

Guillaume de Machaut

**THE COMPLETE POETRY & MUSIC**

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General Editors

**VOLUME 1: THE DEBATE POEMS**

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## INTRODUCTION

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### LIFE OF THE AUTHOR<sup>1</sup>

After delivering a manuscript containing the works of Guillaume de Machaut to Count Louis de Male of Flanders, Eustache Deschamps dedicated a pair of ballades to his master in which he declares:

Dont vous estes honouriez haultement  
Car tous vos faiz moult honourablement  
Chascuns reçoit en maint païs estrange

And so you are highly honored  
For all your works quite honorably  
Are received by everyone in many a  
foreign land

Les grans seigneurs, Guillaume, vous ont chier,  
En voz choses prannent esbatement.

Guillaume, the great lords hold you dear  
And take pleasure in what you write.<sup>2</sup>

Deschamps observes further that Machaut “nourished” him and “paid him many kindnesses.”<sup>3</sup> So perhaps we should consider his opinion of the older poet’s reputation somewhat inflated by gratitude and personal admiration (we might add family obligation since Machaut was also Deschamps’ uncle). And yet Deschamps is hardly the only contemporary writer to offer so favorable an opinion of Machaut’s artistic accomplishments and their reception. Martin le Franc terms him a grand rhetorician, while Achille Caulier praises him as a renowned poet, according Machaut a place in his *Ospital d’amour* (*Love’s Hospital*) alongside Alain Chartier, Boccaccio, and Petrarch in his pantheon of vernacular authors. We may safely conclude from such evidence that Guillaume de Machaut was one of the most famous and influential poets of fourteenth-century France.

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<sup>1</sup> This biographical sketch details Machaut’s relationship with the two patrons who figure in the interconnected works of the debate series, Charles of Navarre and Jean of Bohemia. The biographical sketches in other volumes of this edition, as appropriate, will emphasize Machaut’s relationships with his other principle patrons, John of Berry and King Peter I of Cyprus. Furthermore, we here assess Machaut’s artistic achievement primarily with reference to his literary works; more detailed discussion of his considerable contributions to the development of music in the fourteenth century can be found in the biographical sketches in the volumes of this edition devoted to his musical texts.

<sup>2</sup> Queux de St. Hilaire and Raynaud, eds., *Eustache Deschamps*, I.246, ballade 127. All translations in this volume are mine unless otherwise noted.

<sup>3</sup> Queux de St. Hilairie and Raynaud, eds., *Eustache Deschamps*, III.259. The text in question is ballade 447, which reads, referring to Machaut, “Qui m’a nourry et fait maintes doucours” (line 5).

Machaut's reputation rested on his production of an immense and varied corpus of works, many of which were composed for, and in honor of, the several grand nobles with whose courts he was at various times associated. As a musician, he wrote more than twenty motets and a polyphonic setting of the mass, the virtuosity and innovations of which have made him one of the most important figures of medieval music. As Elizabeth Eva Leach puts it, "what does differentiate Machaut from his contemporaries . . . is the central role of *music* within his literary output."<sup>4</sup> Of musical as well as literary interest is his extensive body of lyric poems in various fixed forms such as the *ballade* and the *virelay*. In fact, Machaut was largely responsible for the continuing fashion of this type of poetry.<sup>5</sup> A central aspect of Machaut's achievement is that he provided musical settings for many of these lyrics using recently developed forms of notation. Finally, following in the tradition of thirteenth-century love vision poetry, especially the *Romance of the Rose*, Machaut composed ten long narrative and didactic poems (*dits amoureux* or "love poems" as well as others with philosophical/religious or historical themes) and four shorter ones (which are all concerned with love). These poems, partly because of their love motifs and partly through what appears to be contemporary allusions, greatly pleased the noble audiences for whom they were originally intended. The considerable number of surviving manuscripts, some beautifully illuminated, testifies eloquently to this popularity. His *dits* exerted a substantial influence on other contemporary writers and some of the generation to follow, especially Deschamps, Oton de Granson, Jean Froissart, Christine de Pizan, and John Gower. And Geoffrey Chaucer's poetry evidences a close and reverent reading of narrative works by the French master. Machaut's *dits* include *Le Jugement dou roy de Behaingne* (*Judgment of the King of Bohemia*) and its sequel, *Le Jugement dou roy de Navarre* (*Judgment of the King of Navarre*), which constitute what is commonly referred to as his debate series. A third text, the *Lay de Plour* (*Lay of Weeping*), which is not narrative but lyric in form and set to music, is linked textually to the two debate poems and is thus included in this edition.

Because he was a low-born cleric (even though he was to become a servant of the noble and famous) little is known about Machaut's life beyond what is preserved in a few ecclesiastical documents and the poet's own works, which contain a fair number of biographical indications, though these are not always reliable. From documents which detail his appointment to different benefices, it can be inferred that Machaut was born at the beginning of the fourteenth century, probably in the village of Machault in Champagne. Since the same documents fail to accord him any of the titles which would indicate noble birth, we may assume he was not well born. This social status is consistent with the self-portrait that emerges from the poetry in which Machaut often makes his diegetic alter ego a humble or even cowardly clerk who moves uncertainly among his betters, the butt of mild class humor. The following passage from his *Fonteinne amoureuse* (*Fountain of Love*) is especially revealing:

Et comment que je soie cler  
Rudes, nices, et malapers,  
S'ay je esté par mes .ii. fois  
En tele place aucune fois

And though I might be a clerk  
Who is ignorant, incapable, and inept,  
Yet I've been, by my two faiths,  
In such a place several times

<sup>4</sup> Leach, *Secretary, Poet, Musician*, p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> For details see Poirion, *Le poète et le prince*.

Avec le bon Roy de Behaingne, Dont Dieus ait l'ame en sa compaigne, Que maugré mien hantis estoie Car il n'i avoit lieu ne voie, Ne destour ou fuir sceüsse, Si couenoit que hardis fusse.	With the good King of Bohemia, And may God keep his soul among His company, And despite myself I was brave Since there was no place, no path, No byway where I knew to flee And thus I had to be courageous. (lines 139–48) <sup>6</sup>
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A similar passage occurs in the *Navarre*. Here a poet named Guillaume de Machaut encounters a beautiful and distinguished lady while hunting rabbits. Starting to dismount, Guillaume is dissuaded from such an unmannerly act of obeisance by the lady herself. Returning her greeting, the poet confides to his readers that he has learned well how to honor those of such higher station than himself (lines 739–59).

Various documents refer to Machaut as “master.” This might mean that after an early education, quite probably in the cathedral school at Reims, Machaut pursued theological studies at a university, likely Paris, finishing with the grade of *magister*. But it also might mean nothing at all, for such a title is a common honorific. Machaut, however, did not go on to take holy orders, it can be assumed, since he is nowhere referred to as a priest and only served in offices like the canonicate which were open to those outside the priesthood. Most university students left after taking the master’s degree to begin a career in secular or religious administration. Having secured a patron or a benefice, they might then return to the university to finish studies for the doctorate degree.

