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Thou fiers god of armes / mars the rede
That in the frosty contre called trace
Within thy grysly temple ful of drede
Honourd art as patron of that place
With thy bellona / pallas ful of grace
Be present and my song contynue & gye
At my begynnnyng thus to the I crye

For it ful depe is sonken in my mynde
With piete{us} herte in english for tendyte
This olde storye in latyn that I fynde
Of quene anelida & fals arcyte
That elde that all can frete and byte
As it hath freten many anoble storye
Hath nyh deuoured out of my memorye

Be fauorable eke thou polimia
On pernasos that with thy sustren glade
By elycon / not fer from cirrea
Singest with wis memorial in the shade
Vnder the laurer the whiche may not fade
And do that I my ship to hauen wynue
First folowe I stace and after that corynne

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Whan theseus with werres long & grete
Thaspre folk of cithye / had ouercome
With laurer crowned ī his chare gold bete
Home to his contre hool is come
For whiche the peple / blisful al and some
So cryeden / that to the sterres it wente
And hym to honouren / dide al thair entēte

Biforn this duc in signe of victorie
The trompes come / and in his baner large
The ymage of mars / & in tokenīg of glorie
Men might see of tresour many a charge
Many bright helme & many a spere & targe
Mani a fresh kinght & mani a blisful route
On hors & fote al the felde aboute

Ipolita his wyf / the hardy quene

Of cythia / that he conquerd had
With emelie / her youg suster shene
Fair in a chare of gold / he with hym lad
That al y^e groūd aboute her chare she sprad
With brightnes of the beaute of her face
Fulfillyd with largesse of alle grace

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With this tryūphe & laurer crowned thus
In alle the floure of fortunes yeuyng
Lete I this noble prynce Theseus
Toward atthenes in his way rydyng
And fonde I wil shortly for to bryng
The sleight way of that I gan to write
Of quene anelida / and false arcyte

Mars that with his furyo{us} cours of Ire
Tholde wrathe of luno to susfyllle
Hath sette the peples hertes bothe a fire
Of thebes aud grece / eche other to kyllle
With blody speres / ne rested neuer styлле
But thrōg / now here / now there amōge botle
Til eueryche other slowhe so were they wrothe

For whan amphiorax and tideus
Ipomedon and / parthonope also
Were dede and slayn and proud cāpane{us}
And whan the wretched brethern two
Were slayn and kyng adrastus hom y go
So desolate stode thebes / and so bare
That no wight / couthe remedye of his fare

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And whan tholde creon gan espye
How the blode ryal was brought adoun
He helde that cyte by his tyrannye
And dyde the gentyls of that regyoun
To ben his frendes / & women in that touñ
So what for loue of him / & what for awe
The noble folk were to the touñ ydrawe

Among alle these / anelida the quene
Of ermonye / was in that touñ dwellyng

That fayrer was / than is the sonne shene
Thurgh the world so gan her name spryng
That her to seen / had euery wyght lykyng
For as of trouth / is ther none her lyche
Of alle the women / in the world ryche

Yonge was this quene / of .xx. yere olde
Of myddel stature / & of suche fayrnes
That nature had a loye / her to byholde
And for to speke of her stedefastnes
She pussid hath penolope & lucre
And shortly yf she shal be comprehended
In her myght nothyng been amended

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This theban knyght eke soth to seyne
Was yong & ther with al a lusty knyght
But he was double in loue & nothing pleyñ
And subtyl in that craft ouer ony wight
And withe his cūnyng wan y^e lady bright
For so ferforth he gan to her trouth ensure
That she hym trusted ouer ony crature

What shold I seyn she loued arcyte so
That whan he was absent ony throwe
Añon her thought her herte brest atwo
For in her sight to her he bare hym lowe
So that she wend haue al his herte yknowe
But he was fals it was but feyned chere
Al nedeth not to men suche craft te lere

But natheles ful mychel besynes
Had he or he myght his lady wynne
And sware he wold dye for destres
Or from his witte he said he wold twynne
Allas the whyle for it was routh & synne
That she vpon his sorowes wold rewe
But nothing thinketh the fals as the trewe

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Hye fredaṁ fonde arcyte in suche manere
That al was his that she hath / moche or lite
Ne to no creature / made she chere

Further / than that it lyketh to arcyte
Ther nas lack / wherwith he myght her wite
She was so ferforth yeuen him to plese
That al that lyketh hym it dede her eese

Ther nas to her / no maner •rē sent
That touched loue / from any maner wight
That she ne shewid it hym / er it was brent
So pleyn she was & dyd her ful myght
That she nel hiden nothīg from her knyght
Lest he of ony vntrouth her vpbreyde
With oute bode / his heste she obeyde

And eke he made hym lelouse ouer here
That whan ony man had to her said
Anon he wold prayen her to swere
What was y^e word / or make him euel paid
And than wēde she out of her wyt haue brayd
But al this nas but sleyght & flaterye
Without loue he feyned lelousye

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And all this toke she so debonairly
That al his will it thought her skilful thīg
And euer the lenger she loueth hym tēderly
And dide hym honour / as he were a kyng
Her herte was to hym wedded with a ring
So ferforth vpon trouthe / is her entente
That where he goth / her herte with hym wēte

