just like Tantris?  
 Put "tris" before "tan"  
 and you get "Tristan." 180  
 I have done leaps and reed-hurling,  
 juggled flat sticks,  
 and lived on roots in the woods;  
 in my arms I've held a queen. 185  
 I can say more if I take the trouble."  
 "That's enough now, Picolet."  
 Yseut, embarrassed, spoke up:  
 "It is time to stop this talk of yours. 187a  
 It bothers me, what you have said.  
 Put an end now to your nonsense."  
 "What do I care if it bothers you? 187b  
 It matters no more than a lump of clay."  
 At that, the knights all cried out:  
 "Heed not a fool, fight not a fool!"  
 Tristan spoke as he wished; 190  
 he was much in love with Yseut.  
 "King," he said over their shouts,  
 do you remember what fear you felt once"  
 when you went hunting in the woods? 193a  
 You found us sleeping together  
 in the bower, with my bare sword 193b  
 lying between us.  
 193c  
 I was only pretending to sleep,  
 because I didn't dare run away.  
 It was warm, as it is in May. 194a  
 I saw a ray of sunshine coming into the bower  
 and shining on her face:  
 God was doing exactly what He wanted.  
 You closed off the opening with your gloves  
 and went away, that's all— 195  
 and I don't mean to tell the rest,  
 since she no doubt remembers it."  
 This made Mark glance at the queen,  
 who was looking down.  
 She drew her cloak over her head: 200  
 "Fool! Damn the sailors  
 who brought you here  
 instead of throwing you into the sea!"  
 Then Tristan spoke:  
 "Damn this cuckold, my lady!  
 If you trusted me,  
 if we were alone together  
 and you could be sure of who I am, 210  
 215

- Ne vos tandroit huis ne fenestre  
 220 Ne lo commandement lo roi.  
 Encor ai l'anel pres de moi  
 Que me donastes au partir  
 Del parlement que doi hair.  
 Maldite soit ceste asanblee!
- Mainte dolereuse jornee  
 225 En ai puis aüe et soferre.  
 Car m'estorez, dame, ma perte  
 En doz baisier de fine amor  
 Ou embracier soz covertor.
- Mout m'avroiez fait grant confort,  
 230 Certes, o autremant sui mort.  
 Onques Yder, qui ocist l'ors,  
 N'ot tant ne poines ne dolors  
 Por Guenievre, la fame Artur,
- Con je por vos, car je en mur.  
 235 Guerpi en ai tote Bretaigne,  
 Par moi sui venuz en Espaigne,  
 Onques ne.l sorent mi ami  
 Ne ne.l sot la suer Caerdin.
- Tant ai erré par mer, par terre  
 240 Que je vos sui venuz requerre.  
 Se je ensin m'an vois do tot,  
 Que l'un en l'autre ne vos bot,  
 Donc ai je perdue ma joie.
- Jamais en augur nus ne croie!"  
 245 En la sale maint en consoille  
 Li uns a l'autrë en l'oroille:  
 "Mien esciant, tost avandroit  
 Que mes sires cel fol creroit."
- Li rois a demandé chevaus,  
 250 Aler veoir vialt ses oisiaus  
 La dedefors voler as grues;  
 Pieça que n'issirent des mues.  
 Tuit s'an issent, la sale est vuie,
- Et Tristanz a un banc s'apuie.  
 255 La raine entra en sa chanbre  
 Don li pavemanz est de lanbre.  
 A soi apele sa meschine,  
 Dit li a: "Par sainte Estrestine,"
- As tu oï del fol mervoilles?  
 260 Male goute ait il es oroilles!  
 Tant a hui mes faiz regreté  
 Et les Tristan, c'ai tant amé  
 Et fais encor, pas ne m'an fain!
- Lasse! si m'a il en desdain  
 265 Et si m'an sofre encore a poine.

[154r]

- no door or window could hold you back,  
not even an order from the king." 220
- I still have on me the ring  
you gave me at the end  
of that meeting that I hate to recall.  
I curse the day it took place!
- I have had many a painful time  
and great sorrow since then. 225
- Give me back what I lost, my lady,  
with sweet kisses of true love  
or embraces under the covers.
- That would ease my pain immensely;  
otherwise, I can only die. 230
- Yder, who killed the bear,  
never ached so much  
for Guenevere, the wife of Arthur,  
as I do for you: I am dying of love. 235
- It made me leave Brittany,  
and I went all alone to Spain;  
my friends never knew about it,  
and neither did Caherdin's sister.
- I traveled far, by land and by sea,  
to come join you here. 240
- If I have to go away as I've come  
and the two of us have never come together,  
I'll have lost all chance of joy.
- No one should ever believe predictions!" 245
- People up and down the great hall  
were whispering to one another:  
"If you ask me, the king  
may yet take this fool seriously!"
- The king ordered horses to be readied,  
because he wanted to go see his birds  
fly out after cranes: 250
- they had not been out of their cages in a while.  
Everyone went out, the hall was empty,  
and Tristan slumped onto a bench. 255
- The queen went into her  
marble-floored chamber.  
She beckoned to her companion  
and said: "By Saint Estrestine,  
did you hear that extraordinary speech? 260
- The fool should have his ears drop off!  
Did you hear how he recalled what I did,  
what Tristan did? Oh, I loved him,  
and still do: I don't deny it!
- But he is full of disdain for me,  
while I can hardly live without him. 265

- Va por lo fol, si lo m'amoine!"  
 Cele s'an torne eschevelee;  
 Voit la Tristanz, mout li agree.
- 270     "Dan fol, ma dame vos demande.  
 Mout avez hui esté en grande  
 De recontter li vostre vie.  
 Plains estes de melancolie.  
 Si m'aüst Deus, qui vos pandroit,  
 275     Je cuit que bien esploiteroit."  
 "Certes, Brangien, ainz feroit mal.  
 Plus fol de moi vait a cheval."  
 "Quel deialblë enpané bis  
 Vos ont mon non ensi apris?"
- 280     "Bele, pieça que je lo soi.  
 Par lo mien chief, qui ja fu bilo,  
 Partie est de cest [chief] raison.  
 Par vos est fors: lo guerredon  
 Hui cest jor, bele, vos demant,
- 285     Que me façoiz solemant tant  
 Que la raïne me merisse  
 La carte part de mon servise  
 O la moitié de mon travail."  
 Don sopira a grant baail.
- 290     Brangien si l'a bien agaitié:  
 Biaux braz, beles mains et biaux piez  
 Li voit avoir a desmesure;  
 Bien est tailliez par la çainture.  
 En son cuer panse qu'il est sage
- 295     Et meillor mal a que n'est rage.  
 "Chevaliers sire, Deus t'anort  
 Et doint joie, mais qu'il ne tort  
 A la raïne a desenor  
 Ne a moi, qui sui de s'amor!
- 300     Pardone moi ce que t'ai dit,  
 Ne m'an poise mie petit."  
 "Je.l vos pardoin, pas ne m'an poise."         [154v]  
 Atant dit Brangien que cortoise:  
 "Toe merci, porchace t'uevre,  
 305     D'autrui que de Tristan te covre."  
 "Ja si feroie je, mon voil,  
 Mais li boivres del trosseroil  
 M'a si emblé et cuer et sans  
 Que je n'an ai autre porpans  
 310     Fors tant que en amor servir.  
 Deus m'an doint a boen chief venir!  
 Mar fu cele ovre apareilliee,  
 mon san ai en folor changiee."  
 Et vos, Brangien, qui l'aportates,

- Go get the fool and bring him here!"  
 The young woman dashed right out;  
 Tristan was delighted to see her.  
 "Fool, sir, my lady wants to see you! 270  
 You have just gone to great lengths  
 to tell her your life's story.  
 What a gloomy, melancholy sort you are!  
 So help me God, if anyone hanged you,  
 I'm convinced he would be doing a good thing." 275  
 "No, Brangain; it would be a great wrong.  
 There are knights more mad than I.  
 "What dark-winged devils  
 told you what my name is?"  
 "I have known it for a while, my dear. 280  
 By my head, whose hair was once blond,  
 reason has taken leave of this head of mine,  
 and it is thanks to you. The compensation  
 I now ask you for, my dear,  
 is that you do what you can  
 to make the queen reward 285  
 at least a quarter of my service  
 or half of my pains."  
 At that, he sighed a great sigh.  
 Brangain looked at him closely: 290  
 she saw that his arms, his hands, his feet  
 were all strikingly beautiful  
 and that he was well-shaped and slim.  
 It seemed to her that he was of sound mind  
 and sick with something better than madness. 295  
 "Sir knight, God grant you honor  
 and joy, as long as your success  
 brings no dishonor to the queen  
 or to me, her faithful friend!  
 Forgive me for what I said to you; 300  
 I am very sorry."  
 "I don't hesitate to forgive you."  
 Brangain answered courteously:  
 "Please go ahead as you plan,  
 but use a name other than Tristan." 305  
 "I would gladly do so,  
 but the potion in your baggage  
 so robbed me of heart and mind  
 that I am left with no thought  
 for anything but the service of love. 310  
 God help me succeed!  
 How terrible, the way it all got started  
 and then made me go from sane to mad!  
 It was you, Brangain, who brought us the drink,

- 315 Certes, malemant esploytates.  
 Cil boivres fu faiz a envers,  
 De plusors herbes mout divers.  
 Je muir por li, ele ne.l sant,  
 N'est pas parti oniemant.
- 320 Car je sui Tristanz, qui mar fu.”  
 A cest mot l'a bien conneü.  
 A ses piez chiet, merci li crie  
 Qu'il li pardoint sa vilenie.\*  
 Cil la relieve par les doiz,
- 325 Si la baissa plus de cent foiz.  
 Or la prie de sa besoingne  
 Et qu'el la face sans essoigne  
 — Bien s'an porra aparcevoir —  
 Et qu'ele en face son pooir.
- 330 Brangien l'an moine par lo poin,  
 L'uns pres de l'autre, non pas loing,  
 Et viennent en la chanbre ensanble.  
 Voit lo Yseut, li cuers li tranble,  
 Car mout lo het por les paroles
- 335 Que il dist hui matin si foles.  
 Mout boenemant et sanz losange  
 La salua, a quel qu'il prange:  
 “Deus saut, fait ce il, la rainé,  
 Avoc li Brangien sa meschine!
- 340 Car ele m'avroit tost gari  
 Por sol moi apeler ami.  
 Amis sui je, et ele amie.  
 N'est pas l'amors a droit partie:  
 Je sui a doble traveillié,
- 345 Mais el n'an a nule pitié.  
 O fain, o soif et ou durs liz,  
 Pansis, pansant, do cuer, do piz,  
 Ai soferte mainte destrece.  
 N'ai rien mesfait par ma parece.
- 350 Mais cil Deus qui reigne sanz fin,  
 Qui as noces Archedeclin\*  
 Lor fu tant cortois botoillier  
 Que l'eve fist en vin changier,  
 Icel Deus me mete en corage
- 355 Que il me giet d'icest folage!”  
 Cele se taist qui mot ne sone.  
 Voit la Brangien, si l'araisone:  
 “Dame,” fait ele, “quel sanblant  
 Faites au plus loial amant
- 360 Qui onques fust ne jamais soit?  
 Vostre amor l'a trop en destroit.  
 Metez li tост voz braz au col!

- and you were wrong to do it. 315  
 Its many herbs made the potion unpredictable  
 and it had the wrong effect.
- I am dying for her, but she feels nothing;  
 the effect is not the same for both.  
 You see, I am Tristan: Alas." 320  
 At that word, she recognized him.  
 She fell at his feet and begged him  
 to forgive her offense.
- Taking her by the fingers, he raised her up  
 and kissed her warmly. 325  
 Then he asked her to help him,  
 to help him without hesitation  
 and to the best of her ability—  
 she would surely know how to proceed."
- Brangain took him by the hand  
 and, walking side by side,  
 they went together into the chamber.  
 Yseut saw him and her heart beat faster  
 because of the hateful words, mad words,  
 that he had uttered that morning. 335  
 He greeted her with great propriety, with  
 no blandishment, ready for whatever might come:  
 "God save the queen," he said,  
 "along with her companion, Brangain!"  
 She would cure me forthwith  
 merely by calling me her lover. 340  
 I am her lover, and she is mine,  
 but it is an unequal love:  
 for me it is a double torment,  
 while it leaves her unmoved.  
 With hunger and thirst, hard beds,  
 a brooding heart, a worried breast,  
 I have undergone great hardship.  
 I have never been daunted by trials.  
 But God above, whose reign is endless,  
 who was a such a generous steward 350  
 at the wedding at Cana  
 that He changed the water into wine—  
 may the same God make me feel  
 that He can free me of this madness!" 355  
 Yseut said not a word.  
 Brangain looked at her and spoke:  
 "My lady," she said, "what greeting  
 do you have for the truest lover  
 who ever was or will ever be?  
 Love for you has brought him torment.  
 Throw your arms around his neck!" 360

- Por vos s'est tonduz comme fol.  
 Dame, entandez que je i di:  
 365 Ce est Tristans, ge.l vos afi."  
 "Damoisele, vos avez tort.  
 Car fussiez vos a lui au port  
 O il ariva hui matin!  
 Trop a en lui cointe meschin!
- 370 Se ce fust il, il n'aüst pas  
 Hui dit de moi si vilains gas,  
 Oiant toz cez en cele sale:  
 Miauz volsist estre el fonz de cale!"  
 "Dame, ge.l fis por nos covrir  
 375 Et por aux toz por fous tenir.  
 Ainz ne soi rien de devinaille.\*  
 La vostre amor trop me travaille.  
 Po vos manbre de Gamarien  
 Qui ne demandoit autre rien  
 380 fors vostre cors qu'il en mena.  
 Qui fu ce qui vos delivra?"  
 "Certes, Tristans, li niés lo roi,  
 Qui mout fu de riche conroi."  
 Voit lo Tristans, mout li est buen.
- 385 Bien set que il avra do suen,  
 S'amor, car plus ne li demande.  
 Sovant en a esté en grande.  
 "Resamble je point a celui  
 Qui sol, sanz aïe d'autrui,  
 390 Vos secorut a cel besoin,  
 A Guimaran copa lo poin?"  
 "Oïl, itant que estes home.  
 Ne vos conois, ce est la some."  
 "Certes, dame, c'est grant dolor.  
 395 Ja fui je vostre harpeor.  
 En la chanbre o fui venistes,  
 Tele ore que je fui mout tristes,  
 Et vos, raïne, encor un poi.  
 Car de la plaie que ge oi  
 400 Que il me fist parmi l'espaulie  
 — Si issi je de cesté aule —  
 Me randistes et sauf et sain;  
 Autres de vos n'i mist la main.  
 Del velin del cruel serpent  
 405 — Panduz soie se je en mant —  
 Me gareïstes sanz mehain,  
 Et qant je fui entrez el bain,  
 Traisistes vos mon branc d'acier;  
 Trovastes l'osche a l'essuier.  
 410 Donc apelastes Perenis

- For your sake, he cut his hair like a fool's.  
 Listen to me, my lady:  
 this is Tristan, I assure you." 365
- "You are wrong, young lady.  
 You should have been with him at the port  
 where he came ashore this morning."  
 What a tricky fellow he is!  
 If he were Tristan, he would not have 370  
 told such foul stories about me  
 in front of all those people in the great hall:  
 he'd rather have hidden in the hold of his ship!"
- "My lady, I did it to protect us:  
 I had to fool them all." 375
- Before, I'd never resorted to riddles,  
 but love for you overwhelms me.  
 Do you not remember Gamarien?"  
 He wanted nothing but you—your body—  
 and he carried you off as his captive. 380
- Who was it that set you free?"  
 "Tristan, of course, the king's nephew,  
 a splendid and elegant man!"  
 Tristan was pleased to hear this.  
 He realized he would yet have the love 385  
 due him, which was all he wanted.
- He had often been eager for it.  
 "Don't I look at all like the man  
 who alone, with no one's help,  
 came to your rescue 390  
 and cut off Guimaran's hand?"  
 "You do, insofar as you too are a man,  
 but the truth is I don't know you."  
 "What a painful answer, my lady!"
- There was a time I played the harp for you. 395
- You came into my chamber  
 at a time when I was in low spirits  
 and you, queen, were sad as well.  
 I had been badly wounded  
 in the shoulder by the Morholt 400  
 (that's how I'd come out of the battle)  
 and you nursed me back to health;  
 no one else was of any help.  
 You cured me, with no ill effects,  
 (let me be hanged if this is a lie!) 405  
 of that cruel dragon's poison.  
 While I was taking my bath,  
 you took out my sword and discovered,  
 when wiping it, the nick in the steel.  
 Then you had Perenis\* bring you 410

- O la bande de paile bis  
 O la piece iert enveloppee;  
 L'acier joinssistes a l'espee.  
 Quant l'un acier a l'autre joint,  
 415      Donc ne m'amastes vos donc point.  
 Par grant ire, por moi ferir,  
 L'alastes a deus poinz saisir,  
 Venistes vers moi tote iriee.  
 En po d'ore vos oi paiee  
 420      O la parole do chevol,  
 Don je ai puis aü grant dol.  
 Vostre mere sot ce secroi,  
 —Ice vos afi je par foi —  
 Don me fustes vos [puis] bailliee.  
 425      Bien fu la nes apareilliee.  
 Quant de havle fumes torné,  
 Au tierz jor nos failli oré.  
 Toz nos estut nagier as rains,  
 Je meïsmes i mis les mains.  
 430      Granz fu li chauz, s'aümes soif.  
 Brangien, qui ci est devant toi,  
 Corut en haste au trosseroil;  
 Ele mesprist estre son voil.  
 Do buvrage empli la cope,  
 435      Mout par fu clers, n'i parut sope.  
 Tandi lo moi et je lo pris.  
 Ainz ne t'iert mal ne aprés pis,  
 Car trop savez de la favele.  
 Mar vos vi onques, damoisele!"  
 440      "De mout bon maistre avez leü!  
 A vostre voil seroiz tenu  
 Por Tristan, a cui Deus aït,  
 Mais toz en iroiz escondiz.  
 Diroiz vos mais nule novele?"  
 445      "Oïl, lo saut de la chapele.  
 Quant a ardoir fustes jugiee  
 Et as malades otroiee,  
 Mout s'antraloient desrannant  
 Et mout duremant estrivant:  
 450      Li queus d'aux vos avroit el bois;  
 A l'un en donerent lo chois.  
 Je n'an fis autre embuschemant  
 Fors do Gorvenal solemant.  
 Mout me deüssiez bien conoistre,  
 455      Car je formant lo fis la croistre.  
 Ainz par moi n'en fu un desdit,  
 Mes Gorvenal, cui Deus aït,  
 Lor dona teus couz des bastons