Through circumstances no longer known, Machaut became associated, while in his early twenties, with one of the most notable grand nobles of the era, Jean de Luxembourg, the king of Bohemia. It may have been that Machaut came to Jean’s notice during one of the latter’s sojourns in northern France; Jean had frequent dealings with the archbishop of Reims, a see with which Machaut may have been associated at an early age, and the archbishop perhaps effected an introduction. To the modern historian, Jean appears an extravagant and perhaps unstable figure. To his contemporaries, however, the king’s fabled prodigality, the restlessness with which he sought to expand and consolidate the lands under his rule, and his reputed social finesse made him the very type of ideal ruler that would appeal to Machaut. In *Le Confort d’ami* (*Comfort for a Friend*) and other narrative works, Machaut speaks of Jean with the highest respect and reverence. Machaut also describes his experiences as Jean’s secretary and chaplain. These include a sojourn at the castle of Burglitz (1323), a series of military expeditions through Poland, Russia, and Lithuania (1329), Jean’s invasion of northern Italy (1330–31), and his involvement in Austrian affairs (1331). Ecclesiastical documents suggest that Machaut remained in Jean’s service until the king’s heroic death (he was led blind into the battle to fight) at Crécy in 1346.

Although he was so willing to provide information about his early association with Jean, Machaut offers few indications about any experiences with the king after 1331. This may mean two things. During the last fifteen years or so of his life, Jean’s fortunes notably declined. Machaut does not mention the king’s second marriage to the French princess Beatrice of Bourbon (1334); the loss of an eye (1337) and the king’s desperate, often revengeful attempts to restore it; finally his complete loss of sight in 1339 and stubborn

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<sup>6</sup> See Volume 3 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

refusal to withdraw from a restless and active public life. Nor does Machaut recount military activities in the east, especially Jean's continuing difficulty in Bohemia (which culminated in the somewhat scandalous pillage of the synagogue in Prague) and renewed hostilities in Austria, where his victories were marred once again by questionable looting of a holy place. Machaut's silence may be a polite way of dealing with Jean's private sorrow and public troubles. After a long and effusive homage to Jean in the *Confort*, Machaut declares that he will not provide more details about his doings "on the other side of the Rhine," but that no one faults him.<sup>7</sup> Or his reticence may simply mean that he was no longer a member of Jean's entourage and so could not testify directly about what happened.

During his association with Jean, Machaut established a reputation as a writer with musical and, especially, poetical works. Evidence suggests that three of his longer *dits* were certainly composed and circulated prior to 1342: *Le dit dou vergier* (*The Poem About the Orchard*), the *Behaingne*, and *Remede de fortune* (*Fortune's Remedy*). It was their success that enabled Machaut to acquire other noble patrons after Jean's death.

Following Crécy, Guillaume must have found himself in a secure but unpromising position. Jean had secured him an appointment as a canon at Reims cathedral, but he apparently did not take up residence there until much later in life. In time, Machaut was provided with other ecclesiastical benefices, but these did not allow him to live in the rich state to which he had become accustomed while serving the King of Bohemia. But in the highest social circles of fourteenth-century France a noted poet was a highly desirable acquisition; Machaut did not spend much time without appropriate benefactors. As Claude Gauvard has said, "le véritable client est alors moins le poète que le prince" [the true client then was less the poet than the prince].<sup>8</sup> Perhaps surprisingly Machaut did not enter the service of Jean's heir and son, Charles, newly crowned emperor of Germany. Toward the end of his career, however, Machaut did dedicate the long crusading chronicle *La Prise d'Alexandrie* (*The Taking of Alexandria*) to him; this indicates that their relations must have been cordial at the least. And in this same work he mentions that he "performed much service for"<sup>9</sup> Charles' sister Bonne (Gutha), who had been married in 1332 to Jean, son of Philip VI, soon to become the next Valois king of France. It is likely that this means he was associated with the provincial court of Jean and Bonne in Normandy. Whether he served the duchess as he had her father (that is, as secretary and resident poet) is not known, but, significantly, he composed no *dits* (or at least none that survive) in her honor, that is, in which she would figure honorifically as a character, unless Lady Bonneürte in the *Navarre* is based on her. In any case, the association with Bonne was short-lived since she died on 11 September 1349, presumably of the plague which at that time was sweeping across northern France.

The opening of the *Navarre* tells us much of Machaut's activities at the time. Possibly resident in the kingdom of Navarre, Machaut recounts his melancholic reactions to the outbreak of the disease, foretold by astrological and political signs. Having made a good confession, the poet closes himself up inside his house and stops going to town (a move that may well have saved his life). He describes the various events that attended the attack

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<sup>7</sup> See lines 3083–86 of the *Confort*, in Volume 2 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

<sup>8</sup> Gauvard, "Portrait du prince," p. 26; see Poirion, *Le poète et le prince*, p. 196, for a similar view.

<sup>9</sup> *Prise d'Alexandrie*, line 769. See Volume 6 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

of the disease: the persecution of the Jews, the appearance of wandering troops of flagellants, the mass burials of victims, the depopulation of the countryside, and desperate economic hardship. The disease at an end, Guillaume finds himself re-entering an unnamed but festive city, tired of burying its dead. The remainder of this work is fictive, a love debate that continues, in a complicated fashion, the one begun a number of years earlier in the *Behaingne*.

#### HISTORICAL CONTEXT AND PATRONAGE

Significantly, the patron who figures in the second judgment poem is Charles, the nineteen-year-old newly crowned king of Navarre (the official coronation took place in Pamplona on 27 June 1350). Charles was the eldest son of Jeanne, queen of Navarre (who had inherited the kingdom from her parents), and Philip, count of Évreux. Though chroniclers at the time and modern historians usually refer to Charles as the king of Navarre (the customary epithet “the Bad” was given him by a Spanish writer in the century following his death), this interesting and complex person, whose career became so connected to the important political developments of the age, was thoroughly French in culture and interests. He may more profitably be considered as count of Évreux and the investee of other properties, especially in the north of France, one of the great feudal vassals of the kingdom rather than a foreign potentate.<sup>10</sup>

How did Machaut meet Charles? Most likely in Normandy or in Paris, where Charles spent most of his early life. Jeanne was the daughter of Louis X of France and thus passed to Charles, through the female line, a direct connection to the royal house. Charles’ younger brothers were Philip and Louis, also prominent French noblemen, while his sister Blanche was married to Philip VI of France. The family’s relation to the Valois was made closer by the fact that young Charles himself was married to Jeanne, daughter of the soon-to-be Jean II, King of France; this was a marriage initiated and promoted by Jean, who apparently desired better ties with his cousin. Having a claim on the throne perhaps as good as that of the Valois, Charles inevitably attempted to press the merits of his case or, at least, increase his domains at the expense of his more fortunate rivals. He was aided in this by what, contemporary accounts suggest, were an engaging personality, a goodly amount of learning, and substantial cunning. In a history of his rival, Charles V, a contemporary chronicler characterizes the king of Navarre thus:

C'estoit un petit homme, mais plein d'esprit et de feu . . . d'un oeil vif et d'une éloquence qui persuadoit tout ce qu'il vouloit, et avec cela si affable et si populaire, que, possédant en perfection l'adresse de se faire aymer tout autrement que les autres princes, il luy fut facile de gagner les esprits du peuple, et mesmes d'attirer à soy, et de débaucher plusieurs personnes considérables, de l'obéissance et de la fidelité qu'elles devoient au roi.