Whan she shal ete / on hym is al her thought
That wel vnuethe / of mete toke she kepe
And whan y^e she was to her reste ybrought
On hym she thought alway / til y^e she slepe
Whan he was absent / pryuely she wold wepe
Thus lyneth fayr anelyda the quene
For fals arcyte / that dyd her al this tene

This fals arcyte / of his newfanglenes
For she to hym / so lowly was and trewe
Toke lasse deynte / of her stedfastnes
And sawe another lady proude and newe
And right anon he clad hym in her hewe

Wote I not whether / in whyte rede or grene
And falshede fair anelīda the quene

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But natheles grete wonder was it none
Though he was fals / it is kynde of mañ
Syth lameth was / that is so long a goon
To be in loue as fals / as euer he can
He was the first fader that began
To louen two / and was in bygamyne
And he fond tentes first but yf men lye

This fals arcyte / somewhat muste he feyne
Whan he was fals / to couere his trayterye
Ryght as an hors / y^e can both bite & pleyne
For he bar her on hond / of trecherye
And swore / he couthe her doubtenes espye
And al was falsnes that she to hym ment
Th^{us} swore this theef & forth his way he went

Allas what herte / myght enduren it
For routh & woo / her sorow for to telle
Or what man hath y^e connyng or the witte
Or what man myght within y^e chābre duelle
Yf that I reherce shold the helle
That suffreth fair anelida the quene
For fals arcyte / that dide her al this tene

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She wepith. wayleth. sw^erneth pytously
To ground dede / she falleth as a stone
Crampissheth her lymēs / •ckedly
She spekith as her wit were al agone
Other colour than asshen / hath she none
None other worde speketh she moche or lyte
But mercy cruel herte myn arcyte

And thus endureth til that she was so mate
That she nad foot on whiche she may sustene
But forth languysshing euer in this astate
On whiche arcyte hath couthe non ne tene
His herte was els where / newe and grene
That on her woo / not deyneth hym to thinke

Hym recketh not / whether she flete or synke

His newe lady holdeth hym so narow
Vp by the brydel / at the staues ende
That euery worde / he drad as an arowe
Her dañger made hym bothe bowe and bende
And as her liste / made hym turne & wende
For she ne granteth hym in her lyuyng
No grace / why that he hath lust to syng

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But d•of hym sorth vnnethe ••st her knowe
That he was seruant / vnto her ladyship
But leste y• he were proud she held hym lowe
Thus serueth he / withoute mete or sype
She sent hym now to land & now to shype
And for she gaf hym daunger / al his fyll
Ther fore she had hym / at her owen wyll

Ensample of this ye thryfty women alle
Taketh hede of anelida and arcyte
That for her liste / hym dere herte calle
And was so meke / therfore he loueth her lite
The kynde of mañs herte / is to delyte
In thing that strañge is / also god me saue
For what he may not gete / that wold he haue

Now torne we to anelida agayñ
That pyneth day by day languysshynge
But whan she sawe / that her gate no gayñ
Vpon a day / ful sorowful wepyng
She cast her•for to make a compleynyng
And of her owen hand she gan it wryte
And sende it to her theban knyght arcyte

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Here foloweth the compleynt of anelida quene of hermenye vpon false arcyte of Thebes.

So thirleth with the poit of remembrance
The swerd of sorow / whet with fals plesāce
My hert bare of blisse / & blak of hewe
That torned is / in quakyng / al my daunce
My sewerte in a whaped coñtenaunce

Syth it auaylleth not to be trewe
For who so trewest is it shal her rewe
That serueth loue / and doth her obseruance
Alway tyl one / and changeth for no newe

I wote my self / as wel as ony wight
For I loued one with al my hert & myght
More than my self / an .C. thousand sythe
And called hym / my hertis lyf / my knyght
And was all his / as fer as it was right
And whan he was glad / than was I blithe
And his disese / was my deth as swithe
And he agayn / his trouth hath me plight
For euermo / his lady me to kythe

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Now is he fals / alas / and causeles
And of my woo / he is so routheles
That with a word / hym list not ones deyne
To brynge agayn / my sorouful herte in pe•
For he is caught vp / in an other lees
Ryght as hym lyst / he laweth at my peyne
And I ne can my herte / not restreyne
For to loue hym / neyther thelees
And of alle this / I note to whom to pleyne

And shal I pleyne / alas the hard stounde
Vnto my foo / that yaf my herte / a wounde
And yet desireth / that my harme be more
Nay certes / for ther shal neuer be founde
None other helpe / my sores for to sounde
My destyne hath shape it so / ful yore
I wil none other medycyn / ne lore
I wyl be ay / ther I was ones bounde
That I haue seyde be seyde for euermore

Allas / where is bicomme your gentillesse
Your wordes ful of plesance and humblesse
Your obseruances / and lo lowe manere

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Your awaytyng / and your besynesse
Vpon me / that ye called your maistresse