[155v]

- the strip of dark silk  
 in which the missing chip\* was wrapped,  
 and you tried to fit the piece into the notch.  
 When you saw how perfectly they matched,  
 then, oh then, you had no love for me. 415  
 Angrily, you seized it with both hands  
 in order to strike me,  
 and rushed toward me in fury.  
 It took little time, though, to calm you  
 with the story of the hair,\* 420  
 which brought me so much suffering.  
 Your mother learned the secret,  
 (I assure you it's true)  
 and you were then put in my care.  
 The ship was made ready. 425  
 When we three days out of the harbor,  
 the wind died down.  
 We all had to take up the oars,  
 and I myself joined the crew.  
 The heat was oppressive, and we grew thirsty. 430  
 Brangain, the very one now facing you,  
 ran to her baggage and in her haste  
 made a mistake she never intended.  
 She poured the drink into the cup;  
 it was perfectly clear, with nothing floating in it. 435  
 She held it out to me and I took it.  
 You had no more woes afterward than before,  
 because you have a glib tongue, Brangain.  
 But what ill luck you brought to me!"  
 "You have been reading some good writers! 440  
 You would like to be taken  
 for Tristan—God save him!—  
 but you'll be shown the door instead.  
 Have you anything else to tell us about?"  
 "Yes, the leap from the chapel." 445  
 When you were condemned to be burned  
 and handed over to the lepers,"  
 they ran around fighting  
 and bitterly arguing to see  
 which one would have you in the woods; 450  
 one was finally chosen.  
 I set up an ambush with no help  
 but Gorvenal's.  
 You should certainly recognize me,  
 for my ambush led to quite a hiding there. 455  
 I myself didn't touch one of them,  
 but Gorvenal—God save him!—  
 gave them a solid beating

- Ou s'apooient des moignons.  
 460 En la forest fumes un terme  
 O nos plorames mainte lerme.  
 Ne vit encor l'hermite Ugrin?  
 Deus mete s'ame a boene fin!"  
 "Ce poez bien laissier ester.  
 465 De lui ne fait mie a parler.  
 Vos ne.l ressanbleroiz oan.  
 Il est prodom et vos truanz.  
 Estrange chose avez enprise,  
 Maint engingniez par truandise.  
 470 Je vos feroie mout tost prandre  
 Et au roi vos ovres antandre."  
 "Certes, dame, s'il lo savoit,  
 Je cuit qu'il vos en peseroit.  
 L'an dit, qui ainz servi Amor,  
 475 Tot lo guerredone en un jor.  
 Selonc les ovres que ci oi  
 Est ce granz errors endroit moi. [156r]  
 Je soloie ja avoir drue,  
 Mais or l'ai, ce m'est vis, perdue."  
 480 "Sire, qui vos a destorbé?"  
 "Cele qui tant jorz m'a amé  
 Et fera encor, se Deu plaist:  
 Ne m'est mestier c'ancor me laist.  
 Or vos conterai autre rien.  
 485 Estrange nature a en chien.  
 Queles! Qu'est Hudent devenu?  
 Quant cil l'orent trois jorz tenu,  
 Ainz ne vost boivre ne mangier,  
 Por moi se voloit enragier.  
 490 Donc abatirent au brechet  
 Lo bel lien o tot l'uisset.  
 Ainz ne fina, si vint a moi."  
 "Par cele foi que je vos doi,  
 Certes, je.l gart en ma saisine  
 495 A celui eus cui me destine  
 Q'ancor ferons ensamble joie."  
 "Por moi lairoit Yseut la Bloie.  
 Car lo me mostrez orandroit,  
 Savoir se il me conoistroit."  
 500 "Conoistre! Vos dites richece.  
 Po priseroit vostre destrece,  
 Car puis que Tristanz s'an ala,  
 Home de lui ne s'aprime  
 Qu'il ne volsist mangier as danz.  
 505 Il gient en la chanbre loianz.  
 Damoisele, amenez lo ça."

- with their very own crutches.  
 We stayed a while in the forest  
 and shed many a tear there. 460  
 Is Ogrin the hermit not still alive?  
 God save his soul!"  
 "Leave that subject!  
 It's not for you to speak of him.  
 You can never be like him! 465  
 He is a man of worth and you, a fraud.  
 It's a remarkable thing you've undertaken,  
 tricking people with your crookedness!  
 I would gladly have you seized right now  
 and let you tell your story to the king." 470  
 "No, my lady; if he heard it,  
 it would surely bring you grief.  
 They say the man who has served Love  
 reaps his reward in a single day. 475  
 But from what I hear you say,  
 that does not apply to me.  
 I used to have a lover  
 but now, it seems, I have lost her."  
 "My lord, who caused you this trouble? 480  
 "The one who has always loved me  
 and will love me still, please God;  
 she mustn't give me up again.  
 Now let me tell you something else.  
 Dogs have a remarkable nature. 485  
 Look, what's become of Husdent?  
 Through the three days he was locked away,  
 he was maddened by my absence  
 and refused to eat or drink.  
 Then they took off the little pointer's  
 fine leash and let him out, 490  
 and he came running to me."  
 "To tell you the truth,  
 I still have him in my keeping,  
 holding him for the same man I wait for myself,  
 the man with whom I will yet share happiness." 495  
 "For me Husdent would leave Yseut the blonde!  
 Show him to me right away;  
 we'll see if he recognizes me."  
 "Recognize you! What nonsense! 500  
 He would hardly appreciate your shabbiness.  
 Ever since Tristan went away,  
 no man has come near him  
 that he has not tried to bite.  
 He is whining in the next room.  
 Brangain, bring him in." 505

- Brangien i cort, sou desloia.  
 Qant li brechez l'oi parler,  
 Lo lien fait des mains voler  
 510 A la meschine qui l'amoine,  
 De venir a Tristan se poine.  
 Sore li cort, lieve la teste,  
 Onques tel joie ne fist beste;  
 Boute do groin et fiert do pié,  
 515 Toz li monz en aust pitié.  
 Ses mains loiche, de joie abiae.  
 Voit lo Yseut, formant s'esmaie,  
 Craint que il soit enchanteur  
 O aucun boen bareteor:  
 520 Tristanz ot povre vesteüre.  
 Au brachet dit: "La norriture  
 C'ai mise en toi soit benoite!  
 Ne m'as mie t'amor toloite.  
 Mout m'as montré plus bel sanblant  
 525 Que celi cui j'amoie tant.  
 Ele cuide que je me faigne:  
 Ele verra la destre enseigne  
 Q'ele me dona en baisant,  
 Qant departimes en plorant,  
 530 Cet enelet petit d'or fin.  
 Mout m'a esté prouchien voisin,  
 Mainte foiz ai a lui parlé  
 Et quis conseil et demandé.  
 Qant [il] ne me savoit respondre,  
 535 Avis m'iert que deüssé fondre.  
 Par amor baisai l'esmeraude,  
 Mi oil moilloient deve chaude." [156v]  
 Yseut conut bien l'anelet  
 Et vit la joie del brechet  
 540 Que il fait, a po ne s'anrage.  
 Or s'aparçoit en son corage,  
 C'est Tristans a cui el parole.  
 "Lasse!" fait ele, "tant sui fole!  
 Hé! mauvais cuers, por que ne fonz  
 545 Qant ne conois la rien el mont  
 Qui por moi a plus de tormant?  
 Sire, merci! Je m'an repant."  
 Pasmee chiet, cil la reçoit.  
 Or voit Brangien ce qu'el voloit.  
 550 Quant el revint, es flans l'anbrace,  
 Lo vis et lo nes et la face  
 Li a plus de mil foiz baisié.  
 "Ha! Tristanz, sire, quel pechié,  
 Qui tel poine sofrez por moi!

- Brangain ran to untie the dog.  
 When he heard Tristan speak,  
 he tore himself away from the young woman,  
 who was leading him on a leash,  
 and dashed forward to Tristan. 510  
 He ran up to him, head held high,  
 then nuzzled and pawed him  
 with all the delight an animal could show;  
 anyone would have been moved by the sight. 515  
 He licked his hands and barked with joy.  
 Yseut was frightened to see this,  
 fearing that the man was a magician  
 or a remarkable impostor:  
 Tristan was dressed so poorly! 520  
 He said to the dog: "Thank God  
 for the training I gave you!  
 You haven't lost your love for me.  
 You've shown me a warmer welcome  
 than the woman I loved so much. 525  
 She thinks that I'm pretending;  
 well, I'll show her the very sign  
 she gave me with her kisses  
 when we parted in tears:  
 this little ring of solid gold. 530  
 It has always been close to me;  
 many a time I have spoken to it  
 and sought its help and advice.  
 Whenever it couldn't answer me,  
 I felt I was about to collapse. 535  
 I kissed the emerald with love,  
 and my eyes would grow wet with tears."  
 Yseut recognized the ring  
 and saw the little dog's excitement  
 and almost lost her mind. 540  
 Now she fully grasped  
 that it was Tristan she was speaking to.  
 "What a fool I've been!" she exclaimed.  
 What a heartless heart, not to melt away  
 for not recognizing the one creature 545  
 who has suffered most on my account!  
 Forgive me, my lord! I am so sorry."  
 She fainted, and he caught her as she fell.  
 This was what Brangain had been hoping for.  
 When Yseut came to, she embraced Tristan  
 and kissed him again and again  
 on the forehead, the nose, and the lips. 550  
 "Ah, Tristan, my lord, what a pity  
 that you should bear such pain because of me!"

- 555      Don mal soie fille de roi  
S'or ne vos rant lo guerredon!  
Quelles, Brangien! Quel la feron?"  
"Dame, ne.l tenez mie a gas.  
Alez, si li querez les dras.
- 560      Il est Tristanz et vos Yseut.  
Or voit l'an bien qui plus se deut  
A mout petitet d'achoison."  
El dit: "Quel aise li feron?"  
"Tandis con vos avez loisir,
- 565      Mout vos penez de lui servir,  
Tant que Mars veigne de riviere."  
"Car la trovast il si pleniere  
Qu'il ne venist devant uit jorz!"  
.....  
A cez paroles, sanz grant cri,\*  
Con vos avez ici oï,  
Entre Tristanz soz la cortine,  
Entre ses braz tient la raïne.

I won't deserve to be the princess I am  
if I let your love go unrequited!  
Tell me, Brangain: what shall we do?"  
"Listen, my lady; I mean this.  
Go find him proper clothes.  
He is Tristan and you, Yseut.  
Now we'll see who laments loudest  
with no reason to lament."  
Yseut said: "How can we content him?"  
"As long as you are free to do so,  
make every effort to serve him—  
until Mark returns from fowling."  
"I wish the riverbank were so teeming  
that he would stay away for a week!"

.....  
At these words, almost soundlessly,  
as you have heard,  
Tristan parted the curtain  
and took the queen in his arms.

555

560

565

570



## REJECTED READINGS AND VARIANTS

7 ms. son norine / P: son uorine / W: san orine 14 W: a. miauz c. 22 ms., P, W: en  
ceste terre 24 H, W: C'or mais 25 H: André 26 ms. Se nos 29 ms. Qel me 32 ms.,  
P, W: Qui 39 ms. qui let / P: qui l'et 47 ms., H, P, W, L: se dialt 48 ms., H, P, W,  
L: Ysiaut 49 ms., H, P, W, L: Ysiaut 50 ms. primes a samie 53 ms., L: en la c. 59  
H, W, L: doit qui 60 W: ne sai, qui 61 ms. cele alaissiee / H, L: celi 63 ms., H, L:  
et tant h. et a. / P: T. m. et tante h. a. / W: T. m., t. h. e t. a. 64 H, W: L., chaitis, f.  
/ P: il, hé las, c. 70 ms. lui amer ne se fait 74 ms. Si serai, Dex 75 ms. ge qui ne 76  
ms. devant que je aie 77 Order of lines in ms.: 76, 77, 84–101, 76, 77, 78–83, 102  
79 ms., L: a Mohort / H: al Morhot / W: al Morholt / P: a Morholt 91 ms., P: me tor  
92 ms. qan cor / P, L: Q'ancore 99 ms. deve / P: deve 101 ms. por lui sont 102 W:  
porroie 104 ms. a. entan pinaie / P: tanpinaje 105 ms. de felon braie 112 ms. Ne f.  
en mon aer 125 ms. il lot 131 ms. un fol 132 ms. Quil / P: Qu'il 136 ms. les p. 143  
ms., P, W: d. que il v. 144 W: q. qu'i

C150–153:

*Quant Tritran vint dewant li rei,  
munt si par fut de povre cunré.*

*Aut fu tundu, reis ot le cole,  
a merveille resunple foyl,*

(152 C: r. vot)

C153a-d not in H, P, L 153a C: ateyt 153c C: ce funt T. la magine 153d C: wot,  
Karidine 154 ms. grandre

C154–181:

*Munt fu mis par amur a grande.*

*Marc l'apele si li demande:*

*"Ka at tu a nunn? — Sire, Pichoyit.  
— Ki ta angendra? — Un veu karoyt.  
— De ki te oyit il? — De une palene.*

*Une sore il ad ki munt amene;  
la magine a nun Prunehuyt.*

*Rei, tu l'avras, e je Isout.*

*— Si nus janjuns, ke fra tu?"*

(162 C: jajuns)

*E dit Tristran: "Tu as bue!"*

*Entre le nuys e ly cel,  
de flor, de royse, saunz angel,  
ly fineraie une masiun  
hou moy e li nus defendrun  
de ce jelus, ke Deu dunt unte!*

*Incor n'ay pays finé mun cunnte.*

*Rei, kar me ditis, hou est Branken?*

*Tenet, m'afianz de ma main:  
de le ber ke ele duna a Trittran,  
dunt pus sufret si grant adhan,  
je e Isout, ke vet ici,*

(172 C: maine)

*en bumes: demandet de ly!  
Si ele tent ce a mensunge,  
tunt gré ge bein ke ce seyt sunge,  
kar jo sungay le autre neyt.  
Reis, ne le pernez pas an doyt.  
Rewardet moy a my li vis  
si jo resumble Trantris.*

160 ms. brunchor 161 ms. et je a. 163 ms., H, P, W, L: : O bee / H: Or bee 170 ms. demoisece / W: Rois, kar me dites ou est Brangain? 171 ms. Tain je tafi enz enz ta m. / H, L: Traist, je t'afi enz en ta m. / W: Tien, je t'affiance en ta m. 176 ms. Et si lo / H: Et si lo C181a-b not in H, P, L 181b C: E ws

C182–187:

*Jo ay saly et lanjez et jungs  
et an fundainne dolé batunz,  
an bois veki de racine ..  
Entre ma braz tuneu ryn.  
Et plus dirai, si entremet.  
— I poet tasir, daunt Picaleyt.*"

187 ms. En terre pose / W: — Et taire pois, dant Picolet C187a-b not in H, P, L 187a C:ke enn / W: que en ot 187b C: tut / W: tut

C188–193:

*I posie moy keu en prolays.  
Des or meys laset vo kais.  
— Ne m'an geut me ke vus pesye. (190 C: ke ws)  
Jo ne duray une pugase."  
Dunt dytrent tut li jevalers:  
"Ne fu baer, ne fu tenger."*

191 W: une pougoise C193-a-c not in H, P, L 193a C: Tristran p. c. il veyt / W: Tristranz p. com il veut 193b C: et munt amey Hysout / W: Mout amoit la rainé Yseut 193c C: O rei!dit tut an oyaunt / W: O roi! dit il tot an oyant 194 ms. Rois m., dun p. / P: R. m. v. de p. g. / L: R. m. v. d'une p. g.

C194:

*Remembret vus de un pur grant, (194 C: ws)*

C194a not in H, P, L 194a C: Kant a bois jacer alates 195 C: D. asemblez nu trovastes / ms., H, P, L: qant vos nos trovastes gisant

C196–198:

*desut le feyy detendu,  
entre nus duos ert mun branc nu.  
Semblant fesay de dormire*

201 ms. lo laie 206 ms. P: l'ovre / L: l'ordre 217 ms. uos marinets s. /P: Se pres vos m'avoiez, ce croi / W: Se pres vos m'avoiez, se croi 222 ms. qui me donestes / P, W: Qui 224 ms. soi 228 P, W: baisiers 239 ms. e. sanz c. / H, P, W: souz 232 ms. Ydel quocist 233 P: t. de p. 234 ms. artus 239 ms. cuer candin / P: Caadin 248 ms., P tot 251 ms. Aleveor v. 254 ms. est uie 255 ms. sapoie / P, W, L: s'apoie 259 ms., L: Por / H: Par s. Chrestine / W: Par s. Cristine 262 ms. m. fox 267 P: si l'o 272 ms., P, W, L: r. hui 282 H, L: cest r. / P: cest las r. / W: cestui r. 283 ms. est sors / P, W: P. v. e. fors lo guerredon. Hui 286 ms. r. me reisse 295 ms. mal que que nest 296 ms. tanor 310 ms. Fors que tant 317 ms. plusor 324 ms. Si la / P: Si la 335 ms. mati 336

ms. san 337 ms., W, L: qui praigne / H: qui prange / P: que praigne 345 ms. ele 346 ms. f. oi s., dur 347 H: do cuer do piz 354 H: Icil D. li mete 355 ms. Qui me / H: Que el 367 P: o lui 372 ms. Oient 373 ms., L: fale 376 P: —Ainz ne soi rien de devinaille! 377 P: —La nostre amor trop me travaille. 378 P: Por 387 ms. grandre 396 ms. deluimenistre or deluimeuiste / H, L: del ju menistre / P: en la ch. o fui venistes 397 ms., H, W, L: tristre 406 ms. garistes / P, W: garesistes 408 H: Vos traististes 409 L: L'osche trovastes 418 ms. ver 423 ms. Ice vois 424 H, L: v. b. 426 ms. de haute 427 ms. Aut' jor / W: Autre j. 432 ms. trosseroel 433 ms. Ele me prist 434 P: buverage 437 ms. A. ne trt or crt mal / P: ne iert 439 ms. damoise 443 P: escondit 444 ms., P: nole n. 450—451 transposed in ms., P, L 453 ms. Fars do / L: de 455 ms. lo fis je c. / H: les fis la c. / W: les fis je c. /P: f. lor feisse c. 459 ms., P: Qui s'ap. 462 ms. encore li h. 472 ms. si lo? H: s'i lo / W: si lo 473 ms. qui vos / H: qui vos 476 ms. o. que lioi / H, P, L: ci voi 477 ms. g. enors 484 P: c. d'autre 486 ms. Queles hudent 497 question in P, W 505 ms. gent / P, W: gent 509 ms. des mars 512 ms. Se li c. 514 ms. do grain 527 P: la dreite 534 ms. Qan ne / L: Qant ne / P: Et qan ne 536 ms. baissai 540 ms., P: a pol 542 ms. ele 544 P: font 550 ms., P, W: el flans 555 P: Don ne s. 563 ms. Et dit



## NOTES

3. As indicated by the unpaired rhyme-word *roi*, this line is preceded by a lacuna of at least one line.

7. The form *san* is to be understood as a variant of *sen* ‘sense, intelligence’ rather than *san/cj* ‘blood’ in the sense of ‘family’, however tempting the latter acceptation may seem in the present context. The Tobler-Lommatsch *Altfranzösisches Wörterbuch* offers no attestation of that meaning, and the *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (Paris: Dictionnaires Le Robert, 1992) states that this meaning did not enter the language until the 14th century. However, the meaning seems to have been present in Latin!