[he was a little man, but full of spirit and fire . . . with a lively eye and an eloquence which persuaded everyone he wished to persuade, and in addition he was so affable and friendly that, possessing the ability to make himself more loved than any other prince, he found it easy to gain the hearts of the people, drawing them to his side, even corrupting several important nobles in the loyalty and devotion they owed to the king.]<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Plaissé, *Charles, dit le mauvais*, for further details.

<sup>11</sup> Quoted in Plaissé, *Charles, dit le mauvais*, p. 17.

The difficulties between the Valois and their English cousins, also claimants to the throne of France, provided Charles with an opportunity to maneuver; his possessions in Normandy and Navarre, though eventually quite substantial, could not support a direct confrontation with his father-in-law, and yet these same possessions were, for obvious geographical reasons, of great strategic importance.

In order to understand Machaut's relationship to Charles of Navarre, which endured more than a decade and prompted the composition of the *Confort* we must at this point examine in some detail the events of the late 1350s in which patron and, to a lesser extent, poet both became embroiled.<sup>12</sup>

The first dispute between Jean and his Navarrese son-in-law arose in 1354 over the king's gift of the county of Angoulême to Charles, constable of France, a man, also of royal blood, who had been given the office held by Raoul of Brienne, recently executed by Jean as a traitor. Charles of Spain, cadet son of the royal house of Castille, was one of Jean's favorites, perhaps his lover as well (the rumor of a homosexual liaison was spread by Charles of Navarre, even to the Pope at Avignon, but Jean never answered the charge). As Charles of Navarre reckoned, the county of Angoulême belonged to him. By right his mother should have inherited the counties of Champagne and Brie (territories which her grandmother had brought to the crown in marrying Philip the Fair). When a minor, she had been tricked by her guardian and Philip VI of Valois into renouncing her claim to these counties in return for those of Angoulême and Mortain, as well as for fixed rents to be drawn on the royal treasury. The Valois had never permitted Jeanne possession of Angoulême or paid the compensation, and when Charles of Navarre became Jean II's son-in-law, he pressed this family claim strongly. Moreover, he was at the time promised a huge dowry in cash that was not paid.

Continually refused by Jean what he fairly considered his due, Charles was enraged to see the county of Angoulême pass to Charles of Spain as the result of what he could only understand as a deliberate affront to his personal honor. When Charles of Spain passed through Alençon on the night of 8 January 1354 (foolishly approaching the Navarrese stronghold of Evreux with no escort), he was waylaid at a local inn by Philip of Navarre and several of the king's cronies, including the count of Harcourt, the seigneur de Graville, a knight named Maubue, and the squire Colin Doublet. As he would later publicly acknowledge, Charles of Navarre gave the order for the assassination. In bed, stripped of his arms, and begging for mercy, Charles of Spain was cut down without pity. With his typical taste for the spectacular and gory, Froissart states:

Lors le Bascon de Mareul et Radigo et quatre servans occistrent le dit Charles d'Espaingne connestable de France. Et l'occist de sa main et de son espée le dit Bascon de Mareul. Car il lui lança et bouta tout oultre parmi le corps ; et tant engoisseusement, villainnement et abominablement l'apareillerent qu'ilz lui firent quatre vingt plaies.

[then Bascon de Mareul and Radigo and four other squires killed the aforementioned Charles of Spain, the constable of France. Bascon de Mareul killed him with the sword in his hand. For he pierced and stuck him right through the body, and they did it so that he suffered great pain, was villainously and abominably treated, having eighty wounds.]<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This account is based on Plaissé, *Charles, dit le mauvais*; Bordonove, *Jean le Bon et son temps*; Cazelles, *Société Politique*; Deviosse, *Jean le Bon*; and Quillet, *Charles V*.

<sup>13</sup> Quoted in Plaissé, *Charles, dit le mauvais*, pp. 61–62.

Jean's reaction was a predictable rage and desire for vengeance. But Charles of Navarre had powerful allies at court, especially his aunt and sister, at that time the widows of Philip VI and Charles IV, who pleaded his case with Jean. There were even a good number of the king's council, ecclesiastics and nobles alike from the north of France, who sympathized with Charles of Navarre and what they viewed as his legitimate struggle against the crown. Many thought that the count of Évreux had acted only to restore his injured honor; Machaut apparently agreed, for, reviewing Charles' career in the *Confort*, he more than once affirms that his patron never did anything to merit the punishment he was then suffering (see especially lines 15–18 and 1832–35). Charles also arranged for the pope and other influential members of the Church to intervene, accomplishing this in what was then a novel way: by the writing of persuasive letters of explanation. Perhaps most effective, however, was the fact that Charles of Navarre sought aid, once again by elegantly written letters from his English cousin Edward III and the king's lieutenant, Henry of Lancaster.<sup>14</sup>

Fearing a coalition between England and Navarre (and a secure Norman base for operations against northern France), Jean allowed himself to be reconciled with Charles through the intercession of the Cardinal of Boulogne. As it turns out, the cardinal was an important member of what French historians term the Navarrese party at court and a vital source of information for Charles. Jean's political situation permitted no other course. Though submitting to his father-in-law, Charles was forced to give nothing, not even a public apology for his "crime." However he received the better part of the Cotentin, a territory then in dispute which made his Norman holdings even more strategically substantial and, as far as the Valois were concerned, more threatening. The Treaty of Mantes (signed in March 1354) established a temporary peace between the two rivals. Jean was at the time very much occupied with the English peace negotiations which, had he accepted the proposed final settlement, would have resulted in Edward III's taking possession of most of France. Reneging on the Treaty of Mantes (after some provocation), Jean was forced once more to deal with Charles of Navarre who, in 1355, was in the Cotentin and planning a voyage to England, where he was to resume his own negotiations. Jean appealed his son-in-law with the Treaty of Valognes (signed at an impressive ceremony of reconciliation on 10 September 1355). Once again Charles profited at the expense of his father-in-law and the latter's continuing fear of an Anglo-Norman alliance. He demanded and received the payment of his wife's dowry and even claimed financial compensation for the expenses incurred in raising an army (which was supposed to join an expeditionary force led by Edward III of England debarking at Cherbourg) to fight his sovereign.