Your souerayne of this world is here
Alas / and is ther now no word •e chere
Ye wuchen sauf, vpon my heuynesse
Alas / your loue / I bye it al to dere

Now certes swete / though that ye
Thus causeles / the cause be
Of my dedely / aduersite
Your manly reson / ought it to respyte
To sle your frende / & namely me
That neuer yet in no degre
Offendyd / as wysly he
That al wote / oute of wo my soule quyte
But for I was so playn arcyte
In al my werkis / moche & lite
And so besy / you to delite
Myn honour sauf / meke. kynde. and free
Therfore ye put on me this wite
And also ye reken not a myte
Though that the swerd of sorow bite
My woful herte / thurgh your cruelte

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My swete foo / why doo ye so. for shame
And thinke ye / that furtherd be / your name
To loue a newe / and be vntrewe / nay
And put yow / in sklaundre now / & blame
And do to me / aduersyte / and grame
That loue you most / god thou wost / alwaye
Yet come agayn / & be thou playn / soñ daye
And then shal this / y^e nowe is mis / be game
And all foryeue / whyle I lyue / maye

Lo herte myn / alle this is for to seyn
As whether shal I pray / or ellis pleyn
Whiche is the way / to do you to be trewe
For eyther mote I han you in my cheyn
Or with the deth / ye mote departe vs tweyn
Ther lye none other mene weyes newe
For god so wysly / on my soule rewe
As veryly ye sle me with the peyn
That may ye se vnfeyned an my hewe

And shold I praye / and weyuen womāhede

Nay rather dye / than do so cruell dede
And axe mercy causeles / what need

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And yf I pleyne / what lyf that I lede
Thenne wil ye lawhe I knowe it out of deede
And yf that I to you / myn othes bede
For myn excuse / a skorn shal be my mede
Your chere flourith / but it wil not sede
For longe a goo / I ofte han take hede

For though I had you to morn ageyn
I myght as wel holde apryll for reyn
As holden you / to make you stedfaste
Alle myghty god of trouth souereyn
Wher is y^e trouthe of man who hath it sleyn
Who y^e hym loueth shal hym fynde as faste
As in a tempeste is a roten maste
Is that a tame beest / that is ay fayn
To fle away / whan he is leest agaste

But mercy swete / yf I mys seye
Haue I ought seyde out of the weye
I note / my witte is half a weye
I fare as doth the songe of chanteplure
For now I pleyne / and now I pleye
I am so marred that I deye

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Arcyte hath born away the keye
Of alle my world and good auenture

For in this world / nys creature
Wakyng in more discumfiture
Than I / ne more sorow endure
And yf I slepe / a furlong weye or twey
Thenne thinketh me / your fygure
Before me stont / clothid in azure
To profren eft / and new assure
For to be trewe / and loue me / til he deye

The longe nyght / this wonder sight / I drye

And on the day / for thilke affray / I dye
And of all this right nought ywis ye recche
Ne neuer mo / myn eyen two / be drye
And to your routhe / & to your trouthe / I crye
But wele away / fer ben they / to fecche
Thus holdeth we / my destyne / a wrecche
But me to rede / out of this drede / or gye
Ne may my wyt / so weyke is it / not strecche

Thenne I thus / syn I may do no more

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I yeue it vp / for now and euermore
For shal I neuer / eft putten in balance
My sikernes / or lerne of loue the lore
But as the swan / I haue herd seye ful yore
Agayn his deth / shal syngen his penañce
So synge I here / my destyne or chañce
How that arcite / anelida so sore
Hath thirled with the peynt of remēbrāce

Thus endeth the compleynt of anelida

The {con}pleit of chaucer vnto his empty purse

To you my purs / and to none other wight
Compleyne I for ye be my lady dere
I am sory now / that ye be light
For certes / ye now make me heuy chere
Me were as •ef / be leyd vpon a bere
For whiche / vnto your mercy thus I crye
Be heuy agayn / or ellis mote I dye

Now wuchesauf / this day or yet be nyght
That I of yow / the blisful sowne may here

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Or see your colour like the sonne bright
That of yelownes had neuer pere
Ye be my lyf / ye be my herte• stere
Quene of confort / and of good companye

Be heuy agayn / or ellis mote I dye

Now purs that be to me my lyues light
And saueour / as doun in this world here
Out of this toun helpe me by your might
Syn that ye wil not be my tresorere
For I am •haue / as nyghe as ony frere
But I pray vnto your curtoisye
Be heuy agayn / or ellis mote I dye

The nouye of chaucer vnto the kynge

O conquerour of brutes albyon
Whiche that by lyne / and fre election
Ben veray kynge / this to yow I sende
And ye that may / alle harmes amende
Haue mynde vpon my supplicacion
Explicit.

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Whan feyth failleth in prestes sawes
And lordes hestes ar holden for lawes
And robbery is holden purchas
And lechery is holden solas
Than shal the lond of albyon
Be brought to grete confusioñ

Hit falleth for euery gentilman
To saye the best that he can
In mannes absence
And the soth in his presence
Hit cometh by kynde of gentil blode
To cast away al heuynes
And gadre to gidre wordes good
The werk of wisdom herith witnes

Et sic est finis