25. *Odé ‘Odet’*: an imaginary saint.

26. This line is preceded by a lacuna of at least one line.

28. Saint Samson: patron saint of church in king Mark’s city.

33. Dinas: Mark’s steward and friend of Tristan (Beroul).

45. It is not clear where Tristan is at this time or which land is meant by *pais*. The word might well be understood as coreferential with the *terre* of line 22, i.e., King Mark’s Cornwall, but the combination with *repairier* suggests instead Tristan’s home country of Loënois (Lothian). Note, however, that when he decides to return to Cornwall in disguise, his point of departure is said to be *sa terre et son roiaume* (l. 116).

50. The allusion is to Yseut of the White Hands, sister of Tristan’s friend Caherdin, married to Tristan during his exile from Mark’s court. The “first love” is, of course, Yseut the Blonde.

59. The line is missing a syllable, very possibly a one-syllable conjunction before *qui*, and is followed by a lacuna of at least two lines.

64. The line is missing two syllables. Previous editors have filled the lacuna with such conjectures as vocative *chaitis* ‘wretch’ and the exclamation *hé las*.

66. This final segment of a sentence is preceded by a lacuna of at least two lines. Given the context, the subject is in all likelihood Yseut.

76. The ms. repeats lines 75–76 after l. 101 and then presents ll. 77–83. We follow Hoepffner, Walter, and Lecoy, but not Bédier and Payen, in deleting the repetition and moving the displaced passage back to what appears to be its appropriate place. For an argument against emendation, see Eckard.

83. For Tristan’s battle with the Morholt, see Beroul.

105. The word *fol*, noun and adjective, like its modern reflex *fou*, covers a broad semantic range from simple ‘fool(ish)’ to ‘insane,’ including ‘court fool.’ The poem plays with the ambiguities that this semantic extensiveness makes possible. Thus, Tristan—who is, of course, a victim of the “madness” of love—travels to Mark’s court disguised as a man truly demented. There, he will be perceived mainly, though not exclusively, as a (court) fool, a ‘jester’ whose psychosocial exceptionality allows him to express with impunity sentiments, opinions, predictions, and real or imagined memories that no one else would dare voice. Translation into English forces choices that the French leaves unspecified. Our version attempts to provide the most

appropriate equivalent at any given point in the text. Only toward the end, when Yseut refers to herself as *sole* (l. 543), is it clear that the English needs to be 'fool.'

134. Carrying a club, like dressing in tatters and picking fights, was emblematic of the medieval madman. See Ménard.

150. The scene running from l. 150 to l. 198 is preserved in a redaction, the so-called Cambridge fragment, which includes not only a number of relatively insignificant divergences from the Berne manuscript but also several passages that the latter does not contain. We have judged these passages sufficiently relevant to the unfolding of the narrative to warrant inclusion in our text. In one line, this has also led to the substitution of a Cambridge reading for the equivalent reading in Berne. All lines taken from the Cambridge fragment are printed in italics; the additional lines, moreover, are all provided with lettered numbers. All Cambridge material not integrated into the text is to be found with the Rejected Readings and variant Readings from Hoepffner et al. The passages from Cambridge are presented there as originally edited by Dean and Kennedy. For a comparative study of the Berne and Cambridge texts, along with an integrative edition, see Robertson.

152. The Cambridge fragment has *reis* 'shaven.'

156. The name *Picous* (= *Picol*) does not occur in other literary works. It may be an allusion to William Picol, one of King John's court fools; see G.D. West, *French Arthurian Romances, 1150–1300* (Toronto: U. of Toronto P., 1969), s.v. *Picous*. It is in any case the base form of the diminutive *Picolet* (l. 187), which does appear in chansons de geste and elsewhere as the name of a dwarf seer.

157. The Cambridge fragment has *veu karoyt*, which, unless it is a corruption of *galerous*, is incomprehensible.

159. In the Cambridge fragment, the line begins: 'He has a sister.' The rest of the line is corrupt and its meaning unclear.

163. Whether Tristan's verb is understood as an imperative (by Hoepffner, who emends the interrogative *O* 'where' to the adverb *Or* 'now') or as a present indicative (by Lecoy, who does not, however, add the flexional -s in his critical text), it is fairly clear that the function of the sentence is to express a somewhat scornful surprise at Mark's question. The variant in the Cambridge fragment, despite a very different literal meaning—'You've been drinking!'—has the same function.

166. The Cambridge variant *fineraï* has the apparent meaning of 'I will finish,' i.e., 'complete the building of,' but Dean and Kennedy, in their commentary, provide the French gloss 'je fournirai' ('I will furnish').

168. This line and the following interrupt the flow of Tristan's thought with what must be an irritated reference to the "Welshmen" in the room, presumably guilty of showing impatience with the speaker. The equivalent lines in the Cambridge fragment offer a quite different reading: '... a house / where she and I will defend ourselves against the jealous one, ...'. Here there is no unexpected outburst about the audience, and only l. 169 refers to Tristan's own words.

170. The Cambridge fragment introduces Brangain and the love potion with much less abruptness than Berne: 'King, tell me, where is Brangain? / Look, I assure you: / Of the potion that she gave to Tristan, / which led him to suffer great torment, / both I and Yseut, whom you see here, / drank.'

183. Line 182 alludes to a competition recounted in Thomas's narrative (ll. 2073–77 in Bédier's 1902 edition). The following verse, with a verb whose meaning is not certain in this context, may refer to a similar game and/or to the chips of wood that

Tristan once threw into a brook to attract the attention of Yseut; cf. the Oxford text, ll. 787–790, which calls the brook not only a *ruisseau* but also a *fontaine*. This *fontaine* is no doubt the *fundainne* in the Cambridge fragment, and the form *sostenu* in Berne may represent nothing more than the scribe's misinterpretation of the word.

191. With the Cambridge addition, lines 187–189 all belong to Mark, and Tristan's reply in ll. 190–191 is accordingly addressed not to Yseut but to the king.

193. This proverb is recorded as No. 1325 in Joseph Morawski, *Proverbes français* (Paris: Champion, 1925).

194. Tristan alludes in the following lines to an episode recounted in Beroul, ll. 1943–2056.

220. For Yseut's promise, as well as the ring and farewell alluded to in the following lines, see Beroul, l. 2792ff.

232. Yder: Arthurian knight famed for defeating a bear in combat; see G.D. West, *op. cit.*, s.v. Yder<sup>2</sup>.

245. Rather than allude to a real failed prediction, the statement seems to be simply an idiomatic or proverbial way of expressing discouragement.

259. Like the Saint Odé of line 25, Estrestine seems to be an imaginary saint. It has been suggested that the first is a scribal error for André; likewise, the second might be an error for Crestine (Christine); see Hoepffner, pp. 67 and 96.

313. The need for a rhyme in *-iee* may explain the agreement of *changiee* with the immediately preceding feminine *folor* instead of the masculine *san* with which the past participle should in fact agree.

323. What is Brangain's *vilenie*? Is it the way she has just treated him—as a fool? Or is it her choice of potion, her responsibility for the whole unhappy affair?

329. This line has proved troublesome to editors and translators, partly because the subject of *porra* is left unexpressed and partly because of the broad semantic range of *s'an aparcevoir*. The most persuasive of the versions that differ from ours is that of Payen, which carries the hint of a threat: 'il saura bien si elle est ou non son alliée' ('[Tristan] will know whether [Brangain] is in fact his ally').

351. The Latin *architriclinus* 'wine steward' was popularly mistaken for the name of the bridegroom of Cana (John 2). The form gave *Archedeclin* in French.

368. We have translated like Payen and Walter: 'Que n'étiez-vous avec lui au port . . .' and 'On voit bien que vous n'étiez pas avec lui . . .', resp., but the fact is that Yseut's meaning is not clear. Hoepffner, with: 'Puissiez-vous être avec le fou loin d'ici, au port . . .' ('I wish you were now with him, far from here, at the port . . .') may as readily be right.

375. The syntax of this line is not entirely clear, whence the quite different translations of Payen and Walter, resp.: 'et pour que tous me crussent fol' and 'et afin que tout le monde me prenne pour un fou.'

376. Payen treats this verse as a single-line interruption by Yseut, translating: 'Pouvais-je comprendre tes énigmes?'

378. For Gamarien (= Guimaran in l. 391), the Irish harper, see G.D. West, *op. cit.*, s.v. Gamarien.

410. Perenis: Yseut's squire, in Beroul.

412. The missing piece is the fragment of Tristan's sword that had lodged in the Morholt's head during the fatal combat and that Yseut had preserved ever since her uncle's death.

420. The reference is to the strand of hair that originally led Mark to send Tristan in quest of Yseut.

445. For the episode of Tristan's leap, see Beroul, ca. l. 909ff.

447. That is, condemned to be burned but then handed over to the lepers instead.

569. This line is preceded by a lacuna of at least one line.



## La Folie Tristan (Oxford)

Tristran surjurne en sun païs,  
Dolent, murnes, tristes, pensifs.  
Purpensem soi ke faire pot,  
Kar acun cunfort lu estot.  
5  
Confort lu estot de guarir,  
U, si ço nun, melz volt murir.  
Melz volt murir a une faiz  
Ke tutdis estre si destraiz,  
E melz volt une faiz murir  
10  
Ke tut tens en peine languir.  
Mort est assez k'en dolur vit;  
Penser cunfunct hume et ocist.  
Peine, dolur, penser, ahan  
Tut ensement cunfunct Tristran.  
15  
Il veit ke il [ne] puet guarir;  
Senz cunfort lui estot murir.  
Ore est il dunc de la mort cert,  
Quant il s'amur, sa joie pert.  
Quant il pert la reine Ysolt,  
20  
Murir desiret, murir volt,  
Mais sul tant ke ele soüst  
K'il pur la sue amur murrust,  
Kar si Ysolt sa mort saveit,  
Siveus plus süef en murreit.  
25  
Vers tute gent se cele e doute,  
Ne volt nul descovrir le dute.  
Il s'en celet (c'en est la fin)  
Vers sun cumpaingnun Kaherdin,  
Kar ço cremeit, si li cuntast,  
30  
De sun purpens k'il l'en ostast,  
Kar ço pensout e ço voleit  
Aler en Engleterre droit,  
Nent a cheval, mais tut a pé,  
K'el païs ne seit entercé,  
35  
Kar il [i ert] mult cuneüz,  
Si serrait tost aparceüz.  
Mais de povre home k'a pé vait  
N'en est tenu gueres de plait;  
De povre messagë e nu  
40  
Est poi de plait en curt tenu.  
Il se penset si desguiser  
E sun semblant si remüer

[912v]

[13r]

## La Folie Tristan (Oxford)

Tristan was back in his own country,  
sorrowful, somber, sad, and brooding.  
He was wondering what he could do  
to find the consolation he needed.

He needed consolation to recover his health;  
otherwise, it was better to die.

5

It was better to die once and for all  
than remain so distraught,  
better to die once and for all  
than go on languishing in pain.

10

Living in sorrow brings you close to death;  
brooding confounds you and kills you.  
Pain and sorrow, brooding and torment—  
Tristan was overwhelmed by it all.

He saw that he could not recover  
and would surely die without consolation.

15

He was now sure of death,  
having lost his love and his joy.

With queen Yseut lost to him,  
he longed for death, was eager to die,  
but only if she could know  
that he was dying for love of her;  
for if Yseut knew of his death,  
dying would at least be sweeter.

20

He was wary of everyone  
and kept his thoughts to himself.

25

He was particularly wary  
of his companion Caherdin,  
fearing, if he confided in him,  
that he would impede his plans.

30

For what he had firmly in mind  
was to go straight to England,  
not on horseback but on foot  
lest he be recognized in that country:

he was well known there  
and would be readily identified.

35

A poor man traveling on foot, though,  
easily goes unnoticed;  
no one pays much attention at court  
to a poor and shabby messenger.

40

He thought he would so disguise himself  
and alter his appearance

Ke ja nuls hom ne.l conestrat  
 Ke Tristran seit, tant ne.l verrat.  
 45 Parent, procein, per ne ami  
 Ne pot saver l'estre de li.  
 Tant par se covre en sun curaje  
 K'a nul ne.l dit, si fait ke sage:  
 Suvent avent damage grant  
 50 Par dire sun cunseil avant.  
 Ki s'i celast e ne.l deïst,  
 Ja mal, ço crei, ne encursist.  
 Pur cunseil dire e descuvrir  
 Solt maint mal suvent avenir.  
 55 La gent en sunt mult desturbé  
 De ço k'en unt suvent parlé.\*

Tristran se cele cuintement,  
 Si pense mult estreitement.  
 Il ne.l met mie en long respit:  
 60 La nuit se purpense en sun lit  
 E l'endemain, tres par matin,  
 Acuilt sun erre e sun chemin.  
 Il ne finat unke d'erer,  
 Si est venu droit a la mer.  
 65 A la mer vent e truve prest  
 La nef e quanque mester est.  
 La nef ert fort e bele e grande,  
 Bone cum cele k'ert markande.  
 De plusurs mers chargee esteit,  
 70 En Engleterre curre deit.

Li notiner alent lur treff  
 E desaancrent cele nef:  
 Aler volent en alte mer;  
 Li venz est bon pur ben sigler.  
 75 Atant es vus Tristran li pruz.  
 Dit lur: "Sennurs, Deu vus guard tuz!  
 En quel part irés vus, Deu l'oie?"  
 "En Bretaine," funt cil, "a joie!"  
 Tristran respunt al notiner:  
 80 "A joie i pussez vus aler!  
 Sennurs, kar me portez od vus!  
 En Bretaine aler volum nus."  
 Cil li a dit: "Ben le graant.  
 Entrez dunc tost, venez avant."  
 85 Tristran i vent e si entre enz.  
 El vail amunt s'i fert li venz.  
 A grant esplait s'en vunt par l'unde,  
 Trenchant en vunt la mer parfunde.

- that no man would take him for Tristan  
however much he might see him.
- No one must know his secret,  
no relative or friend, no companion or peer.  
He masked his intentions  
and told no one, which was wise of him:  
great harm often comes  
from revealing your plans ahead of time. 45
- Anyone wary enough not to speak  
will not, I think, come to harm.
- Many a misfortune arises  
from saying too much and speaking your mind.
- People often suffer  
from having spoken too much. 55
- Tristan cleverly kept quiet,  
holding all his thoughts within.  
He did not delay for long,  
but made his plan one night in bed  
and early the next morning 60  
started out on his journey.  
He kept walking  
until he reached the sea.  
Reaching the sea, he found  
a ship ready and equipped for sailing,  
a solid, large, beautiful ship,  
as good as a merchant vessel could be.  
It had carried cargo over various seas  
and was now bound for England. 65  
70
- The sailors raised the mast  
and lifted the anchor,  
eager to be on their way;  
the wind was right for sailing.  
Just then, Tristan appeared. 75
- "Lords," the good man said, "God keep you!  
Where, please God, are you going?"  
"To Britain," they said, "and gladly!"  
Tristan answered the sailors:  
"Get there gladly and well! 80  
And take me with you, lords!  
I, too, want to sail to Britain."  
One of them said: "All right!  
Hurry and come on board."  
Tristan stepped up and went on board. 85  
The wind filled the topsail  
and they glided away on the water,  
cutting across the deep sea.

- Mult unt bon vent a grant plenté,  
 90 A plaisir, e lur volonté.  
 Tut droit vers Engleterre curent;  
 Dous nuiz e un jur i demurent;  
 Al secund jur venent al port  
 A Tintagel, si droit record.
- Li roi Markes i surjurnout,  
 95 Si fesait la reine Ysolt,  
 E la grant curt iloc esteit,  
 Cum li rais a custume aveit.  
 Tintagel esteit un chastel  
 100 Ki mult par ert [e] fort e bel.  
 Ne cremout asalt ne engin  
 .....  
 ..... ki vaile  
 Sur la mer en Cornuaile."
- La tur querree, fort e grant,  
 105 Jadis la fermerent jeant.  
 De marbre sunt tut li quarel,  
 Asis e junt mult ben e bel.  
 Eschekerez esteit le mur  
 110 Si cum de sinopre e d'azur.  
 Enz al chastel ert une porte;  
 Ele esteit bele e grant e forte.  
 Ben serreit l'entree e l'issue  
 Par douz prudumes defendue.
- La surjurnout Markes li reis  
 115 Od Bretuns e od Cornwaleis  
 Pur le chastel ke il amout;  
 Si feseit la raine Ysolt.  
 Plentét i out de prairie,  
 120 Plentét de bois, de veneerie, [13v]  
 D'ewes duces, de pescheries  
 E des beles guaaineries.  
 Les nefz ki par [la] mer siglouent  
 Al port del chastel arivouent;  
 125 Par mer iloc al rei veneient  
 Genz d'autres terres ki l quereient,  
 E li estrange e li privé,  
 E pur ço l'ad il enamé.  
 Li lius ert beus e delitables,  
 130 Li païs bons e profitables,  
 E si fu jadis apelez  
 Tintagel li Chastel Faiez.  
 Chastel Faié fu dit a droit,  
 Kar douz faiz l'an [il] se perdeit.

With no lack of good wind—  
it was as much as they could want—  
they went sailing straight toward England.  
The crossing took two nights and a day;  
they reached the port of Tintagel  
on the second day, as I recall.