The confrontation increased the popularity of Charles among the nobles of northern France, especially Normandy, a duchy which, for a number of reasons, was having its own difficulties with the king. It was during this sojourn in Normandy that Charles probably had the idea of plotting with the dauphin, Charles, recently put in charge, but not created duke, of Normandy (Charles, quite probably, convinced his impressionable younger cousin that his father was not going to give him his due). In October 1355, Jean was faced once again with the landing of an English army, but the campaign was short-lived and resulted in no significant gains for either side. He felt, perhaps, that with a lull in the war the time had come to deal decisively with Charles of Navarre. The details of a plot between his son

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<sup>14</sup> For the original texts of the letters to Edward, see Plaisse, *Charles, dit le mauvais*, pp. 62–63.

and Charles of Navarre probably came to the attention of the king about this time; Jean had an excellent network of spies. As Friquet de Fricamps, one of Charles of Navarre's lieutenants, was to reveal much later under torture, the dauphin was encouraged by his cousin to ask in person for armed help from the emperor to save the kingdom from his father's misrule. Having raised a substantial force, Charles was then to return to join armies with the king of Navarre in order to capture and do away with his father.

Jean soon saw a perfect opportunity to defeat this conspiracy; the majority of Norman nobles had assembled in early April 1356 at Rouen to do homage to Charles and discuss issues of state, especially new taxes. With a substantial party of armed men, Jean surprised the convocation at the castle of Rouen on 5 April 1356, entering unnoticed through a back gate. Jean immediately had Charles of Navarre taken into custody. He dealt more severely with the noblemen in his retinue who had been involved in the killing of the constable of Spain. Harcourt, de Graville, Maubue, and Doublet were put into a cart to be transported to the gibbet, but, apparently fearing some trouble from the townspeople among whom Harcourt was especially popular, Jean ordered them unloaded halfway there and beheaded in the presence of his then presumably quite terrified son Charles. Their bodies and heads were dragged in chains and installed on the city gibbet. Put in the personal custody of Arnoul d'Audrehem, the marshal of France, Charles of Navarre was taken to a number of prisons. First he was transported to the Château-Gaillard, then to the Louvre, then to the Châtelet (near Cambrai), and finally to Arleux-en-Palluel (near Douai). Contemporary accounts, based largely on what Charles was to reveal upon his release, confirm what Machaut hints at in *Confort*, namely that the king of Navarre was often harshly treated, in effect tortured during his captivity. Charles was not to gain his release until a year and slightly more than seven months had passed (8 November 1357).

For about six weeks Philip of Navarre tried to persuade Jean to let his brother go, but his efforts, and those of Charles' other friends and relations at court, were in vain. As a result, the Navarrese in Normandy made common cause with the English against Jean during the summer campaign of that year. But this fighting was soon to seem insignificant when at the beginning of autumn an English raiding party led by Henry of Lancaster made an attempt to link up with the forces of the Black Prince, who had invaded Poitou. Raising a huge army, Jean pursued the latter and in a remarkable and famous turnabout was defeated at Poitiers on 17 September. This was an event that Charles of Navarre, languishing in prison, might have regarded with some good humor, for the king who had put him in chains was himself made a prisoner (though in much less uncomfortable circumstances).

The absence of Jean and widespread dissatisfaction at the dauphin's initial lack of strong leadership probably contributed to the climate, long favorable to Charles of Navarre, which led to his eventual release. Somewhat inexplicably, Jean never publicized his reasons for arresting Charles, a fact to which Machaut himself refers in the *Confort* (see lines 1805–06); this contributed to the feeling, shared by the poet and many others, that the arrest was a miscarriage of justice that would be corrected by proper legal procedure (see the *Confort* lines 1815–24). Already at the meeting of the Estates General during October 1356, a call had been made for Charles' freedom, among other changes demanded by a party interested in the reform of the royal government (the session was eventually prorogued by the dauphin). It is interesting to note that Machaut demonstrates a good deal of sympathy for and agreement with the cause of reformation, although the *Confort*, to our knowledge, constitutes the poet's only public action in its support. One of the most prominent among the reformers was Jean de Picquigny, who was governor of

Artois. At about the very time Machaut was composing a poetic consolation for his imprisoned patron, Jean de Picquigny and other Picard nobles plotted and successfully executed Charles' deliverance from Arleux-en-Palluel; chroniclers disagree about the details of the escape, so we cannot be sure how it happened. There are hints in the *Confort* that he knew something of these plans; for after nearly eighteen months of captivity he decided to compose a political/moral work for Charles that was in many ways quite optimistic about his benefactor's eventual deliverance (see the *Confort* lines 1825–29, which even mention that the king has friends working hard for his release).

Rescued from his cell (perhaps by means of ladders and the connivance, forced or otherwise, of his jailers), Charles immediately began a political campaign to win support in what was, largely, a leaderless France. It is not clear, however, if he intended to take the throne or simply increase his own holdings during a period of crisis. Charles wrote sympathetic and thankful letters to authorities at Arras, letting them know that he did not hold the people of France responsible for his misfortune; he wrote the count of Savoy with similar intent. These documents, which have survived,<sup>15</sup> reveal a resourceful and resilient man eager to take advantage of the opportunities now available to him. Proceeding to Amiens, he received shelter from the respected canon Guy Quiéret; at Amiens he made a persuasive speech detailing his claims not only to Champagne and Brie, but also those to the throne of France, though he did not call for the deposition of Jean. Charles went on to Paris, where discontent with the dauphin was already in the air and he could count on enthusiastic support from an influential bourgeoisie. There he graciously accepted the hospitality of the monks at Saint-Germain-des-Prés; according to Jean de Venette, a contemporary chronicler:

He watched for an opportunity, and when a large number of people had been summoned and had gathered in the Pré-aux-Clercs (the ditches round the monastery had not yet been dug), he stood upon the walls and began to preach to the people in a loud voice. Taking as his text these words in very good Latin, 'Because our Lord is just and hath loved justice, his countenance hath seen equity,' he expounded them to suit his purpose.<sup>16</sup>

We do not know what part Machaut may have played in Charles' campaign to win popular acceptance or support, but the fact that the king attempted in part to do so through scholarly/clerical methods is suggestive. Charles, however, was very well educated and loved learning, so he perhaps proceeded without support from the poet (who, it must be added, continued in his loyalty to the king as well; see the praiseworthy references to Jean's feats of battle at Poitiers in lines 2795–2818 of the *Confort*). Restored to a peace with the dauphin through the intercession of queen Jeanne and queen Blanche, his long-time allies, Charles staged an elaborate burial of the bodies of his executed friends, still hanging on the gibbet at Rouen; this took place on 10 January 1358. The dauphin had promised Charles the return of all his Norman holdings, but when he found it difficult to regain them, Charles broke the peace. Intriguing with Étienne Marcel, the leader of the merchants of Paris, who was himself organizing a formidable opposition to royal power, Charles made an attempt to secure a position in the capital, at that time unfriendly to the dauphin. This alliance likely lost him the support of many nobles and ecclesiastics. In any

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in part in Jean de Venette, *Chronicle*, pp. 226–27.

<sup>16</sup> Jean de Venette, *Chronicle*, p. 69.

case, an unusual chain of circumstances, too complex to be detailed here, led to both Marcel's death and the defeat of Charles' hopes.<sup>17</sup>

Hindsight suggests that Charles quite probably could have seized the throne had he either the nerve or desire in the summer of 1358. But was this indeed his intention? Among other modern historians Raymond Cazelles suggests not: though he certainly thought about becoming king of France, Charles possessed two clearer and not necessarily connected aims:

profiter des embarras des Valois pour s'agrandir et s'enrichir . . . [et] il n'y aucun raison pour que le roi de France abandonne une partie de son royaume au roi d'Angleterre alors que lui-même estime avoir plus de droits qu'Edouard III" [to profit from Valois troubles and thus enrich and elevate himself . . . and there was no reason for the king of France to abandon half his kingdom to the king of England when he himself thought it by rights should be his own and not Edward III's].<sup>18</sup>

Allied with the English, Charles made war upon France, even in 1359 blockading the city of Paris by closing navigation off on the Seine in both directions. Stymied by the dauphin, Charles was once more forced to make peace. Throughout most of the next decade, Charles of Navarre remained an annoying but ultimately rather harmless enemy of his Valois cousins. He was able to continue and in some ways succeed in the position of leadership and responsibility that Machaut prepares him for with conventional wisdom and advice in the *Confort*. But he never became the royal leader around whom the somewhat inchoate cause of reform could organize itself. Defeated decisively by royal forces at the battle of Cocherel in 1364, Charles' fortunes began to decline precipitously in the late 1370s. In 1378, Charles suffered the confiscation of all his territories in France. Reduced to his Spanish possessions, he died in Pamplona on 1 January 1387, according to Froissart of a sudden illness brought on by a night of debauchery with a very young and beautiful girl. If this is true, it was a somewhat fitting end for a man whom Machaut characterizes in the *Navarre* as an enthusiast of the game of love.

After the *Confort*, Machaut never mentions Charles of Navarre again in any of his narrative poems, even though ecclesiastical documents and other evidence suggest that he remained associated with the king in some capacity for a number of years after his release. Machaut's career during this period demonstrates that the contractual relationship of patron and prince was flexible. Still attached to the king of Navarre, Machaut also became associated with a nobleman who, at least politically, would have been Charles' mortal enemy: Jean, the Duke of Berry, his brother-in-law and cousin. During the winter of 1359–60, Machaut lived through the siege laid to the city of Reims by the English and was even required, despite his age, to do some military service. In the spring of 1360 the French were required by the treaty of Brétigny to supply hostages in return for the release of the imprisoned king Jean (whose huge ransom his subjects were having difficulty raising). One of these was Berry, a man who, like Charles of Navarre, loved learning and the arts. Apparently in his service, Machaut wrote a consolation intended to comfort him, just as he had done for the king of Navarre. The *Fonteinne amoureuse*, however, offers a traditional love poem instead of advice and instructive exempla. *Le Livre dou Voir Dit* (*The*

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<sup>17</sup> See Cazelles, *Etienne Marcel*, for details of Marcel's revolt.

<sup>18</sup> Quoted in Plaissé, *Charles, dit le mauvais*, pp. 78–79.

*Book of the True Poem*), written about the same time, hints that Machaut enjoyed patronage from yet another grand nobleman, Charles, duke of Normandy.<sup>19</sup>

In his later years Machaut, serving as canon, must have participated in a number of important public events, including the coronation of Charles V on 19 May 1364, in Reims. Among Charles' entourage was Pierre of Lusignan, the famous knight (he must have reminded Machaut of his beloved Jean of Bohemia), a man whose chivalric accomplishments the poet was later to chronicle in his *Prise*. During this time Machaut was probably more or less permanently resident at Reims, suffering from the afflictions (a cataract and the gout) he mentions in the *Voir Dit*. The records of the canonial chapter reveal that he died in April of 1377 and was interred alongside his brother Jean, who had died some time before.

#### ARTISTIC ACHIEVEMENT

Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin has famously suggested that in its relentless attraction to the written and not yet written, the modern novel is generically anti-generic, and is because it offers, in contrast with formal traditions such as the epic, a “new zone opened . . . for structuring literary images . . . the zone of maximal contact with the present . . . in all its openendedness.”<sup>20</sup> With no fixed form or conventional matter, the novel is defined by its lack of a defining feature beyond the most unhelpfully vague: that it is prose fiction of a certain length. Had he been acquainted with the tradition of the late medieval *dit*, the form of verse narrative whose acknowledged master was Guillaume de Machaut, Bakhtin might have been inclined to view the novel’s receptivity to languages, styles, and themes of all kinds as interestingly anticipated by the most popular form of a much earlier period. If the novel is, as he argues, a kind of *summa* or master form capable of re-orienting and re-presenting texts of all varieties, then this unlimited capacity to accommodate all imaginable sources is anticipated by the *dit* (roughly speaking, the tale), which is most importantly characterized by its attraction to the quotidian, the occasional, even the autobiographical and, in consequence, by its formal preoccupation with discontinuity and pastiche.

In its definite indefiniteness, the *dit* is by nature open to the textualizing or re-textualizing of whatever can be rendered in octosyllabic rhyming couplets. Such openness should, to a degree, dispose the form outward, toward the matter that might be incorporated. And yet, while he does not foreclose centrifugal possibilities of inclusion, Machaut simultaneously turns the *dit* inward, redirecting its openness toward its own ontology. However heterogeneous and syncretic, his *dits* are in a sense all of a piece since they are most notably characterized by a centripetality that leads them to focus on the social (dis)continuities of his authorship, as well as various aspects of his text-making practice. Across an impressively large oeuvre, this metafictional urge manifests itself in a continually re-inventive fashion, whose always surprising variety reflects the different materials (literary, personal, historical, etc.) on which each text draws. Such a balance between the outward and inward energies is proto-novelistic in the sense that, as Bakhtin suggests, the novel, though lacking a “unitary language” and disposed to reproduce all those it encounters,

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<sup>19</sup> See Chailley, “Du cheval de Guillaume de Machaut,” for further detailed discussion of this stage in Machaut’s career.

<sup>20</sup> Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 11.

locates the author at “the center of organization where all levels intersect.”<sup>21</sup> The novelist is customarily an all-disposing ventriloquist who disappears into his various appearances. Like the other poets who imitate his example, however, Machaut does not only constitute the subjective source of the *dit*’s verbal flow. He is also either his own main character or an important subsidiary presence when characters of noble birth claim the narrative spotlight. In this insistence on the organizing energies as well as the representational possibilities of authorial singularity, the Machaldian *dit* proves generically ungeneric, as the subsequent developmental history of the form makes clear. His contemporaries Jean Froissart, Christine de Pizan, John Gower, and Geoffrey Chaucer, among others, produced so many similarly self-regarding texts — each of which is resolutely disposed toward uniqueness and disconnection, defying regularizing tendencies — that this particular inflection of the *dit* becomes the most recognizable literary form at the end of Middle Ages.