90

King Mark was staying there,  
as was queen Yseut,  
and the great court was assembled  
that the king liked to hold there.  
Tintagel was a remarkably fine  
and well-fortified castle town.\*  
It feared no attack or engine of war  
.....  
..... stood fast  
on the Cornish coast.

95

The square keep, large and strong,  
had long ago been built by giants.  
The building blocks were all of marble,  
artfully arranged and fitted together.  
The wall was in a checkered pattern  
of heraldic red and blue.  
The gate to the castle  
was large and splendid, strong enough  
for the entry and exit  
to be defended by two good men.

105

There king Mark was staying  
with his Britons and Cornishmen,  
because he loved that castle;  
queen Yseut was there as well.  
The place was surrounded by meadows  
and woods and broad pasture lands;  
it was rich in game  
and fresh-water fish.  
Seagoing vessels  
sailed into the castle's port,  
bringing to the king  
people seeking him from distant lands,  
both foreigners and natives.  
That is why he loved the place.  
The site was beautiful and charming,  
the area fertile and prosperous,  
and Tintagel long ago came to be  
called the Enchanted Castle.  
Enchanted Castle was the right name,  
for twice a year the place vanished.

110

115

120

125

130

- 135 Li païsant dient pur veir  
 Ke douz faiz l'an ne.l pot l'en veir,  
 Hume del païs ne nul hom,  
 Ja grant garde ne prengë hom:  
 Une en ivern, autre en esté;
- 140 Ço dient la gent del vingné.  
 La nef Tristran est arivee,  
 El port senement est ancree.
- Tristran salt sus [e] si s'en ist  
 E sur la rive si s'asist.
- 145 Nuveles demande e enquert  
 Del rai Markes, e u il ert.  
 Hom lu dit k'en la vile esteit  
 E [ke] grant curt tenue aveit.  
 "E u est Ysolt la raïne
- 150 E Brengain, sa bele meschine?"  
 "Par fai, e eles sunt ici,  
 Encor n'at guere ke les vi.  
 Mais certes la raïne Ysolt  
 Pensive est mult, cum ele solt."
- 155 Tristran, quant ot Ysolt numer,  
 Del quer cumence a supirer.  
 Purpensem sai d'une vaidie,  
 Cum il purrat veer s'amie.
- 160 Ben set k'il n'i purat parler  
 Pur nul engin k'il pot truver.  
 Prüeisse ne lu pot valer,  
 Sen ne cuintise ne saver;  
 Kar Marc li rois, ço set il ben,
- 165 Le heeit sur trestute ren,  
 E s'il vif prendre le poeit,  
 Il set ben ke il l'ocireit.  
 Dunc se purpense de s'amie  
 E dit: "Ki en cheut s'il m'ocie?  
 Ben dai murir pur sue amur.
- 170 Las! ja me mur [je] chescun jur.  
 Ysolt, pur vus tant [par] me doil,  
 Ysolt, pur vus ben murir voil.  
 Ysolt, si ci me saviez,  
 Ne sai s'a mai parleriez.
- 175 Pur vostre amur sui afolez,  
 Si sui venu e ne.l savez.  
 Ne sai cument parler od vus,  
 Pur ço sui [je] tant anguissus.

The peasants insist it is true  
 that twice a year no one could see it—  
 neither natives of the area nor anyone else—  
 however hard they tried:  
 once in winter and once in summer;  
 that is what the local people say.<sup>\*</sup>  
 Tristan's ship came to the shore  
 and anchored safely in the port.

135

140

Tristan leapt up, ran out,  
 and sat down on the bank.  
 He asked for news of king Mark,  
 wanting to know where he was.  
 Right there, he was told,  
 and holding a great court.  
 "And where is Yseut the queen  
 and Brangain, her lovely companion?"  
 "Why, they're right here.  
 I saw them just a while ago.  
 I tell you, though, queen Yseut  
 looks as downcast as ever."

145

150

At the sound of Yseut's name,  
 Tristan heaved a deep sigh  
 and began to ponder what ruse  
 could let him see his dear belovèd.

155

He knew that he could not speak to her  
 by normal means.  
 His prowess would be of no avail,  
 nor wit, shrewdness, or intelligence.  
 It was clear to him that king Mark  
 hated him above all and anyone else  
 and, if he could capture him alive,  
 would unhesitatingly kill him.  
 Brooding over his belovèd Yseut,  
 he said: "What does it matter if he kills me?  
 I am ready to die for love of her.  
 Already, every day is death to me.  
 For you, Yseut, I grieve all the time;  
 for you, Yseut, I want only to die.  
 Yseut, even if you knew I was here,  
 how could I be sure you would speak to me?  
 My love for you drives me mad."  
 I have come here, and you don't know it.  
 I don't know how to approach you,  
 and it is a torment to me.

160

165

170

175

- |     |  |
|-----|--|
|     | "Or voil espruver autre ren,<br>Saver si ja me vendreit ben:<br>Feindre mei fol, faire folie,<br>Dunc n'est ço sen e grant veisdie?<br>Cuintise est: quant n'ai liu e tens,<br>Ne puis faire nul greniur sens.             |
| 185 | Tels me tendra pur asoté,<br>Ke plus de lu serrai sené;<br>E tels me tendra pur bricun,<br>K'avra plus fol en sa maisun."  |
| 190 | Tristran a cest cunseil se tient.<br>Un peschur vait ki vers lu vient;<br>Une gunele aveit vestue<br>D'une esclavine ben velue;<br>La gunele fu senz gerun,<br>Mais desus out un caperun.                                  |
| 195 | Tristran le vait, vers lu le ceine,<br>En liu repost od lu l'en maine.<br>"Amis," fet il, "changuns [noz] dras.<br>Li mens sunt bons ke tu avras;<br>Ta cote avrai, ke mult me plest,<br>Kar de tels dras suvent me vest." |
| 200 | Li pescheres vit les dras bons,<br>Prist les, si li dunat les sons;<br>Et quant il fu saisi des dras,<br>Lez fu, si s'en parti chaut pas.  |
| 205 | Tristran unes forces aveit.<br>Il meimes porter les soleit.<br>De grant manere les amat:<br>Ysolt les forces lu donat.<br>Od les forces haut se tundi:<br>Ben senble fol u esturdi.  |
| 210 | Enaprés se tundi en croiz.<br>Tristran sout ben müer sa voiz.<br>Od une herbete teinst sun vis,<br>K'il aporta de sun païs.<br>Il oinst sun vis de la licur,<br>Puis ennerci, muad culur.                                  |
| 215 | N'aveit hume ki al mund fust<br>Ki pur Tristran le cuneüst<br>Ne ki [pur] Tristran l'enterçast,<br>Tant ne.l veïst u escutast.<br>Il ad d'une haie un pel pris<br>Et en sun colet l'ad il mis.                             |
| 220 | Vers le chastel en vait tut dreit;<br>Chaskun ad poür ki le vait.  |

- "But there is something I want to try,  
to see if it can succeed: 180  
I'll pretend to be mad, act like a madman."  
Isn't that a clever ruse?  
It's shrewd: with no opportunity for anything else,  
it is the cleverest plan I can make.  
I'll be considered out of my mind  
by people less sane than I, 185  
and I'll be taken for a blockhead  
by people with a madman in their attic."
- Tristan resolved on this course.  
He saw a fisherman coming along, 190  
dressed in a rough woolen  
frock that had no slit  
below for riding  
but had a hood attached at the neck.  
Seeing him, Tristan beckoned  
and led him to a secluded spot. 195  
"Friend," he said, "let's trade clothes.  
Take mine, which are well-made,  
and give me yours, which I like:  
I often wear a frock like that." 200  
It was obvious how good Tristan's clothes were,  
and the fisherman took them in return for his own.  
Tristan was delighted with his new costume  
and hurried away.
- Tristan had a pair of scissors  
which he always kept with him; 205  
he was very much attached to them,  
for they had been a gift from Yseut.  
He cut his hair high up the back of his head,  
then cut the rest into a cross; 210  
he looked like a madman or an idiot.  
He had no trouble changing his voice.  
With an herb brought from home,  
he changed his complexion:  
daubed with the herb juice, 215  
his face turned color and darkened.  
There were no men in the world  
who could recognize him  
or identify him as Tristan,  
however much they might peer or listen. 220  
He wrenched a stick out of a hedge  
and rested it on his shoulder.  
He headed straight toward the castle,  
frightening everyone who saw him.

- 225      Li porters, quant il l'ad veü,  
           Mult l'ad cum fol bricun tenu.  
           Il li ad dit: "Venez avant!  
           U avez vus demurré tant?"
- 230      Li fols respunt: "As noces fui  
           L'abé del Munt, ki ben cunui.  
           Unë habesse ad espusee,  
           Une grosse dame velee.  
           Il ne ad prestre ne abé,  
           Moine ne clerc [ne] ordiné  
 235      De Besençun deskë al Munt,  
           De quel manere ke il sunt,  
           Ki ne serunt mandé as noces,  
           Et tuz i portent pels e croces.  
           En la lande, suz Bel Encembre,  
 240      La sailent e jüent en l'ombre.  
           Je m'en parti pur ço ke dai  
           Al manger ui servir le rai."
- Li porter li ad respundu:  
 "Entrez, fis Urgan le Velu.  
 245      Granz et velu estes assez;  
           Urgan en ço ben ressemblez."  
           Li fol entre enz par le wicket.  
           Cuntre lui current li valet,  
           [Si] l'escrient cum hom fet lu:  
 250      "Veez le fol! hu! hu! hu! hu!"  
           Li valet et li esquier  
           De buis le cuilent a rocher.  
           Par la curt le vunt cunvaint  
           Li fol valet ki.l vunt siwant.  
 255      Il lur tresturne mult suvent.  
           Estes ki li gete a talent:  
           Si nus l'asalt devers le destre,  
           Il turne e fert devers senestre.  
           Vers l'us de la sale apruchat,  
 260      Le pel el col dedenz entrat.
- Senes s'en aparçout li rais,  
           La u il sist al mestre dais.  
           Il dit: "Or vai un bon sergant;  
           Fetes le mai venir avant!"
- 265      Plusurs sailent, cuntre lui vunt,  
           En sa guisse salüét l'unt,  
           Puis si amenerent le fol  
           Devant le rai, le pel el col.  
           Markes dit: "Ben vengez, amis!"

At the sight of him, the gatekeeper  
took him for a mad rascal.  
He said: "Come along!  
Where have you been all this while?"

225

The would-be fool answered: "At the wedding  
of the abbot of the Mount," a friend of mine.  
He married an abbess,  
a large, veiled lady.  
There is no priest or abbot,  
no monk or clerk, ordained or not,  
anywhere between Besançon and the Mount,  
of whatever condition or order,  
who was not invited to the wedding,  
and they all came with their staves and crooks.  
Out on the moors, near Bellencombe,  
they were romping and dancing about in the shade.  
I left them there, because it is my turn  
to serve at the king's table today."

230

235

240

The gatekeeper answered:  
"Come in, Hairy Urgan's son!"  
Big and hairy as you are,  
you look a lot like Urgan."  
As the fool entered through the wicket,  
boys ran up around him,  
shouting as if at a wolf:  
"Look at the madman! Grrr! grrr!"  
The boys and squires  
began pelting him with sticks,  
thronging after him through the court  
as if mad themselves.  
He turned to them a number of times  
to see one or another attacking him;  
if the attack came from the right,  
he turned and struck back to the left.  
He reached the entrance to the great hall  
and, carrying his stick on his shoulder, went in.

245

250

255

260

The king saw him right away  
from his seat at the head table.  
He said: "That looks like a true man-at-arms!  
Have him come up to me!"  
A number of men rushed up to him,  
greeted the fool in fitting fashion,  
and led him to the king,  
his stick still resting on his shoulder.  
Mark said: "Welcome, friend!"

265

- 270      Dunt estes vus? K'avés ci quis?"  
           Li fols respunt: "Ben vus dirrai  
           Dunt sui e ke je ci quis ai.  
           Ma mere fu une baleine,  
           En mer hantat cume sereine.
- 275      Mes je ne sai u je nasqui.  
           Mult sai [je] ben ki me nurri:  
           Une grant tigre m'aleitat  
           En une roche u me truvat.  
           El me truvat suz un perun,
- 280      Quidat ke fusse sun foün,  
           Si me nurri de sa mamele.  
           Mais une sor ai je mult bele:  
           Cele vus durai, si volez,  
           Pur Ysolt ki tant [par] amez."
- 285      Li rais s'en rit e puis respunt:  
           "Ke dit la merveile del mund?"  
           "Reis, je vus durai ma sorur  
           Pur Ysolt ki aim par amur.  
           Fesum bargaine, fesum change:
- 290      Bon est [a] asaer estrange.  
           D'Ysolt estes tut ennuez:  
           A une autre [vus] acuinez;  
           Baillez m'Ysolt, jo la prendrai.  
           Reis, pur amur vus servirai."
- 295      Li reis l'entant e si s'en rit  
           E dit al fol: "Si Deu t'aït,  
           Si jo te doinse la raïne  
           A amener en ta saisine,  
           Or me di ke tu en fereies,
- 300      U en quel part [tu] l'ameraias."  
           "Reis," fet li fol, "la sus en l'air  
           Ai une sale u je repair.  
           De veire est faite, bele e grant;  
           Li solail vait par mi raiant.
- 305      En l'air est e par nues pent,  
           Ne berce, ne crolle pur vent.  
           Delez la sale ad une chambre,  
           Faite de cristal e de lambre.  
           Li solail, quant par main lefrat,\*
- 310      Leenz mult [grant] clarté rendrat."  
  
           Li reis e li autre s'en riënt,  
           Entré [els] parolent e dient:  
           "Cist est bon fol, mult par dit ben,  
           Ben parole sur tute ren."  
           "Reis," fet li fols, "mult aim Ysolt.

- Where are you from and what have you come for?" 270  
 The jester answered: "I'll tell you  
 where I'm from and what I've come for.  
 My mother was a whale;  
 she lived in the sea, like a siren.  
 I don't know, though, where I was born. 275  
 I do know who brought me up:  
 a great tigress nursed me  
 among the crags where she had found me.  
 She had found me under a rock  
 and, thinking I was her cub, 280  
 she fed me with her milk.  
 But I have a sister—very beautiful;  
 I'll give her to you, if you like,  
 in exchange for your belovèd Yseut." 285  
 The king laughed and answered:  
 "What does this wonder of the world say?"  
 "King, I'll give you my sister  
 in exchange for Yseut, whom I love.  
 Let's strike a bargain and trade:  
 it is good to try something new! 290  
 You are tired of Yseut,  
 so get to know another woman;  
 give me Yseut, and I'll take her.  
 King, I will serve you out of love."
- At these words, the king laughed 295  
 and said: "So help you God,  
 if I gave you the queen  
 to have in your possession,  
 tell me what you would do with her  
 and where you would take her." 300  
 "King," said the fool, "up there in the air,  
 there is a palace that I call home."  
 It is large and splendid and made of glass;  
 the sun shines right through it.  
 It hangs from the clouds and floats in the air, 305  
 never rocked or shaken by the wind.  
 Next to the great hall, there is a chamber  
 made of crystal and marble.  
 The sun, when it rises tomorrow morning,  
 will flood the room with light." 310
- The king and all the others laughed;  
 people were saying to one another:  
 "Great jester—good jokes!  
 He has a good answer to everything."  
 "King," said the fool, "I am in love with Yseut. 315

- Pur lu mis quers se pleint e dolt.  
 Je suis Trantris ki tant l'amai  
 E amerai tant cum vivrai."
- 320 Isolt l'entent, del quer suspire,  
 Vers le fol ad curuz e ire.  
 Dit: "Ki vus fist entrer ceenz?  
 Fol, tu n'es pas Trantris, tu menz."  
 Li fols vers Ysolt plus entent  
 K'il ne fesait vers l'autre gent.
- 325 Ben aparceit k'ele ad irur,  
 Kar el vis mue la culur.
- Puis dit aprés: "Raïne Ysolt,  
 Trantris sui, ki amer vus solt.  
 Membrer vus dait quant fui nauvrez  
 (Maint home le saveit assez)  
 Quant me cumbati al Morhout  
 Ki vostre treü aver volt.  
 A tel hoür me cumbati  
 Ke je l'ocis, pas ne le ni.
- 335 Malement i fu je navrés,  
 Kar li bran fu envenimés.  
 L'os de la hanche m'entamat  
 E li fors veninz eschauffat;  
 En l'os s'aerst, nercir le fist  
 340 E tel dolur puis i assist  
 Ke [ne] me pout mire guarir,  
 Si [ke] quidoie ben murir.  
 En mer me mis, la voil murir,  
 Tant par m'ennuat le languir.
- 345 Li venz levat turmente grant  
 E chaçat ma nef en Irlant.  
 Al païs m'estot ariver  
 Ke jo deveie plus duter,  
 Kar j'aveie ocis le Morholt,  
 350 (Vostre uncle fu, raïne Ysolt).  
 Pur ço dutai mult le païs;  
 Mais jo fu naufrez e chitifs.  
 Od ma harpe me delitoie;  
 Je n'oï cunfort ki tant amoie.
- 355 Ben tost en oïstes parler,  
 Ke mult savoie ben harper.  
 Je fus sempres a curt mandez  
 Tut issi cum ere navrez.  
 La raïne la me guari  
 360 De ma plaie, sue merci.  
 Bons lais de harpe vus apris,  
 Lais bretuns de nostre païs.

[15r]

My heart is full of suffering for her.

I am Tanris, who love her deeply  
and always will, as long as I live."

At these words, Yseut felt her heart quicken  
with anger against the fool.

320

She said: "Who let you in here?

Fool, you are not Tanris; you're lying!"

The madman was paying closer attention  
to Yseut than to anyone else.

He could see how angry she was  
by the change of color in her face.

325

Then he spoke: "Queen Yseut,

I am your ever-loving Tanris.

You must remember when I was wounded—  
it was widely known—

330

in my fight with the Morholt,  
who was demanding tribute.

I had the good luck  
to kill him—I don't deny it.

But I was badly wounded in the fight,  
because his sword was poisoned.

335

It cut through to my hipbone,  
which the powerful poison inflamed;

it attacked the bone and turned it black,  
which caused a pain so great

340

that no doctor could cure me  
and I was sure I would die.

I set sail, eager to die at sea  
and be done with my agony.

The wind blew up a terrible storm  
and drove my boat to Ireland.