An embrace of disconnection and uniqueness constitutes the paradoxical formal ground of this impressive body of texts, which includes such diverse masterpieces as Froissart’s *Prison amoureuse*, Chaucer’s *House of Fame*, and Christine’s *Livre du duc des vrais amans*. Unlike most medieval narrative, the *dit* eschews pre-existing cycles, the thematic corpora or *matières* that make possible a vast range of fictionalizing that is genetically related as for example in the various strands of the Arthurian tradition that so dominates literary production in the period. Like the novel, the *dit* resolutely resists any subordination of the individual text to ordinate traditions, which increase in cultural authority through continuing acts of invocation and re-use. Their cultural lives are characterized by the continual accretion of “range” to which each individual text contributes in terms of narrative mass, even as by its very existence each new text expands the possibilities for further imitation and linkage. Textual boundaries are never understood as closed, but rather as open to a continuation that can always inspire further continuation, producing complex, never-closed multiplicities (sometimes appropriately termed “cycles”). The *dit* is utterly different from matter-based narrative. The *dit* constitutes, in fact, the formal and thematic “other” to such impressively massive genres as the romance and the *chanson de geste*, with its invocation of speech (*dit* from *dire* “to say”) perhaps pointing toward the unreplicability of *parole*. The *roman*, by way of contrast, takes its name for the vernacular language in which it first appeared (*romanz*=French), and it fittingly shows affinities with the rule-governed nature of *langue*, in which the abstracting generalities of a constantly expanding repertoire customarily prevail over the idiosyncratic.

Another way of saying this is that almost without exception the *dit* exists in se and per se. Whatever transtextual connections it may establish are not mandated by a tradition that molds and prescribes even though Machaut’s own oeuvre in some sense connects to the tradition of love poetry. His *dis* offer a perfect match between generic form and content. To repeat, the major structural motif of his narrative verse is the dramatization of his activity as a poet in the service of different great nobles. Such a focus is hardly surprising or unusual. In its insistence upon the unique, the unanticipated, and the ephemeral, the *dit* is strongly drawn toward the at least ostensibly autobiographical, most obvious source of emerging story (a truism about the connection between author and form that the modern novel, of course, clearly reflects).

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<sup>21</sup> Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 49.

And yet, the Machaldian *dit* continually escapes the confinement of the autobiographical. For this particular persona (if in complicated ways that connect to such modern notions as narrator and implied author) is identical with the poet who assumes the burden of continuing production. And this is a task that necessarily involves more than the narration of the self, generally including a substantial invocation of literary tradition in some form. The overall result, in any case, is an inward-regarding text constantly referencing itself as an aesthetic object in the making, whose confection (the various stages of which, to be sure, can also constitute the subject of further versifying) is the task the poet sets himself.

Long neglected as the productions of an inferior author who could do little more than imitate the truly grand monuments of an earlier age (especially the *Roman de la rose* and the *Ovide moralisé*), the narrative poems of Guillaume de Machaut have been revalued by the current generation of medievalists. Contemporary critics have especially appreciated the features of Machaut's *dits* dismissed by earlier scholars as "conventional:" the insistent literariness of the Machaldian text, its intricate (dis)connections to the poet's corpus and life, its playful celebration of the shifting, complicated relations among poet, public, and patron, its self-conscious re-making (and replacing) of literary models. The creation of a "post-modern" Machaut rightly has restored the poet's reputation by demonstrating that he should be read according to his age's conception of the literary (one intriguingly contemporary).<sup>22</sup> Current work, however, has slighted those aspects of the writer's oeuvre, particularly political and didactic elements, which do not fit such a model of textual self-containment. It is true, to paraphrase William Calin, that Machaut's narrative poetry is often about the writing of poetry by a poet;<sup>23</sup> but this interest is hardly global, and does not explain the generation or form of certain works. The lack of attention paid to that poetry reflects a judgment about literary categories that is thoroughly modern, not medieval: a division between the fictional, mimetic, and entertaining, on the one hand, and the occasional, rhetorical, and didactic, on the other. The modern critic and reader prefer texts of the first type, though this taste was not shared by their fourteenth-century counterparts.

Machaut was prompted to compose occasional poems because of events in his own and his patrons' lives. Both the *Voir Dit* and the *Navarre*, for example, offer themselves as responses to turning points or crises in the career of the poet (though it may well be that these "events" are themselves fictional, imagined in order to justify the works which respond to them). It is fairly certain that Machaut carried on a literary love affair with a much younger reader, and the first of his two *jugement* poems was perhaps found so objectionable by female readers that he was forced to compose a revision. But our only evidence for these "histories" is in the poems themselves. It is public knowledge, however, that Jean of Berry was forced by treaty obligations to leave France for England; the *Fonteinne amoureuse* refers, if vaguely, to this occasion, but also provides consolation for the sorrowful patron. This poem fulfills its occasional and didactic purposes through the construction of a traditional fiction. It is a love vision that assimilates Jean's grief (which presumably was a complex emotion) to the agony felt by a lover forced to part from his lady. The resulting text treats its occasion metonymically, offering an exposition of only those elements which can be expressed by poetic forms and conventions. The metonymy, in this case the figuration of

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<sup>22</sup> For more on the "post-modern" Machaut, see Palmer, "Transtextuality and the Producing-I."

<sup>23</sup> See Calin, *Poet at the Fountain*.

Jean as a lover, means that occasionality becomes subordinated to the more general meanings of dream vision (e.g., that the nobleman's dream of Venus is not intended to represent Jean's particular, unique circumstances). Occasionality, in other words, is less a meaning in the text than a meaning which can be read into it. We do not need to know about the unfortunate turning of events in Jean's life to understand and appreciate the poem, though such knowledge helps us to locate a referential gesture that supplements our understanding and appreciation. The poem develops a series of general, conventionally acceptable meanings which can also be applied flatteringly to Jean's real life situation. Thus the patron's sorrow is less represented than alluded to. Occasionality in the two debate poems similarly incorporates autobiographical references into what is essentially a generic framework.

Because the later omnibus manuscripts of Machaut's complete poetry and music, including BnF, fr. 1584 (usually known by the siglum A) on which this present edition is based, to all appearances put the narrative *dits* in chronological order of composition, it is possible to establish that the *Behaingne* was the poet's second major work, likely following closely on his initial work, the *Dit dou Vergier*. Machaut's first *jugement* poem was followed more than a decade later by a sequel of sorts, the *Navarre*. The *Behaingne* revives a genre inaugurated some two hundred years earlier in which questions of love and gender are broached in debate form. Under Machaut's brilliant handling, the love debate genre went on to flourish for more than a century and a half, involving many, perhaps most, of the gifted authors of the later Middle Ages. The model he set stages a debate argued by two or more characters, each of whom speaks to a particular side of an issue concerning love. The discussion often takes place in the presence of a narrator figure in charge of recording the argument for a patron who will decide the matter. The whole case is written up as poetry, providing plenty of scope for lyrical expression of the joy and pain brought on by strong emotion. In the hands of the best poets, language and erudition are on display as much as sentiment. That is certainly the case with both the *Behaingne* and the *Navarre*.

#### POETIC LOVE DEBATES

Reaching back to the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, extended poetic debate in the topic of love existed already in what were called *débats du clerc et du chevalier* (debates of the cleric and the knight) or *jugements d'amour* (judgments about love). We have as examples of this genre half a dozen works, some in Latin and some in Old French, that stage a discussion in which ladies weigh the relative merits of clerics and knights and lovers. Consider, for example, the short Latin verse narrative *Idus Aprilus Habitum est Concilium Hoc in Monte Romarici* (*Council of Remiremont*), written in the middle of the twelfth century and soon translated into French.<sup>24</sup> The *Concile* recounts the extraordinary events that supposedly took place at the monastery of Remiremont. The nuns have come together on the Ides of April, we are told, not to hear the reading of the Gospel but to discuss *amoris tractatus* (the "practice of love"). On one level, the poem satirizes those devoted to the religious life, who were famed, justly or unjustly, for a failure to observe the most difficult of vows. No men are permitted to attend this council except for "honest clerks," monks from nearby Toul, whose presence is welcomed and for whose "solace" the company of women has, in fact, been convoked. All the sisters know of love, but they have no physical

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<sup>24</sup> For discussion and texts, see Oulmont, *Débats*.

experience of it. In a kind of mockery of religious service, the meeting begins not with a reading from the Bible but with a passage from the teachings of Ovid, which are declaimed by a certain Eve, who is said to be well skilled at following Love's commandments and offering sagacious advice to others. Eve is hardly attired in the modest garments of a nun. Instead, she is dressed like a courtly lady, wearing splendid clothes and adorned with precious jewels and flowers. She has come, so she says, to advise them never to hide the manner of life they have chosen for themselves — which, she says, is characterized by its exclusive devotion to, if not the physical presence of, carnal love and desire.

Elizabeth of Granges responds for the company, declaring that they have served Love to the best of their ability. Most important, the community has observed the rule of refusing to have sex with men (*viri copula*) and not accepting the companionship of anyone who does not belong to their “order.” Elizabeth of Faucogney, however, offers a somewhat more expansive view of the sisters’ behavior. They have never ceased enjoying, she declares, the grace, the worthiness, and the good memory of clerks — and they intend to continue loving them in this fashion.

Elizabeth of Faucogney then proceeds to catalogue the virtues of clerks as lovers. The clerk is gracious, kind, and attentive, full of courtesy and generosity. Experienced in love, he knows how to treat a woman well, bringing her appropriate presents and never failing to keep a promise. And he is faithful in his love, never abandoning a woman to whom he has joined himself. A knight, in contrast, is not worth the trouble or affection of a virtuous lady. His brand of loving is detestable, unfortunate, and short-lived. The sisters of the house at first sought out knights for lovers, but, realizing that they were deceivers, quickly abandoned them for clerks, who are famed for being blameless in affairs of the heart. And so any attachment to a knight has become forbidden to members of the company, she concludes. Such is the life they will continue to live, if it pleases Eve for them to do so.

One of the other nuns present has a different view, however. Clerks, she declares, are not as able in loving as Elizabeth has maintained. Those who share this opinion also belong to the “family of Love.” Knights are worthy of respect because they love both war and pleasure. They fear no pain, whether it comes from love or wounds. In battle they are courageous, with a view toward gaining the ladies’ affection and possessing the bodies of women.

Those who prefer clerks then state their case once again before Eve puts an end to debate. She affirms that clerks are able, sweet, and affable, while knights are fickle and given to foolish speech. Henceforth, these women should accept the proffered affection only of clerks. Women who shun this advice would not be admitted to their company until they repent and are granted absolution for the transgression.

The wisdom of clerks is to be preferred because, when women act foolishly, clerks will know where their best interest lies and direct them to pursue it. Eve orders that those who do not follow her injunction be excommunicated from the community and become objects of hatred. But pardon will quickly come to anyone who shows proper repentance.

Eve’s judgment is that clerks make the best lovers, but, enforcing a double standard, affirms that nuns are to honor absolutely their vows of chastity. The *Concile* thematizes this new “doctrine” in a different fashion, making the question of how women should behave in love the subject of a debate that centers on the qualities to be expected in the men to whom they devote themselves. The *Concile* establishes the basic structure of the genre: a debate about an important aspect of the love experience — here the relative suitability of clerks and knights — which is eventually referred for adjudication to an appropriate authority figure.

Another text in the love debate tradition is worth a brief look. The thirteenth-century French *Jugement d'amours* (*Judgment of Love*) offers a distinctive variation on what was becoming a stock theme. One May morning two maidens, pretty and elegantly dressed, make their way to a pleasant garden where they intend to entertain themselves. After a walk through a valley filled with blossoms and the pleasant fragrances of the season, they find an olive tree, under which they sit and discuss a question of love. The first maiden, Blancheflor, sings the praises of the man, a clerk, with whom she has fallen in love, while Florence, her companion, argues for the superiority of her lover, who happens to be a knight. They can reach no consensus and decide to take their case to the God of Love, who with his knowledge and power, can resolve the dispute. On the appointed day, they make their way to Love's palace, a beautiful dwelling covered in flowers, but the door is barred and there is no porter to allow them inside. Suddenly two birds appear to conduct them to the divinity who is taking his rest on a bed of flowers. The god listens with interest and summons his council of "barons" who are all birds of different kinds. They debate the issue between champions representing the two positions. The champion who supports the knight is soon forced to admit that clerks are valiant and courteous and that all virtues are more evident in them than in any other men. Feeling her lover dishonored, Florence breaks into tears, moans bitterly, and dies. The poem ends with her burial as a martyr to Love.

The literature of love reaches its apotheosis in the thirteenth century with *Roman de la rose* (*Romance of the Rose*), a work of immense breadth and impact that is preserved in more than 250 manuscripts, a huge number for a medieval vernacular work. Its influence is correspondingly large. Virtually all love literature that follows over the next two centuries shows the impact of this work in some way, reproducing/rewriting, or taking exception to its contents, conceits, and characters.

The *Rose* consists of two parts, the first of approximately 4,000 lines and the second of an additional 18,000. It is conventionally assumed that the two parts were composed by different poets. Guillaume de Lorris is known as the author of the older portion, composed around 1230, which begins the story of a young lover who falls in love with a rosebud he sees in the Garden of Delight. The garden is the domain of the God of Love and his company, a group of allegorical personifications favorable to his powers. The second part of the romance, composed by Jean de Meun around 1270, describes the vicissitudes experienced by the lover but also incorporates long passages of exposition on all manner of topics, making it a compendium of knowledge as well as the resolution of the quest for the Rose.