345

It was my fate to reach shore in the very land  
that I had the greatest reason to fear.

Had I not killed the Morholt—  
your uncle, queen Yseut?

350

That's why I was afraid of your land;  
but I was wounded and weak.

I found distraction in playing my harp;  
there was no comfort I loved more.

Soon word reached you  
that I was a very good harpist.

355

I was summoned to court right away,  
wounded as I was.

There the queen healed my wound,  
and I am grateful to her.

360

I taught you lovely lais on the harp,  
Breton lais from my country.

- 365      Menbrer vus dait, dame raïne,  
           Cum je guarri par la mecine.  
        Iloc me numai je Trantris.  
        Ne sui je ço? Ke vus est vis?"
- 370      Isolt respunt: "Par certes, nun!  
           Kar cil est beus e gentils hum,  
           E tu es gros, hidus e laiz  
        Ke pur Trantris numer te faitz.  
           Or te tol, ne hüer sur mei!  
           Ne pris mie tes gas ne tei."  
        Li fols se turnë a cest mot,  
        Si se fet ben tenir pur sot:  
        Il fert ces k'il trove en sa veie,  
           Del deis a l'us [si] les cumveie,  
           Puis lur escrie: "Foles genz,  
           Tolez, issez puis de ceenz!  
        Lassez m'a Ysolt cunsiler,  
        Je la sui venu dounier."  
        Li reis s'en rit, kar mult li plest;  
        Ysolt ruvist e si se test.
- 385      E li reis s'en aparceit ben.  
        Al fol a dit: "Musart, ça ven!  
        N'est la raïne Ysolt t'amie?"  
        "Oil, par fai, je ne.l ni mie."
- 390      Isolt respunt: "Certes, tu menz!  
           Metez le fol hors de ceenz!"  
        Li fol respunt tut en riant  
        E dit a Ysolt sun semblant:  
           "Ne vus menbre, raïne Ysolt,  
           Quant li reis envaer me volt,  
           Cume si fist? Il m'envaiat  
           Pur vus, k'il ore esspusee ad.  
        Je i alai cum marcheant,  
           Ki aventure alai querant.  
           Mult ere haï al païs,  
           Kar le Morholt aveie ocis.  
           Pur çو alai cum marcheant,  
        Si fis de çо cointisse grant.  
           Quere vus dui a l'os le rei,  
           Vostre sennur, ke je ci vei,  
           Ki el païs n'ert nent cheriz,  
           E j'i fu durement haïs.  
        Mais j'ere chevaler mervilus,  
           Mult enpernant e curajus:  
           Ne dutai par mun cors nul home

You must remember, my lady,  
how that medicine cured me.  
I bore the name Tanris there.  
Am I not Tanris? What do you think?"

365

Yseut answered: "Certainly not!  
He is a handsome and noble man,  
and you are a gross and ugly creature  
pretending to be Tanris."

370

Now stop your mockeries and go away!  
I don't care much for you or your jokes."  
At that, the jester turned around  
to make sure he was taken for mad.  
He struck the people standing in his path;  
he swept them from high table to exit  
with his shouts: "Fools,  
go, get out of here!  
Let me have a private talk with Yseut;  
I have come to court her."

375

380

The king laughed in enjoyment;  
Yseut blushed and said nothing.

But Mark noticed her reaction  
and said to the jester: "Dreamer, come here!  
Isn't queen Yseut your sweetheart?"  
"Yes, indeed; I don't deny it."

385

Yseut spoke up: "What a lie!  
Throw the fool out of here!"  
The fool, laughing all the while,  
told Yseut what was on his mind:  
"Don't you remember, queen Yseut,  
when the king decided to make me  
his envoy? He sent me for you,  
who are now his wife.

390

I traveled disguised as a merchant  
curious to see what might come his way.

395

I was roundly hated in your land  
for having killed the Morholt,  
which is why I traveled as a merchant—  
and a clever idea it was, too.

400

I was supposed to fetch you for the king—  
your husband, here present—  
who was hardly cherished in your country,  
and I was thoroughly hated there.

But I was a remarkable knight,  
bold and brave:  
no man, from Scotland to Rome,

405

Ki fust d'Escoce tresp'a Rume."

- 410 Isolt respunt: "Ore oi bon conte!  
A chevalers feites vus hunte,  
Kar vus estes un fol naïf.  
Ço est dol ke tant estes vif.  
Tol tei de ci, si Deu t'ait!"  
Li fols l'entent [e] si s'en rit.
- 415 Dunc dit aprés si faitemment:  
"Raïne dame, del serpent  
Menbrer vus dait ke je l'ocis,  
Quant jo vinc en vostre païs.  
La teste li sevrai del cors,  
420 La langue trenchai e pris hors;  
Dedenz ma chauce la botai  
Et del venim si eschaufai,  
Ben quidai estre morz en fin;  
Paumés me jeu lez le chemin.  
425 Vostre mere e vus i venistes  
E de la mort me guareïstes.  
Par grant mecene e par engin  
Me gareïstes del venim.
- 430 "Del bain vus membre u enz jo sis?  
Iloc m'aviez pres ocis.  
Merveile grant voliez faire  
Quant alastes m'espeie traire.  
E quant vus l'aviez sachee  
[E] si la trovastes oschee,  
435 Dunc pensastes, e ço a dreit,  
Ke Morholt ocis en esteit.  
Tost purpensastes grant engin,  
Si deferastes vostre escrin  
[E] la pece dedenz truvastes  
440 Ke del test al Morholt ostastes.  
La pece junsistes al brant,  
Cele se jointest demaintenant.  
Mult par fustes granment osee  
Quant enz el bain od ma espee  
445 Me voliez sempres ocire.  
Mult par est femme de grant ire!  
La raïnë en vint al cri,  
Kar el vus aveit ben oï.  
Ben savez ke je m'acordai,  
450 Kar suvent merci vus criai,  
E je vus deveie defendre  
Vers celui ki vus voleit prendre.

[15v]

could make me fear for my person."

Yseut answered: "That's a good story!  
 You are an insult to knights,  
 you born fool!  
 It's a pity you're still alive.  
 Go away, for God's sake!"

At these words, the fool laughed. 410  
 Then he went on: 415  
 "My lady, you must remember  
 the dragon that I killed  
 when I came to your country.  
 I cut off its head,  
 pulled out its tongue and cut it off, 420  
 tossed it into my boot—  
 and its venom so inflamed my leg  
 that I thought I would soon die;  
 I fainted beside the road.  
 You and your mother came by 425  
 and saved me from death.  
 With all your skill in medicine,  
 you cured me of the poison.

"Do you remember the bath I was taking?  
 You almost killed me as I sat there 430.  
 You had a resounding feat in mind  
 when you unsheathed my sword.  
 When you pulled it out  
 and discovered the nick in the blade,  
 you suspected—rightly—that it was the sword 435  
 that had killed the Morholt.  
 You quickly had the clever idea  
 of opening your little box  
 and looking at the chip of metal  
 that you had taken from the Morholt's head.  
 You tried to fit the piece back into the blade, 440  
 and it fitted exactly.  
 It was extraordinarily daring of you  
 to come to my bath all ready  
 to kill me with my own sword. 445  
 What extraordinary anger can possess a woman!  
 The queen heard your cry  
 and rushed in.  
 You know that I made peace with you:  
 I begged you for mercy. 450  
 I was to champion you, too,  
 against that too-eager suitor."

- Vus ne.l prendrièz en nul for,  
Kar il vus ert encuntrue quor.  
455 Ysolt, jo vus en defendi.  
N'est vair iço ke [je] vus di?"
- "N'est mie vair, einz est mensunge;  
Mais vus recuntez vostre sunge.  
Anuit fustes ivre al cucher  
460 E l'ivrece vus fist sunger."  
"Vers est, d'itel baivre sui ivre  
Dunt je ne quid estre delivre.
- "Ne menbre vus quant vostre pere  
Me baillat vus, e vostre mere?  
465 En la nef nus mistrent en mer:  
Al rai ici vus dui mener.  
Quant en haute mer nus meïmes,  
Ben vus dirrai quai nus feïmes.  
Li jur fu beus e fesait chaut  
470 E [si] nus fumes ben en haut.  
Pur la chalur eüstes sei.  
Ne vus menbre, fille de rai?  
D'un hanap beümes andui:  
Vus en beüstes e j'en bui.  
475 Ivré ai esté tut tens puis,  
Mais male ivrece mult i truis."
- Quant Ysolt ço entent e ot,  
En sun mantel sun chef enclot;  
Volt s'en aler e leve sus.  
480 Li rais la prent, si l'aset jus.  
Par le mantel hermin l'ad prise,  
Si l'ad dejuste lui resise:  
"Sufrez un poi, Ysolt amie,  
Si parorum ceste folie.  
485 Fol," fet li reis, "or voil oïr  
De quel mester tu sez servir."  
Li fols a Markes respundi:  
"Reis e cuntes ai [je] servi."  
"Sez tu de chens? Sez tu d'oisels?"  
490 "Oil," fet il, "jo oi des bels."  
Li fols li dit: "Reis, quant me plest  
Chacer en bois u en forest,  
Od mes levrers' prendrai mes grues  
Ki volent la sus par ces nues;  
495 Od liemer les cingnes preng,  
Owes blanches, bises, de reng;  
Quant vois od mun berseret hors,

whom you found so repugnant  
and refused to accept.

Yseut, I rescued you from him.  
Am I not telling the truth?"

455

"It's a lie, not the truth;  
you're just retelling a dream.  
You were drunk going to bed last night  
and your drunkenness made you dream."  
"I am drunk—true—but on such a drink  
that I cannot soon expect to be sober.

460

"Don't you remember when your father  
and mother put you in my charge?  
They escorted us to the boat  
in which I was to conduct you to the king.  
I'll tell you what we did  
once we were out on the high sea.  
The day was beautiful and hot,  
and we were resting on the deck  
The heat made you thirsty.  
Don't you, daughter of a king, don't you remember?  
We both drank from the same goblet;  
first you drank and then I.  
I have been drunk ever since,  
more drunk than I should ever have become."

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470.

475

When Yseut heard these words,  
she drew her cloak over her head  
and stood up, ready to leave.  
The king stopped her and made her sit down.  
He took her by her ermine cloak  
and sat her down again beside him:  
"Be patient, Yseut my dear,  
and let's hear this foolishness to the end.  
Fool," said the king, "now I want to know  
what sort of work you do."  
The jester answered:  
"I have served kings and counts."  
"Do you work with dogs? with birds?"  
"Yes," he replied, "and fine ones, too."  
He went on: "King, when I have an urge  
to go hunting in the woods or forest,  
I use my greyhounds to catch cranes  
flying high up among the clouds;  
with a bloodhound, I catch swans;  
white geese or grey I get with a falcon;  
when I go out with my hunting dog,

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495

- 500 Mainz preng pluviuns [e] butors."  
 Markes del fol bonement rit,  
 Si funt li grant e [li] petit.  
 Pus dit al fol: "Amis, beau frere,  
 Ke sez tu prendre en la rivere?"
- 505 Li fols respunt, a rire a pris:  
 "[Reis], tut [i] preng quanquë i truis,  
 Kar je prendrai od mes osturs  
 Les lus de bois e les granz urs;  
 Les senglers preng de mes girfaus,  
 Ja ne.s garde ne muns ne vaus;  
 De mes pitiz faucuns hauteins  
 510 Prendrai les chevrés e les daims;  
 D'esparver prendrai le gupil [16r]  
 K'est devers la koe gentil;  
 D'esmerelun prendrai le levre,  
 De hobel le kat e le bevre.
- 515 Quant veng arere a mun ostel,  
 Dunc sai ben eskermir de pel;  
 Nul ne se cuvrerat tant ben  
 Ke il ne ait aukes del men.  
 [E] ben sai partir les tisuns  
 520 Entré esquiërs e garsuns.  
 Ben sai tenprer harpë e rote  
 E chanter après a la note.  
 Riche raïne sai amer,  
 Si n'at sus cel amand mun per.
- 525 Od cultel sai doler cospels,  
 Jeter les puis par ces rusels.  
 Reis, ne sui je bon menestrel?  
 Ui vus ai servi de mun pel."  
 Puis fert del pel envirun sei:
- 530 "Tolez," fet il, "de sur le rei!  
 A voz ostels tost en alez!  
 N'avez mangé? Ke demurrez?"
- 535 Li reis s'en rit a chascun mot,  
 [Ke] mult od bon deduit del sot.  
 Puis cummande a un esquiér  
 K'il li amenet sun destrer;  
 Dit ke aler dedure volt  
 Cum a custume faire solt.  
 Cil chevaler se vunt od lui  
 540 E li esquiér pur l'ennui.
- "Sire, merci," ço dit Ysolt.  
 "Malade sui, le chef me dolt."

- I catch many a plover and bittern." 500  
 Mark laughed heartily at the fool,  
 and so did everyone else.  
 Then he said: "Friend, good man,  
 how do you do with waterfowl?"
- The fool laughed and answered:  
 "King, I bag whatever I find!  
 I use my goshawks to capture  
 forest wolves and large bears;  
 boar I hunt with my gyrfalcons,  
 which are never stopped by hills or valleys;  
 with my soaring little falcons,  
 I can get roebuck and fallow-deer;  
 with a sparrow-hawk I'll catch a fox—  
 a noble beast, to judge by the tail;  
 I hunt for hare with a merlin,  
 for wildcat and beaver with a hobby.
- Back at home, 515  
 I know how to fence with a pike;  
 no one can dodge  
 my thrusts and strikes forever.  
 I also know how to divide clubs  
 between squires and grooms.\* 520  
 I know how to play the harp and the rota  
 and can sing on pitch.  
 So well do I know how to love a great queen  
 that no lover on earth can do better.  
 I can carve wood chips with a knife  
 and toss them into brooks. 525  
 King, am I not a fine entertainer?  
 My pike will serve you today."  
 At that, he struck all around him with his stick.  
 "Get away from the king!" he cried.  
 "Run back home!  
 Haven't you eaten? Then why hang on?"
- The king laughed at every word,  
 for the idiot was truly amusing.  
 Then he ordered a squire  
 to bring him his horse,  
 saying that he wanted to go out  
 for a ride, as he usually did.  
 The knights and squires were following him out,  
 more than ready for a change of sport. 535  
 540  
 "Please, my lord—" said Yseut.  
 "I am not well; my head is aching."

- En ma chambre irrai reposer,  
Ne puis ceste noise escuter."
- 545 Li reis atant aler la lait;  
E ele salt sus, si s'en vait.  
En sa chambre vent mult pensive,  
Dolente se clame e chaitive.  
A sun lit vent, desus se sist,  
Mult fu li dol grant k'ele fist.
- "Lasse!" fait el, "pur quei nasqui?  
Mult ai le quer gref e marri.  
Brengain," fait ele, "bele sor,  
Certes a poi [ke] ne me mor.
- 555 Melz me serait, fusse jo morte,  
Kant ma vië est dure e forte.  
Quanque je vai tut m'est cuntraire.  
Certes, Brengain, ne sai quai faire,  
Kar laenz est un fol venuz
- 560 Ki mult est haut en croiz tunduz.  
A male urë i vint il hui,  
Kar mult [par] m'ad fait grant ennui.  
Certes, cist fol, cist [faus] jugleres,  
Il est divins u enchanteres,
- 565 Kar il set mun estre e ma vie  
De chef en chef, ma dulce amie.  
Certes, Brengain, mult me merveil  
Ki li descufri mun cunseil,  
Kar nus ne.l sout fors je e vus
- 570 E Tristran, le cunseil de nus.  
Mais cist tafur, men escient,  
Le set tut par enchantement.  
Unques nul hom plus veir ne dist,  
Kar unques d'un mot ne mesprist."
- 575 Brengain respunt: "Je pense pur droit  
K'ico Tristran meimes soit."  
"Ne l'est, Brengain, kar cist est laiz  
[E] hidus e mult counterfaiz;  
E Tristran est tant aliniez,
- 580 Bels hom, ben fait, mult ensenez:  
Ne serroit travez en païs  
Nul chevaler de greniur pris.  
Pur ço ne crerai je uwan  
K'ico sait mun ami Tristran.
- 585 Mais cist fol soit de Deu maldit!  
Malete soit l'ure k'il vit!  
E cele nef maldite sait  
En ki li fol vint ça endreit!

I'll go to my room to rest;  
all this noise has been too much."  
The king agreed at once;  
she stood up and hurried out.  
She was downcast as she went to her chamber,  
calling herself unhappy and wretched.  
She came to her bed, sat down,  
and burst into a fit of grief.

545

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"Why," she cried, "was I ever born?  
My heart is heavy and is breaking.  
Brangain," she said, "good friend,  
I am going to die.  
With a life so harsh and bitter,  
it would be better if I were dead.  
Everything I see is against me.  
I don't know what to do, Brangain:  
A madman has come along,  
with his hair cropped into a cross.  
What bad luck led him here today?  
He has brought me nothing but harm.  
This jester, this fake entertainer,  
must be a seer or a sorcerer,  
for he knows everything about me,  
my dear friend—everything .  
I cannot imagine, Brangain,  
who revealed to him the secret  
that no one knew except you and me  
and Tristan—the secret about us.  
But this vagrant, I'm certain,  
knows what he knows by witchcraft.  
Everything he said was true;  
not one word was a mistake."

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Brangain replied: "I think  
the man is probably Tristan himself."  
"He is not, Brangain. The man is ugly  
and gross and all deformed.  
Tristan is slender and well-built,  
an elegant, well-bred man;  
nowhere could you find  
a more admirable knight.  
That's why I cannot ever believe  
that the fool is my belovèd Tristan.  
Damn him, that fool!  
Curse the fact that he was ever born!  
And curse the ship  
that brought him here!"

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- [16v]
- 590 Dol fu k'il ne neat en l'unde  
La hors en cele mer parfunde!"
- "Taisez, dame," [co] dit Brengain.  
"Mult estes or de male main.  
U apreïstes tel mester?  
Mult savez ben escuminger!"
- 595 "Brengain, kar [cil] m'ad fet never.  
N'oïstes home si parler."  
"Dame, je quid, par seint Johan,  
K'il seit le messager Tristran."
- 600 "Certes, ne sai, ne.l cunus mie.  
Mes alez i, ma bele amie,  
Parler od li, si vus pöez,  
Saveir si vus le cunustrez."
- Brengain salt sus—curteisse esteit—  
E vint en la sale tut dreit,  
605 Mes el n'i trovat serf ne franc,  
Fors le fol seant sur un banc.  
Li autrë en sunt tuz alé  
A lur ostels par la cité.  
Brengain le vait, de luin estut,  
610 E Tristran mult ben la cunuit.  
Le pel jeta lors de sa main  
E puis dit: "Ben vengez, Brengain!  
Franche Brengain, pur Deu vus pri  
Ke vus de mai aez merci."
- 615 Brengain respunt: "E je de quai  
Volez k'aie merci de tei?"  
"E cheles! Ja sui je Tristran  
K'en tristur vi e en haan.  
Je sui Tristran ki tant se dolt  
620 Pur l'amur la raine Ysolt."
- Brengain li dit: "Ne l'estes, veir,  
Si cum jo quid, al men espeir."  
"Certes, Brengain, veirs je le sui.  
Tristran oi nun quant ça me mui,  
625 [Kar] je sui Tristran verrement.  
Brengain, ne vus menbre cument  
Ensemble partimes d'Irlande,  
Cume vus [oi] en ma cumande,  
E vus e la raine Ysolt  
630 K'ore cunustre ne me volt?  
La raine, quant a mei vint  
E par la destre main vus tint,

What a pity that he didn't drown  
out there in the deep sea!"

590

"Don't speak like that, my lady," said Brangain.

"You're being horrid.

Where did you learn to be  
so quick to condemn!"

"Brangain, he has driven me mad.

595

No one else has ever spoken like that."

"By Saint John, my lady, I believe  
he is Tristan's messenger!"

"I don't know. I don't recognize him.

But go to him, my dear Brangain;

600

speak with him if you can,

and see if you recognize him."

Brangain, ever courteous and obliging, rose  
and hurried straight to the great hall;

605

there she found no one, neither serf nor freeman,  
except the fool, who was sitting on a bench.

The others had all gone back  
to their lodgings in town.

Brangain saw him and, from a distance,

610

Tristan recognized her.

He threw down his stick

and cried: "Welcome, Brangain!

Noble Brangain, I ask you in God's name  
to take pity on me!"

Brangain answered: "And why

615

do you want me to take pity on you?"

"Well! Because I am Tristan,

unhappy and tormented

Tristan, aching

for love of queen Yseut."

620

Brangain said: "No, surely not,

as far as I can see."

"But I am, Brangain—truly.

Tristan was my name when I came here,

and the truth is, I am Tristan.

625

Don't you remember, Brangain, how

we left Ireland together—

how you sailed under my command,

you and queen Yseut,

who now refuses to recognize me?

630

The queen her mother, when she came to me

holding you by the right hand,

- Si me baillat vus par la main.  
 Menbrer vus dait, bele Brengain:  
 635 Ysolt e vus me cumandat;  
 Mult [me] requist, bel me priat  
 K'en ma garde vus receüsse,  
 Guardasse al melz ke je peüssse.  
 Lors vus baillat un costeret,  
 640 N'ert gueres grant, mes petitet.  
 Dist ke vus ben le guardissez,  
 Cum s'amur aver voliez.  
 Quant venimes en haute mer,  
 Li tans se prist a eschaufer.  
 645 J'aveie vestu un blialt,  
 Tressué fu [e] si oi chault.  
 J'oi sai; a baivre demandai.  
 Ben savez si vairs vus dit ai.  
 Un valet qui a mes pez sist  
 650 Levat e le costerel prist;  
 En un hanap d'argent versat  
 Le baivre ke il denz truvat.  
 Puis m'assist le hanap al poing  
 E je en bui a cel bosuing.  
 655 La maité ofri a Ysolt  
 Ki sai aveit e baivre volt.  
 Cel baivre, bele, mar le bui,  
 E je unques mar vus cunui!  
 Bele, ne vus [en] menbrë il?"  
 660 Brengain respunt: "Par fai, nenil."

"Brengain, des puis k'amai Ysolt,  
 A nul autre dire ne.l volt.  
 Vus le soustes e oïstes  
 E vus l'uvraine cumentistes.  
 665 Ço ne sout nul ki fust el mund  
 Fors nus treis, de tuz çous k'i sunt."  
 Brengain entent ke cil cuntat,  
 Sun pas vers la chambre en alat.  
 Cil salt sus, si la parsiwi,  
 670 Mult par lu vait criant merci.  
 Brengain est venue a Ysolt,  
 Si li surrist cum faire solt.  
 Ysolt culur muad e teinst  
 E sempres malade se feinst.  
 675 La chambre fu sempres voidee,  
 Kar la raine ert deshaitee.

[17r]

E Brengain pur Tristran alat  
 [E] en la chambre le menat.

- handed you over to me.  
 You must remember, dear Brangain:  
 she entrusted me with Yseut and you,  
 appealing to me  
 to take you into my care  
 and protect you as well as I could.  
 Then she gave you a little case—  
 oh, really quite small. 635
- She told you to guard it well  
 if you wished to keep her love.  
 When we reached the high sea,  
 the weather turned very warm.  
 I was wearing a tunic  
 that left me hot and perspiring. 640
- I was thirsty and asked for something to drink.  
 (I have been telling you the truth, haven't I?)  
 A fellow who was sitting at my feet  
 got up and opened the case; 650  
 he found a drink in it  
 that he poured into a silver goblet.  
 Then he handed me the goblet  
 and I drank eagerly—  
 but saved half for Yseut, 655  
 who was thirsty too and wanted to drink.  
 Yes, Brangain, I drank that drink. Alas.  
 And woe that I ever met you!  
 Don't you remember, dear Brangain?  
 She answered: "No, I don't." 660
- "Brangain, Yseut never wanted  
 to tell anyone about our love.  
 To you, of course, it was no secret,  
 and you were even an accomplice.  
 But of all the people in the world, not one  
 knew about it except the three of us." 665
- Brangain heard him out,  
 then turned to go back to the chamber.  
 He jumped up to follow her,  
 begging for her pity. 670
- Brangain returned to Yseut  
 and smiled to her as she usually did.  
 Yseut, though, turned color and paled  
 and claimed a sudden illness.  
 The room was quickly cleared,  
 because the queen was indisposed. 675
- Brangain went for Tristan  
 and brought him back to the chamber.

- Quant il vint enz e vit Ysolt,  
 680 Il vait vers lu, baiser la volt,  
 Mais ele se trait lors arere.  
 Huntuse fu de grant manere,  
 Kar ne saveit quai fere dut,  
 E tressuat u ele estut.
- Tristran vit k'ele l'eschivat;  
 685 Huntus fu, si se vergundat  
 [E] si s'est un poi tret ensus  
 Vers la parei, dejuste l'us.
- Puis dit aukes de sun voleir:  
 690 "Certes, unc ne quidai ço veir  
 De vus, [Ysolt,] franche raine,  
 Ne de Brengain, vostre meschine!  
 Allas! Ki tant avrai vesquu,  
 Quant je cest de vus ai veü  
 695 Ke vus en dessein me tenez  
 E pur si vil ore m'avez!  
 En ki me purrei mes fier,  
 Quant Ysolt ne me deingne amer,  
 Quant Ysolt a si vil me tient  
 700 K'ore de mai ne li suvent?  
 Ohi, Ysolt! Ohi, amie!  
 Hom ki ben aime tart ublie!"  
 Mult valt funteine ki ben surt,  
 Dunt li reuz est bon e ben curt;  
 705 E de l'ure k'ele secchist,  
 K'ewe n'i surt n'ewe n'en ist,  
 Si ne fet gueres a praiser:  
 Ne fait amur quant volt boiser."
- Isolt respunt: "Frere, ne sai.  
 710 Je vus esguard [e] si m'esmai,  
 Kar n'aparceif mie de vus  
 Ke seiez Tristran l'Amerus."  
 Tristran respunt: "Raïne Ysolt,  
 Je sui Tristran k'amer vus solt.  
 715 "Ne vus membre del seneschal  
 [Ki] vers le rei nus teneit mal?  
 Mis compainz fu en un ostel,  
 U nus jeümes par üel."  
 Par une nuit, quant m'en issi,  
 720 Il levat sus, si me siwi.  
 Il out negez, si me trazat;  
 Al paliz vint, utre passat,  
 En vostre chambre nus guaitat  
 E l'endemain nus encusat.

- When he came in and saw Yseut,  
he went up to her to kiss her,  
but she drew back,  
flushed and hot with embarrassment,  
not knowing  
what to do or say.
- Seeing her avoid him, Tristan too  
was embarrassed and flustered;  
he stepped back a little  
toward the wall, near the door.
- Finally, he let himself speak:  
“Never, Yseut, noble queen, did I expect  
to see this of you  
or of your companion, Brangain!  
Have I really lived  
to see you do this—  
show me such disdain  
and treat me as some shabby wretch!  
Whom can I trust anymore,  
now that Yseut does not deign to love me,  
now that Yseut treats me as such a wretch  
that she no longer remembers me?”
- Oh, Yseut, my love!  
A man in love can never forget!  
A spring is valuable if it wells up high  
and its stream is swift and clear;  
but the moment it dries up  
and water neither rises nor flows,  
it is not of value anymore:  
nor is love, when it turns false.”
- Yseut answered: “I don’t know, my friend.  
I look at you and I don’t know what to think.  
I see no sign in you  
that you are Tristan, the man in love.”
- Tristan answered: “Queen Yseut,  
I am Tristan, your faithful lover.  
“Don’t you remember the steward  
who roused the king against us?  
We had lodgings together,  
where we lived as equals.  
One night when I went out,  
he rose and followed my steps  
through the fresh snow.  
He came to the paling, made his way past,  
and spied on us in your room;  
the next day, he denounced us.”

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- 725      Ço fu li premer ki al rei  
Nus encusat, si cum je crei.
- “Del naim vus redait ben membrer  
Ke vus soliez tant duter.  
Il n’amat pas nostre deduit;  
Entur nus fu e jur e nuit.  
Mis i fu [pur] nus aguaiteur  
E servit de mult fol mester.  
Senez fumes a une faiz.  
Cum amans ki sunt en destraiz  
735      Purpensen de mainte veidise,  
D’engin [e] d’art [e] de cuintise,  
Cum il purunt entrassembler,  
Parler, envaiser e jüer,  
Si feïmes nus: senez fumes  
740      En vostre chambrë u jeümes.  
Mais li fel naims de pute orine  
Entre noz liz pudrat farine,  
Kar par itant quidat saver  
L’amur de nus, si ço fust veir.  
745      Mais je de ço m’en averti,  
A vostre lit joinz pez sailli.  
Al sailir le braz me crevat  
E vostre lit ensenglentat;  
Arere saili ensemant  
750      E le men lit refis sanglant.
- “Li reis Marc i survint atant  
E vostre lit truvat sanglant.  
Al men en vint eneslepas  
E si truvat sanglant mes dras.  
755      Raïne, pur vostre amité  
Fu de la curt lores chascé.  
Ne membre vus, ma bele amie,  
D’une petite drüerie  
Ke une faiz vus envaiai,  
760      Un chenet ke vus purchaçai?  
E ço fu le Petit Creü  
Ke vus tant cher avez eü.  
E suvenir vus dait [il] ben,  
Ysolt amie, d'une ren:
- 765      “Quant cil d’Irland a la curt vint,  
Li reis l’onurrat, cher le tint.  
Harpeür fu, harper saveit.  
Ben saviez ke cil esteit.  
Li reis vus dunat al harpur,

[17v]

He was the first, I believe,  
to denounce us to the king.

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"You must remember, too, the dwarf  
whom you always found so frightening.  
He disliked our pleasure,  
but he was around us night and day. 730  
He had been sent to spy on us  
and he was madly zealous at his task.  
One time, we had been bled."

Now, lovers who are hounded  
invent all kinds of tricks,  
stratagems, and clever ruses  
in order to come together  
and enjoy each other's company,  
and so did we. We had been bled,  
then, and recovering in your chamber. 740

He, that sly and faithless dwarf,  
sprinkled flour on the floor between our beds,  
thinking he could learn that way  
if we were in fact in love.

I realized, though, what he had done,  
and jumped across without touching the floor.  
The leap re-opened the vein in my arm,  
and I stained your bed with blood;  
the same thing happened when I jumped back.  
and my bed was then stained as well. 750

"King Mark appeared at that point  
and found the blood on your bed.  
He hurried over to mine  
and saw blood on my sheets, too.  
Then, Queen, for love of you, 755  
I was banished from the court.  
Don't you remember, my dear Yseut,  
a little love-gift  
that I once sent you:  
a little dog that I had got for you?  
We called him Tiny,  
and you were delighted to have him.  
And surely you remember  
something else, my love:

"When the man from Ireland came to court,"  
the king received him with honor and affection.  
He was a harper and played very well.  
You knew who he was.  
The king handed you over to him, 765

- 770 Cil vus amenat par baldur  
 Tresqu'a sa nef e dut entrer.  
 En bois fu, si l'oï cunter.  
 Une rote pris, vinc après  
 Sur mon destrer le grant elez.
- 775 Cunquise vus out par harper  
 E je vus cunquis par roter.  
 Raiñe, suvenir vus dait,  
 Quant li rais cungié m'aveit  
 E je ere mult anguisus,
- 780 Amie, de parler od vus,  
 E quis engin, vinc el vergez  
 U suvent ermes enveisez.  
 Desus un pin el umbre sis,  
 De mun cnivet les cospels fis
- 785 K'erent enseignes entre nus,  
 Quant me plaiseit venir a vus.  
 Une fonteine iloc surdeit  
 Ki devers la chambre curreit.  
 En l'ewe jetai les cospels,
- 790 Aval les porta li rusels.  
 Quant veiez la doleüre,  
 Si saviez ben a dreiture  
 Ke jo [i] vendreie la nuit  
 Pur envaiser par mun deduit.
- 795 "Li neims sempres s'en aparceut;  
 Al rei Marc cunter le curut.  
 Li rais vint la nuit el gardin  
 E si est munté [sus] el pin.  
 Jo vinc après, ke mot ne soi,
- 800 Mais si cum j'oi esté un poi,  
 Si aparceu l'ombre le roi  
 Ke sëeit el pin ultre moi.  
 De l'autre part venistes vus.  
 Certes, j'ere dunc poërus,
- 805 Kar je dutoie, [çø] sachez,  
 Ke vus trop [ne] vus hastisez.  
 Mais Deus ne.l volt, sue merci;  
 L'ombre veïstes ke je vi,  
 Si vus en traististes arere,
- 810 E [jo] vus mustrai ma praiere  
 Ke vus al rai m'acordissez,  
 Si vus fare le puussez,  
 U il mes guages aquitast  
 E del regne aler me lessast.
- 815 Pur tant fumes lores sauvez  
 E al rei Marc fu acordez.

and he happily set out with you  
for his ship, which he was to board.  
I was in the forest when I heard this news.  
I seized a rota and sped after you  
as fast as my horse could go.

The Irishman had won you with his harp,  
and I won you back with my rota.  
Queen, you must remember  
when the king had banished me  
and I was aching,  
my love, to be with you,

I thought of a plan: I came to the garden  
where we had often spent happy hours together.

Hidden in the shade of a pine,  
I used my knife to make wood shavings

that served as signs between us  
when I wished to come to you.

That was the spot where a spring rose  
which flowed toward your chamber.

I dropped the shavings into the water,  
and the stream carried them along.

When you saw the pieces floating by,  
you knew for certain  
that I would come to turn that night  
into a time of pleasure.

"The dwarf soon became aware of our game  
and ran to tell king Mark.

That night, the king came to the garden  
and climbed up into the tree.

I came later, suspecting nothing,  
but once a little time had passed,  
I noticed the shadow of the king,  
who was perched in the tree above me.

At that point, I saw you come along  
and I was frightened;

I was afraid, you see,  
that you might do something hasty.

But God in His mercy protected us:  
you too saw the shadow

and came no closer,  
while I seized the moment to implore

you to reconcile me with the king  
if you possibly could—

or at least persuade him to pay me my wages  
and let me leave the kingdom.

That's how we were saved that time  
and king Mark pardoned me.

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- [18r]
- 820     “Isolt, membre vus de la lai  
       Ke feïtes, bele, pur mai?  
       Quant vus eisistes de la nef,  
       Entre mes bras vus tinc süef.  
       Je m'esteie ben desguisé,  
       Cume vus m'aviez mandé.  
       Le chef teneie mult embrunc.  
       Ben sai quai me deïstes dunc:  
 825     K'od vus me laissasse chaair.  
       Ysolt amie, n'est ço vair?  
       Süef a la terre chäistes  
       E voz quislettes m'aüvristes,  
       E m'i laissai chaair dedenz,  
 830     E ço virent tutes les genz.  
       Par tant fustes, se je l'entent,  
       Ysolt, guarie al jugement  
       Del serement e de la lai  
       Ke feïstes en la curt le rai.”  
 835     La raïne l'entent e ot  
       E ben ad noté chescun mot.  
       El l'esgarde, del quer suspire,  
       Ne set sus cel ke puisse dire,  
       Kar Tristran ne semblout il pas  
 840     De vis, de semblanz ne de dras.  
       Mais a ço k'il dit ben entent  
       K'il cunte veirs, de ren ne ment.  
       Pur ço ad el quer grant anguisse  
       E [si] ne set ke faire puisse.  
 845     Folie serrait e engan  
       A entercer le pur Tristran,  
       Quant ele vait e pense e creit  
       N'est pas Tristran, mais autre esteit.  
       E Tristran mult ben s'aparceuit  
 850     K'ele del tut le mescunuit.
- Puis dit aprés: “Dame reïne,  
       Mult fustes ja de bone orine  
       Quant vus m'amastes seinz desdeing.  
       Certes, de feintise or me pleing.  
 855     Ore vus vai retraiete e fainte,  
       Ore vus ai de feinte ateinte.  
       Mais jo vi ja, bele, tel jur  
       Ke vus m'amastes par amur:  
       Quant rei Marc nus out cunjeiez  
 860     E de sa curt nus out chascez,  
       As mains ensemble nus preïmes  
       E hors de la sale en eissimes.

- "Yseut, do you remember the oath,  
 my love, that you swore for me?  
 When you left the ship,  
 I was carrying you in my gentle arms. 820  
 I was thoroughly disguised,  
 just as you had asked me to be.  
 I was looking down  
 and had no trouble hearing what you said to me:  
 that I should trip and fall. 825  
 Isn't that true, dear Yseut?  
 You fell gently to the ground,  
 spreading your legs open for me,  
 and I dropped between them—  
 in full view of everyone around us. 830  
 That was how, I realized later,  
 you armed yourself against the oath  
 that you would soon swear  
 at the trial in the king's court."  
 The queen listened intently 835  
 and took note of every word the man uttered.  
 She peered at him; she was short of breath;  
 she had no idea of what to say,  
 because the man's face was not Tristan's,  
 nor the rest of his person nor his clothes. 840  
 But she readily admitted that his story was true,  
 that no part was a lie,  
 and so her heart was pounding  
 and she didn't know what to do.  
 It would be sheer madness 845  
 to acknowledge him as Tristan  
 when her eyes and head plainly told her  
 that he was someone else.  
 Meanwhile, it was clear to Tristan  
 that she did not recognize him. 850
- Then he continued: "My lady,  
 you showed your great nobility  
 when you did not disdain to love me.  
 Now, though, I lament your disloyalty.  
 Now I see duplicity and rejection. 855  
 There: I have charged you with disloyalty.  
 Oh, Yseut, I recall the time  
 you were in love with me:  
 when king Mark banished us  
 and drove us out of his court,  
 we took each other's hand 860  
 and walked out of the great hall together.

- A la forest puis en alames  
 E [un] mult bel liu i truvames:  
 865 En une roche fu cavee;  
 Devant ert estraite l'entree;  
 Dedenz fu voltisse e ben faite,  
 Tant bele cum se fust purtraite;  
 L'entailleure de la pere  
 870 Esteit bele de grant manere.  
 En cele volte cunversames  
 Tant cum en bois nus surjurnames.  
 Hudein, mun chen, ke tant oi cher,  
 Iloc l'affaitai senz crier.  
 875 Od mun chen [e] od mun ostur  
 Nus persoie [je] chascun jur.

- "Reïne dame, ben savez  
 Cum nus aprés fumes trovez.  
 Li reis meïmes nus trovat  
 880 E li naim ke l'i amenat.  
 Mais Deus aveit uvré pur nus,  
 Quant trovat l'espee entre nus"  
 E nus rejumees de loing.  
 Li reis prist le gant de sun poing  
 885 E sur la face le vus mist  
 Tant süef ke un mot ne dist,  
 Kar il vit un rai de soleil  
 Ke out hallé e fait vermeil."  
 Li reis s'en [est] alez atant,  
 890 Si nus laissat [iloc] dormant.  
 Puis n'out nule suspeziun  
 K'entre nus öüst si ben nun.  
 Sun maltaalent nus pardonat  
 E sempres pur nus envoiat.
- 895 "Isolt, menbrer vus dait [il] ben:  
 Dunt vus donai Huden, mun chen.  
 K'en avez fet? Mustrez le mai!"  
 Ysolt respunt: "Je l'ai, par fai!  
 Cel chen ai [je] dunt vus parlez.  
 900 Certes, orendreit le verez.  
 Brengain, ore alez pur le chen!  
 Amenez le od le lien."  
 Ele leve e en pez sailli,  
 Vint a Huden e si.l joï  
 905 E le deslie, aler le lait.  
 Cil junst les pez [e] si s'en vait.

[18v]

Tristran li dit: "Ça ven, Huden!"

Then we went into the forest  
and found a lovely spot there:  
a cave in the rock.

865

The opening was small and tight,  
but inside it was vaulted and spacious,  
as beautiful as if it had been painted;  
the stone was carved  
with remarkable care.

870

We lived in that cavern  
through all the time we stayed in the woods.  
That is where I taught Hudent, the dog  
I loved so much, not to bark.  
With my dog and my goshawk  
I found food for us every day.

875

"Queen, my lady, you know  
how we were eventually found.  
The king himself found us,  
guided by his dwarf.  
But God worked in our favor,  
for the king found my sword between us  
and we, besides, were lying somewhat apart.  
The king removed a glove from his hand  
and gently, silently  
placed it on your face  
when he noticed that it had been burned  
and reddened by the sun.  
The king then went away,  
allowing us to go on sleeping.  
After that, he no longer suspected us  
of doing anything wrong.  
He granted us his pardon right away  
and sent for us to return to court.

880

885

890

"Yseut, you must surely remember  
when I gave you my dog, Hudent.  
What have you done with him? Show me!"  
Yseut answered: "Why, I still have him,  
your little dog!  
In fact, you'll see him now.  
Brangain, go bring the dog in!  
Bring him in on his leash."  
Brangain rose and hurried out  
to get Hudent. With a caress,  
she freed him of his leash, then let go of him.  
The dog bounded away.

895

900

905

Tristan cried: "Come here, Hudent!

- Tu fus ja men, or te repren."
- Huden le vit, tost le cunuit,
- 910      Joie li fist cum faire dut.
- Unkes de chen n'oï retraire
- Ke pouüst meiur joie faire
- Ke Huden fist a sun sennur,
- Tant par li mustrat grant amur.
- 915      Sure lui curt, leve la teste,
- Unc si grant joie ne fist beste;
- Bute del vis [e] fert del pé:
- Aver en pouüst l'en pité.'
- Isolt le tint a grant merveille.
- 920      Huntuse fu, devint vermaille
- De ço k'il issi le joï
- Tant tost cum il sa voiz oï,
- Kar il ert fel e de putte aire
- E mordeit e saveit mal faire
- 925      A tuz icés k'od lu juöent
- E tuz icés ki.l maniöent.
- Nul n'i poeit sei acuinter
- Ne nul ne.l poeit manier
- Fors sul la raïne e Brengain,
- 930      Tant par esteit de male main,
- Depuis k'il sun mestre perdi
- Ki l'afaitat e ki.l nurri.
- Tristran joïst Huden e tient
- 935      E dit: "Ysolt, melz li suvient
- Ke jo.l nurri, si l'afaitai,
- Ke vus ne fait, ki tant amai.
- Mult par at en chen grant franchise
- E [at] en femme grant feintise."
- Isolt l'entent e culur mue,
- 940      D'anguisse fremist e tressue.
- Tristran li dit: "Dame reïne,
- Mult suliez estre enterine.
- "Remembre vus cum al vergez
- 945      U ensemble fumes cuchez,
- Li rais survint, si nus trovat
- E tost arere returnat?
- Si purpensa grant felunnie:
- Occire nus volt par envie.
- Mais Deus ne.l volt, sue merci,
- 950      Kar je sempres m'en averti.
- Bele, dunc nus estut partir,

- You used to be mine; now I am taking you back."  
 Hudent recognized him in a trice  
 and was—of course—all over him with excitement. 910
- I have never heard of any dog  
 more excited to see his master  
 than Hudent was at that moment.  
 All his affection was on display.  
 He ran up to him, head held high,  
 and nuzzled and pawed  
 with all the delight an animal could show:  
 it was a moving scene.
- Yseut was dumbfounded.  
 She turned red with embarrassment  
 to see how happily the dog greeted Tristan  
 as soon as he had heard his voice,  
 for otherwise he barked and snarled  
 and bit and fought  
 when anyone tried to play with him 925  
 or touch him.  
 No one had been able to approach him,  
 no one had been able to touch him,  
 except the queen and Brangain,  
 so horrid had he been  
 since he had lost the master  
 who had raised and trained him.
- Holding Hudent and petting him,  
 Tristan said: "Yseut, he remembers  
 how I raised him and trained him  
 better than you remember how much I loved you.  
 What noble loyalty a dog can show  
 and what duplicity a woman..." 935
- At these words, Yseut turned color,  
 shuddered and perspired with anguish.  
 Tristan said: "My lady, queen,  
 you used to be so true. 940
- "Do you remember how, in the garden  
 where we were lying together,  
 the king suddenly appeared, discovered us,  
 and immediately turned back?  
 He planned a terrible crime:  
 his jealousy made him want to kill us.  
 But God in His mercy protected us  
 by letting me realize what was happening.  
 Dear Yseut, we had to part at that point 945  
 950

Fors la raïne Ysolt, u ert.  
Tristran en est joius e lez:  
Mult set ben k'il [est] herbigez.

the queen, Yseut herself, just as she was.  
He was filled with joy  
to know he now had such lodgings.



## REJECTED READINGS AND VARIANTS

8 P: tuz dis 11 ms., S: ki en 12 H: ocit 13 ms., S: ahaan 15 ms. -1 18 ms., S: sa amur 21 ms. ke il la s. 22 ms., S: Ke il 26 ms., H, W, L, S: Ne volt vers nul descouvrir (H, W, L: descovrir) le d. 27 ms., L, S: c. so en / H, W: c. s'en 30 ms. ke il en / H: k'il l'en / S: ke i' l'en 33 ms., S: Vent 34 ms. Ki le p. ne s. aterre / S: antercé 35 ms. Kar il m. cunuz (-3) / S: il estoit m. cunuz 37 ms., H, W, L, S: hom ki a pé 38 ms., S: Ne en / H, P: Nen 43 ms. ne lu c. / P: ne c. 46 ms., S: le estre 47 ms., S: Tan / ms. curare 48 ms., S: Ke a 49 ms., L, S: Kar suvent avent / H, W: Kar suvent vent 52 ms., H, P, W, L, S: so crei / ms., P: ne en cursist / H: ne l'en sursist / W: ne l'en cursist / S: ne en cursist 53 ms., S: descuverir 54 ms., L, S: s. venir (-1) 56 ms., H, P, W, L, S: De so / ms. ke uunt suvent pelise / H, W: k'en unt s. pensé / P, L, S: ke n'unt s. pensé 62 ms., S: Acusit (S: Acuillt) sun estre 68 ms., S: ke ert m. 69 ms., S: charge e. (-1) 70 H: En Bretaine / ms., H, W, L, S: c. devait 72 ms. E desanerent / P: Et il desancrent / S: E desancrent 75 ms. A. estest v. / S: est v. 77 ms., L, S: En q. p. en i. / W: Quel p. en i. 78 ms., P, W, L, S: En Engleterre (+1) 83 ms., S: grant (-1) 86 ms. amunte (+1) 87 ms., S: le unde 90 H: p. a lur 95 ms. marc' / H, W, S: Markë 99 ms., P: Tiltagel 100 ms., H, L, S: -1 104 P: S. la m. sist en C. 105 ms., S: querré (-1) / P: La t. ki ert e f. e gr. 107 ms. De marke 110 ms. de 9zur / S: de azur 111 ms., W, L, S: Enez (W, L, S: Enz) al ch. esteit u. p. (+2) / P: Al ch. esteit u. p. 113 ms., S: Ben ferreit (S: serreit) le entré e le i. 115 ms. marc' / H, W, P, S: Marke 121 ms., S: De ewes / P: D'euves 122 ms. gwaineres / S: gwaineries 123 ms., L, S: -1 124 ms., S: Al porte (+1) 126 ms., S: de autres t. ke il (S: kil) 128 ms., H, P, W, L, S: pur so / ms., S: le ad 132 ms. fiez / H, P, W, L: faez 133 ms. fai / H, P, W, L: faé 134 ms., P, W, S: le an se / L: l'an se 135 ms. Li passant destrent / H, W: Li paisant distrent / S: Li paissant distrent 136 ms., S: Ki (S: Ke) d. f. le an 138 L: Ja si gr. / ms. pr. nom / P: pr. l'om 139 ms. en uline a. 140 ms., H, P, W, L, S: So 141 ms., S: arrivé 142 ms. s. est en ancre / H: s. aancree / S: s. est enancré 143 ms., L, S: sus si (-1) 144 ms., S: se asist 146 ms. marc' / H, W, S: Marke 147 ms., S: ke en 148 ms., S: E gr. c. tenu a. / H, W, L: E gr. c. tenu i a. / P: E gr. c. tenuë a. 151 ms., S: Par fait e eus s. i. (-1) 152 ms. En co nat / ms., L, S: ke je les vi / H, W: ke jes vi 157 ms., S: de une vaidi 158 ms., S: sa amie 159 ms., S: ke il ni / P: ke n'i 160 ms., S: ke il pot / P: ke pot 163 S: Marke / L: Markes / P: K. Markes li r. so set b. / ms., H, W, L, S: so set 164 ms., L, S: Le het (-1) / P: heeit / W: heent 165 ms., S: si il 166 ms., S: le o. 167 ms., S: sa amie 168 ms., S: si il me o. 170 ms., L, S: -1 171 ms., L, S: -1 174 ms., S: s. si a m. parleret 178 ms., L, S: -1 179 ms., S: Ore v. (+1) 181 ms., L, S: fol e faire (+1) 184 ms., L, S: Je ne (+1) 188 ms., S: Ki avera 192 ms. De un / S: De un' 196 ms., S: En un repost u l'en m. (-1) / H: En un repostail u l'en m. / W: En un repost liu u l'en m. / P: En un repost o lu l'en m. 197 ms., S: -1 198 ms., S: tu averas 199 ms., S: averai 201 ms., S: peschers (-1) 206 P: K'il / W: K'il meïsmes p. s. 210 ms. seul le f. / H, W, L, S: senlle f. 213 ms., S: un h. 214 ms., S: Ke il 216 ms., L, S: e. si m. (+1) 217 ms. S: ki al monde (+1) / H: k'al monde 218 ms., S: cunust (-1) 219 ms., S: Ne ki T. le e. 221 ms. ad de deune h. / S: ad de une 222 ms., S: s. col le ad / H, W, L: s. col l'ad (-1) / P: s. col l'en ad 223 ms. en volt / H, W, S: en voit 224 ms., P, W: ke il / H: k'il (-1) 225 ms.,

S: le ad 226 ms., S: le ad 230 ms., S: Le abé 231 H, L: habeesse 233 ms., S:abee / H: nen ad / L: Il n'ad (-1) 234 ms., L, S: cl. ordinee (L: ordiné) (-1) / H, W: Ne m. ne cl. ordiné 236 H: k'il (-1) 240 ms., S: le umbre 241 ms., L, S: me p. / ms., H, P, W, L, S: so 245 ms., L, S: Graz / H, W: Gras 246 ms., H, P, W, L, S: so 248 ms., W, S: Encentre l. (+1) 249 ms., P, W, S: Le esc. / H: E l'esc. 252 P: cuident 254 ms., P, S: ki vunt swiant (P: siwant) 256 ms. Est' kili gacte a tanlent / H: Estes k'il i / L: Estre ki li / P, W: Est tes (W: Estes) ki li giete a talent / S: Est vus ki li gatte a talent 261 H: aparceut 263 ms., S: ore (+1) 266 ms., S: le unt 269 ms. Maidit / H, S: Marke dit 270 ms., S: ke avés si quis / H, P, W, L: si 272 ms. je si quisi / H, W, L, S: je si 276 ms., L, S: sai ben (-1) 277 ms., S: me aleitat / H, P, L: m'alettat 278 ms., S: u ele me 279 ms., S: Ele me 282 ms. bel / S: bel' 284 ms., L, S: ki tant amez (-1) / P: ki vus t. a. 286 ms., P, W, S: de mund 290 ms., S: est asaer (-1) 291 ms., S: De Y. 292 ms., S: A un (S: un') autre a. (-1) 293 ms., S: moy Y. jo / P: moi la jo 295 ms., S: le entant 296 ms., S: te ait 298 ms. L, S: Aver et mener en / H: Aver et mette en 299 ms., S: Ore me di ke tu en fereis (+1) 300 ms., L, S: p. la meraies (-1) / H: U e en / P, W: p. tu la m.

301 ms., S: le air 305 ms., S: le air est e p. nuez p. 307 ms., S: De la s. (-1) 309 ms., L, S: matin le frat (S: lefrat) (+1) / H, P, W: levrat 310 ms. Lenz m. cl. r. (-2) / S: Lenz (-1) 311 ms. r. en autre 312 ms., S: Entre p. e d. (-1) / P, W: Entre els en p. e d. 317 ms., S: le amai 318 ms., S: viverai (+1) 319 ms., S: le entent 321 ms., S: Ki vus f. e. cenz (-2) / H: Ki vus f. e. ceenz (-1) 324 ms., P, S: Ke il f. v. le a. (P: l'autre) g. 325 ms., S: ke ele 329 ms. f. nauurez 330 ms, S: hom le (-1) / P, L: sevent 334 ms., W, L, S: je le o. (W, L: l'ocis) p. nel ni / H: je l'o. mie nel ni 336 ms., L, S: br. en fu (+1) 337 ms., S: me entamat 339 ms., S: le os serst 341 ms. Kine (?) Kme (?) / H, L: Ki ne p. par m. g. / P, W, S: Ki ne pout (P, W: poüt) m. g. 342 ms., H, W, L, S: Si quidai b. m. (-2) 344 ms., L, S: T. me par nuat / H: me partuat 345 ms., S: turment (S: turment') (-1) / P, W: turment out gr. 347 ms., me estoit aruer / H, P, W, L: m'estut / S: me estot 349 ms. je avei o. / S: je avei' 350 ms. unche 354 H, L: ke t. 355 ms., S: oist p. (-1) 364 ms., S: meschine 371 ms., S: Ore te tol ne huez mes sur mei (+2) / P: hue 374 P: p. un s. (+1) 375 ms., S: ke il tr. en sa vei (S: vei') 376 ms., S: Del d. a lus les cumvei (S: cumvei') (-1) / P, W, L: Del d. desk'a l'us l. c. 378 ms., S: cenz (-1) 379 ms., S: L. moi e Y. c. (+1) 385 ms., S: ta amie 388 ms., S: cenz (-1) 393 ms., L, S: Cum si f. il me envaiat (L: m'envaiat) 394 ms., S: ke il ore esspuse ad / W, L: esspusé 395 ms., S: merchant (-1) 398 ms., P, W, S: avei / S: avei' 399 ms., S: merchant (-1)

404 ms., S: je i 405 ms., S: je ere 408 ms. S: treske a 412 ms., P, W, L, S: ki t. 413 ms., S: te aït 414 ms., P, W, L, S: l'ent. si se en (L: s'en) rit 417 ms., S: je le o. 419 ms., S: t. la severai / L: la sevrai 420 ms., S: lange 421 ms., S: le b. 425 ms. vus meuistes / H, P, W: vus me veistes / S: vus me vistes 426 ms., W, S: guaristes (-1) / P: guaresistes 427 ms., S: meschine 428 ms., S: garistes (-1) / P, W: guaresistes 430 ms., S: me aviez 432 ms., S: me espeie 433 ms., S: le aviez 434 ms., L, S: Si la tr. o. (-1) / H, W: Si la tr. vus o. 436 H: Le Mor. 439 ms., W, L, S: La p. d. tr. (-1) 440 ms., P, W, S: teste 444 H, L: m'espee (-1) 445 ms., S: voilez 448 ms., S: ele v. (+1) 449 ms., S: me accordai 453 ms., P, W, L, S: fuur / H: fuor 456 ms., L, S: ke vus di (-1) 457 ms., L, S: N'est pas v. (-1) / H: Nen est pas v. 460 ms. E le ivrez v. / E le ivreze v. 461 ms., S: de itel 465 H, P, W: n. vus m. 470 ms., W,

L, S: E nus f. ben en h. (-1) / H: E nus f. ben en bliaut / P: E nus f. molt ben en h. 473 ms., S: De un h. bumes a. 474 ms., S: je en 475 ms. mal iurez / S: mal' ivreze 480 ms., S: le asset 481 ms., S: le ad 482 ms., S: le ad 485 ms., S: ore v. (+1) 487 ms. marc' / H, W, S: Markes 488 ms., S: -1 / P: R. dus e c. ai s. 489 ms., S: de oisels 493 ms., P: Od mes leures / ms. prendra / H, L: p. les gr. 495 ms, S: Od limer (-1) / P, W: Od mes limers 497 ms. mun berser h. (-1) / P: m. pel berser h. 498 ms., P, L, S: pluniuns (L, S: plunjuns) b. (-1) / P: pr. jo plunjuns e b. 499 ms. Marc' / H, W, S: Marke 500 ms., S: -1

503 ms. res. rit apres (-1) / W: res. e rit a. / S: res. a pres a ris 504 ms., H, W, L, S: -2 / P: qanquez 506 H, W: des b. 508 ms., L, S: Ja ne les (+1) / P, W: guard 511 ms., S: De esparver 512 ms. Ke est d. la ke g. / P, W: la keue / S: la kue 513 ms., L, S: De esmerelun preng le l. / H: D'esm. preng je le l. 514 ms., P, W: le kac 517 ms., H, P, W, S: cuverat 518 H: nen ait 519 ms., L, S: -1 / H, W: Ben sai je p. les t. / P: Ben resai p. les t. 520 P: es., entre g. 526 ms. Jeun les p. 527 ms. Ren ne / P: Enne sui 528 ms. vus a 529 ms. el pel 534 ms., L, S: -1 / H: M. par out b. 535 ms., S: une esq. 536 ms., H, W, L, S: K'i li / P: Ki li 537 ms. Dit ki a. / H: Dit k'il / W, S: Dit k'i 540 ms., L, S: E li esquier (L, S: esquier) hors pur l'ennui 545 ms., P, W, S: le lait 546 H, P, W: Cele s. sus e si 550 ms., S: ke ele 551 ms., S: f. ele (+1) 554 ms., S: -1 555 ms., S: E melz me s. f. jo mort (S: mort') (+1) / P: E m. me s. f. morte 556 ms. Quant je vai tut mes c. (-1) / P: Quant je v. t. m'est a c. 557 ms. ne sa q. 560 ms. tenduz 561 ms. mal / L, S: mal' 562 ms. P, W, L, S: Kar m. me ad (L: m'ad) f. gr. e. 563 ms., S: cist juglers (-1) / P: c. fous jugleres 568 H, W, L: descuvri 574 ms., S: de un 577 ms. Nul est / P, L, S: Nu l'est 578 ms., W, L, S: Hidus e m. cunterfaiz (W: cuntafaiz) (-1) 579 ms. alumez (?) / S: alinnez 581 ms. H, W, L, S: en nul pais (+1) 586 ms., S: le ure ke il 588 ms., S: fol en v. (+1) / ms., H, W, L, S: v. sa 589 ms., S: ke il ne n. en le unde 591 ms., W, L, S: -1 592 ms., S: ore de m. maine (+1) 593 P: apresistes 594 ms., L: escumiger / P: escumignier / W: escumigner 595 ms., L, S: -1 / H, W: kar il m'ad 597 ms., H, W, L, S: sen J. 598 ms., S: Ke il 600 ms., P: mai b. a.

605 ms., S: ele (+1) 611 ms., S: lores (+1) / P: hors 614 ms., S: Ki 616 ms., P, S: ke ai 618 ms., S: Ki en tr. vi e en h. (+1) / P, W: Ki en tr. vif e h. 620 ms., S: la amur 621 ms., P, W, S: Nu l'estes / H, L: Nul estes 625 ms., L, S: -1 / H, P, W: Ja sui je T. v. / H, P, W, L: veirement 627 ms., S: de Irlande 628 ms. -1 / P, L: vus mist en 630 ms., S: Ke ore 636 ms., S: -1 637 ms., S: Ke en 638 ms. Guaidasse ai / ms., S: pusse 639 ms., S: Lores (+1) 645 ms., P, W, S: Je avei 646 ms., L, S: -1 647 ms., S: Je oi 648 ms., L, S: dis ai 651 ms., P, S: En h. de a. v. 652 ms., S: La b. 653 ms., S: me assist 659 ms., L, S: -1 661 ms. ki amai (+1) / S: ke amai 664 ms., S: le uveraine 666 ms., S: For 671 ms. venu / S: venu' 675 ms. voide / S: voidé 676 ms. deshaite / S: deshauté 678 ms., L, S: -1 / P, W: Dreit en 681 ms., S: traite lores (+2) 683 ms., S: Kar ele ne (+2) 687 ms., L, S: Si s'est un p. eret (L, S: tret) e. / P, W: Si s'en est un p. tret en sus 690 ms., S: unkes ne (+1) 691 ms., S: -2 693 ms., H, W, L, S: tant ai v. (-1) 696 ms., S: me avez 697 ms., L, S: purreie m. f. (+1) / P: purreie fier 698 ms. Qu. Y. ne ne me deing a. / P, W: deing 700 ms., S: Ke ore

702 ms. umblie 705 ms., S: ke ele 706 ms., S: Ke ewe n'i s. ne ewe ne ist / H, W, L: ne ewe n'ist 708 ms., H, S: qu. voit b. 710 ms., L, S: E (S: Je) v. esg. si me esmai

(L: m'esm.) / P: E vus 711 ms. L, S: Kar je ne aparceif (L: n'ap.) m. de v. 712 ms., S: le amerus 714 ms., S: ke amer 716 ms., L, S: -1 / H: Cil v. 718 ms., L, S: Fumes junes par uel / H: F. si jumes p. u. 719 ms., S: me issi 721 P: trovat 723 ms., S: vus (S: nus) enguatat (+1) 726 ms. Nus cusat (-1) 729 ms., H, W, L, S: Il ne (H: nen, W, L: n'amad) amad pas mun d. 731 ms., S: -1 734 ms. Cum a. kist' d. / P: ki trop sunt d. / L, S: ki sunt d. 736 ms., P, W, S: De engin de art de c. / L: D'e., d'a., de c. 737 ms., P, L, S: entre assembler 740 ms., S: E (S: En) v. ch. u sumes / P, L: En v. ch. u nus jeümes 741 ms., S: fol n. de pure (S: pute) o. 743 ms., L, S: par tant (-1) 744 ms., S: Le amur 746 ms., S: peez 747 ms., P, S: sailer 751 ms. Marc' / H, W, L, S: Marke / P: Markes survint 753 ms. v. e ne les pas 754 H, W: sanglanz 758 ms. De un petit / S: De un' petit' 761 ms., S: Cru (-1) 763 ms. L, S: -1 / P, W: v. en d. b. 764 ms. Amie Ysolt de un ren (-1) / P, W, L, S: Am. Y. dë une (L: d'une, S: de un') ren 765 ms., S: de Irland / P: d'Irlande 766 ms., S: Li r. on. 769 ms., S: harpeur 771 ms., P, S: Tresque a / H: nef u dut 772 ms., S: le oi 774 ms. destre / P: destré 775 ms., L, S: Conquis (-1) 778 ms., S: me aveit 780 ms., S: od us (S: 'us) 782 ms., S: eimes / P: fumes 783 ms. De sus un espin / H: Desuz / S: Desus un p. en le u. sis 788 ms., H: Ki de la ch. (-1) / S: Ki delez la ch. 789 ms., P, L, S: En ewe / ms. cospeis 792 ms. Suuvez (?) b. / H, W: Si veiez b. 793 ms. L, S: (-1) 796 ms. Marc' / L: Markes / S: Marke 798 ms., W, L, S: m. el espin (S: pin) 800 ms., S: je oi

801 ms., S: le umbre 802 ms. Ke seet a le espin u. moi / H, P, L, S: Ke seet / W: Ke seet el espin 804 ms., S: je ere 805 ms., S: -1 806 ms., S: -1 / H: tr. vus enhastisez 807 ms. voit 808 ms., S: Le umbre 810 ms., L, S: -1 / W: E vus m. en ma p. 811 ms., S: me acordissez 815 P, W, L: Par 816 ms. Marc' / L: Markes / S: Marke / P: C'al r. Marcus 820 ms. tint 821 ms., P, W, S: Je me ere ben desguisee (P, W: desguisé) / H, L: Je m'ere b. desguisé (-1) 822 ms., W, L, S: Cum (W: Cume vus me aviez (L: m'aviez m. 823 ms. tenei mult en brune 824 ms. B. sa qu. me d. dune 825 ms., S: Ke od v. me l. chair / H: chaeir / P, W, L: chair 828 ms., S: me auveristes 829 ms., L, S: chair / H, P, W: chair 830 ms., S: tuz l. g. (-1) 831 ms., S: ce je le entent / H, P, W: ce je 832 ms. guari al serment / S: guari' 833 ms., S: serment (-1) 835 ms., S: le entent 837 ms., S: Ele lesgurad (S: l'esguard') del 838 H, P, W: suz cel 841 ms., S: ke il 842 ms. Ke il cum veris e de ren ne m. / P: K'il dit veir e de r. / S: Ke il cunte veirs, de r. 844 ms. L, S: -1 845 ms., P, W: engain 849 ms., S: Ke ele 852 ms. bon / P, S: bon' 853 ms., S: me amastes 854 ms., S: ore (+1) 856 ms., S: ai jo de (+1) / H, P, W: Or vus ai jo de 858 ms., S: me amastes 859 ms. Marc' / P: Marcus / L: Markes / S: Marke / ms., S: cunjeiet 863 ms, S: Al f. (-1) 864 ms., L, S: E mult (+1) 866 ms., S: le entree 867 ms. fu uoesse 869 ms., S: Le entaileure 874 ms., S: le afaitai 875 ms. H, W, L, S: ch., od mun osteür (L: ostur) 876 ms., L, S: -1 880 ms., L, S: ke li (L, S: l'i) menat / P: kë od li menat 881 H, P, W, L: pur vus 882 ms., S: le espee 883 ms., S: rejumes de loins 886 ms., S: ne dit 888 H: Ke l'out 889 ms. -1 890 ms., W, S: -1 891 ms., P, W, S: Puis ne out nul (W: nule, S: nul') s. 892 ms., S: Ke entre 895 ms, L, S: vus dait ben (-1) / P, W: v. en d. b. 897 ms., S: Ke en 898 ms, S: je le ai 899 ms., L, S: ai dunt (-1) 900 ms., S: ore endreit le veret (S: verét) / P, L: ore endreit / P: verrez

902 ms., P, S: Am. le od tut li l. (+1) / H, W, P: Am. l'od tut li l. 904 ms., P, W, S: e cil j. 906 ms., L, S: -1 908 ms., S: ore te (+1) 911 ms., S: ne oï 912 ms., S: Ke

post m. j. f. (-1) / H, W: p. maür / P: Ne p. merur 915 ms., W, S: Sur lui (-1) 916 ms. best / S: best' 917 ms., L, S: Rute (L, S: Bute) del vis f. del p. (-1) 918 ms., L, S: l'en gran p. (+1) 920 ms., L, S: fu si d. (+1) 921 ms., W: De ço ki li fist le joïe / H: De ço k'i li f. sil joï / P, S: De ço kë il (S: k'il) si le joï 925 ms., S: ki od (+1) 926 ms., S: ki m. 927 ms., P, S: se a. 930 ms., S: de mal (S: mal') maine (-1) 931 ms., S: ke il 932 ms., S: Ki le af. e ki le n. 934 ms. E dit a Y. m. li s. (+1) / S: E dit a Ysolt: "... (+1) / P, W, L: Dit a Ysolt: "... 935 ms., S: Ke jo le n. ki le af. / P, W: Ki jol n. / L: n., ke l'af. 938 ms., L, S: -1 940 ms. E ang. / S: De ang. 947 ms., L, S: Si pensa (-1) 948 ms., S: O. vus v. 951 ms., W, S: B. d. vus estot departir (+1) / P: B., de vus m'estot p. 952 ms., L, S: nus volth. 953 ms., S: Lores (+1) 954 ms. S: De or 955 ms., S: E je le r. (+1) / L: Je le r. 957 ms., P, W, S: ensengnez 958 ms., S: le anel 959 ms., S: le anel si li donast 960 ms., S: le esguardast 961 ms., S: se escreve 964 ms. E fin 965 ms., S: si il 966 ms., W, S: Ke autre hume / P: Kë a. hum 967 ms., S: ore s. jo b. ke il (+1) 968 ms., S: ne averai (+1) 970 ms., S: le empris 972 P: Bele e. vus e ent. 973 ms., S: ore, cuverir (+2) 980 ms., S: E si esjoi / P: Ki s'esjoi 982 ms., P, W, S: m. vif (P, W: vis) ki est s. 983 ms., S: le ewe 985 ms., P, W, S: de herbe 987 P: E sa 989 ms., S: Tele joi (S: joi') 990 ms., S: Ke ele 991 ms., S: Ke ele ne (+1) / H, W, L: K'el ne 992 ms., S: Ne le l. a. mes p. (+1) / P: Ne le l. a. p. 993 ms., S: Dit ki (S: k'i) averat b. o. / H, W: Dit ke il avrat / P: E dit k'i avrat / L: Dit k'il avrat 994 ms., H, W, L, S: E baus (H: dous) lit ben f. e bel (-1) 995 ms., S: chosce 996 ms., W, L, S: Fors la raine Y. u ele ert / H: F. la raïne u ele ert 998 ms. M. set bén ke il h. / S: ke il est h.



## NOTES

56. The ms. reading of this line, here emended, is faulty and its meaning is unclear. Other editors' emendations (see Rejected Readings) would permit such glosses as: 'from not having thought enough' and 'from having thought too much.'

100. The lengthy description of place that begins here is largely drawn from the descriptions of Tintagel and Carlion in the *Roman de Brut* of Wace.

104. The obviously defective line 103 is preceded by a missing line whose rhyme-word would presumably end in *-in*. Line 104 itself is missing one syllable, but the incompleteness of the four-line passage to which it belongs argues against proposing a conjecture.

140. Walter suggests, p. 241, that the disappearances, following Celtic folkloric patterns, coincide with the two solstices.

175. The normal meaning of *afolez* is 'injured' or 'killed.' In the present context, however, it is hard not to see a pun on *fol* 'mad.'

181. For our treatment of *fol* and *folie*, see the note appended to line 105 of our Berne text.

210. The meaning seems to be that the remaining hair formed a cross and not that a cross was formed by cutting away two intersecting strips of hair; this is discussed by Ménard, pp. 437–38. Cf. lines 152–57 in Berne.

212. Unlike the other elements of Tristan's disguise, the change of voice occurs solely in the Oxford *Folie*. The return to Tristan's natural voice will be the key to his ultimate recognition by Yseut (ll. 975–76).

222. The stick serves here as the club typical of the medieval madman; cf. Berne, line 134.

230. The Mount: no doubt the Mont-Saint-Michel.

239. Bellencombre: town south of the Channel port of Dieppe. *Bel Encumbre* may, however, be an imaginary place.

244. *Urgan le Velu* 'Hairy Urgan': a giant killed by Tristan, in Thomas.

302. For the significance of the glass palace described in the following lines (and in the Berne *Folie*, ll. 164–67), see Payen.

309. Lecoy prints *le frat* and explains, p. 89, that *frat* is a syncopated future form of *ferir*. The meaning of the phrase would be: 'when the sun strikes it (i.e., the crystal chamber).' We retain the one-word form *lefrat* not only for its equally acceptable meaning but also because this occurrence of *-fr-* for *-vr-* (*levrat* = *levera*) is not at all unique in the Anglo-Norman usage of the Oxford manuscript: cf. *naufrer* in l. 352 and *descufri* in l. 568.

341. This passage presents several problems, as the Rejected Readings suggest: the opening of l. 341, the meter of l. 342, the syntax and sense of l. 344, the use of *murir* twice in succession at the rhyme, and, indeed, the occurrence of the rhyming syllable *-ir* in two consecutive couplets.

452. For the suitor as well as the entire dragon episode, see chapter 13 of Bédier's Thomas.

493. The ms. shows *leures* 'snares, lures,' which would make sense in a context of normal behavior. Tristan, however, is playing the fool, and his stated

approach to crane-hunting should in fact be bizarre. In addition, he is answering Mark's question (l. 489) about his work with birds and dogs. These considerations support our emendation to *levrers* 'greyhounds.' The same facts explain our treatment of line 497, whose ms. reading requires an extra syllable for both meaning and metrical regularity. Instead of opting for a solution such as Payen's: *Quant vois od mun [pel] berser hors* 'quand j'emporte ma massue pour tirer à l'arc,' the word *berser* being a verb that happens to mean 'to shoot with a bow', we choose, along with other editors, to posit one more dog, a *berseret*, in what is at this point a poetically persuasive series.

520. The clubs called *tisons* were used primarily by jousting knights. It is not clear what is meant by this statement about their distribution among subordinates.

702. This proverb is recorded as No. 1835 in Joseph Morawski, *Proverbes français* (Paris: Champion, 1925).

718. The ms. reading is troublesome, and our emended line cannot be considered entirely satisfactory. In the Thomas version (Bédier, chap. 20), Tristan and the steward Mariadoc share a single bed, which may be the meaning intended here.

733. For this episode, see Bédier's Thomas, chap. 24.

765. For this episode, see Bédier's Thomas, chap. 19. In the Berne text (ll. 378–91), the 'man from Ireland' bears the two names Gamarien and Guimarant.

882. The exceptionality of identical rhyme-words has led several editors to substitute *vus* 'you' for the first of these two occurrences of *nus*.

888. The two normally transitive verbs need to be construed here as absolutes, since the obvious direct object, feminine *la face* (l. 885), is grammatically precluded by the masculine past participles and, especially, the masculine adjective *vermeil*. It is nevertheless clear that Yseut's face is the object of the sun's action.

918. Lines 915–918 are almost identical to ll. 512–515 in Berne.

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