The story is a dream vision that unfolds in the narrator's unconscious. Here, we find extensive meditations on love, debates about the central issues of the emotional life. Becoming the vassal of Love in the first part of the poem, the dreamer is aided in his pursuit of the Rose by Fair Welcome, who is driven off by Danger, Shame, and Fear before the lover can attain his goal. At this point, Reason rushes to the lover's rescue, urging him to give up on love, which, she maintains, is both unnatural, because not centered on procreation, and unreliable transient. An opposing view is offered by Friend, who emphasizes the positive aspects of the love experience, persuading the dreamer to disregard what Reason has advocated. In the poem's second part, the dispute over the value of love becomes even more elaborate, as a variety of other personifications appear to offer different perspectives. For example, a character known as the Old Woman, who has, perhaps foolishly, been given charge of the Rose's virtue, offers a disquisition on the rules of love, foolish counsel, promiscuity, and the blatant manipulation of unfortunate men. Her advocacy of an immoral surrender to impulse is opposed both by Nature, who recognizes that "laws" can be rejected by

those who make use of their reason, and by Genius, whose view of love's essential connection to the procreative imperative reflects official Church doctrine. In the end, these points of view are, at best, uneasily reconciled. The lover does finally gain possession of the Rose, although his success is depicted in an extended military metaphor that shows his victory as a siege and assault on the tower protecting the Rose, a violent and overtly sexual ending to a tale that began in the most refined of registers. Most modern readers agree that the debate over the nature of love offered in the poem is never adequately resolved.

#### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE BEHAINGNE

Though it was to reinvent a genre, Machaut's first judgment poem begins in a most conventional fashion, with the narrator's reminiscences of the adventures he passed through one late April morning, a time appointed by Nature and God for love. Love, he affirms, is an emotional experience that affects many men and women, bringing them both joy and pain. This narrator confesses to being an experienced and successful lover, so he can give himself over quite happily to the enjoyment of beautiful sunshine and reawakening nature. Following a nightingale, he enters a lonely glade, there to contemplate in solitude the indescribable beauty of the natural music he hears. This short opening (lines 1–40) draws explicitly on the *Roman de la rose* in which the archetypal Lover similarly falls prey to the enticements of springtime. In the *Rose*, after falling asleep, the lover experiences a vision of the Garden of Love, where the poem's complex, allegorical drama unfolds. In Machaut's reworking, however, the narrator does not fall asleep, but becomes witness to a different kind of drama that takes place nearby (lines 41–124).

The structure of the *Rose* has been invoked, but radically transformed. The elaborate interplay between allegorical personages that lends psychological and intellectual depth to the *Rose* has been altered in favor of a confrontation between two human characters, a man and a woman, unknown to one another, whose experiences in love — which are related in substantial detail — have been, up to a point, similar. Both have known not only the joy that love brings but the overwhelming and enduring sorrow that comes from its loss. Yet this loss, in their two cases, has intriguingly different sources, and the poem takes as one of its main themes the measuring of one loss against the other. Which of these distressed lovers suffers the greater pain? The issue is debated first (and inconclusively) by the protagonists, only later to be submitted as a question of love that is answerable by the king of Bohemia's courtiers, allegorical personages who each represent, in the tradition of the *Rose*, different and to some degree incompatible, aspects of the love experience.

Enjoying his springtime walk, the narrator spies an obviously troubled lady and a serving girl approaching down a lonely path. At the same moment, on the other side, he sees a knight walking down the same path. Thinking he may be intruding upon a lovers' meeting, the narrator hides in the bushes, becoming an involuntary witness to their encounter. The knight gives the lady a fair greeting, but she ignores him. Puzzled, he seizes her robe and questions her. She apologizes for her inadvertent rudeness; it seems she was lost in thought. Like a true gentleman, the knight offers his assistance, but it is declined since, as the lady declares, her difficulties are so severe that no one save God could alleviate them. Though sympathetic, the knight politely challenges her declaration, responding that his own suffering is more than any human being ever endured or indeed ever could. Their dispute leads almost to a joint undertaking as the lady and the knight will explain their troubles in full in order to determine who bears the greater burden of grief.

The lady begins her account of emotional distress by describing her dedication as “serf and vassal” to Love, who favored her with the affection of a knight who, in her view, was the best man who ever lived. His death, she maintains, has left her with an irremediable sorrow, the proof of which seems to be the dead faint into which she falls at the end of her speech (lines 125–205). After reviving her, however, the knight refuses to concede, remaining committed to his initial view, and in an even more elaborate response (lines 261–860) recounts his faithful service to the God of Love, which eventually earns him the reward of the young girl’s heart. But Love’s favor leads in the end only to misery, because his beloved throws him over for another man, betraying his trust. The bereaved lady, though sympathetic to his plight, is not persuaded that the jilted knight’s suffering is worse, and she makes a telling point to support her contention (lines 881–928). She argues that since his beloved is still living, it is possible for him to regain her favor through loyal and patient service. In his rebuttal, the knight maintains the contrary: were she dead, he could forget the girl and be released from pain, but, being alive and forever unattainable, she will make him suffer endlessly (lines 929–1167).

Having reached an impasse, the two disputants obviously need a judge to decide the case, but, constrained by the rules of polite intercourse, neither wishes to nominate one. Nearly forgotten during the progress of the debate, the narrator once again assumes a prominent role, if quite a different one (lines 1185–1442). He is no longer free to lose himself in his own thoughts of love, awakened by the spring morning. Instead he must serve his betters in their time of emotional distress. Like the knight and the lady, he finds himself in a difficult position, for, though he wished to help them find a proper judge, he is embarrassed to reveal his presence. Chance soon intervenes. The lady’s dog spots him hiding in the bushes and runs toward him, barking. This provides him with the opportunity to introduce himself. Confessing that he has heard all of their discussion, the narrator proposes the king of Bohemia as a judge to hear the case. The pair concur and the narrator quickly leads them to the nearby castle of Durbuy, where the king is in residence. Jean listens graciously to a summary of the disagreement provided by the knight (lines 1509–1608), and he then turns the issue over to his court for further discussion, charging his courtiers, sixteen allegorical personages with names such as Reason, Love, Youth, and Loyalty, to provide the proper explication of the issues involved.

Raison (Reason), who holds a position of prominence at court, speaks first, and in a long response (lines 1665–1784) confirms the correctness of the knight’s argument, maintaining that, since love is a carnal affection, it cannot survive the death of the body. But the knight sees his unfaithful lady constantly and so cannot forget, even though Raison advises him to do so, because Jeunesse (Youth) and Amour (Love) urge him on in this mad error. Amour then intervenes (lines 1788–1811), agreeing with Raison’s solution of the dispute, but challenging her view that the knight should abandon the love he feels because she has proved a traitor to him. In an emotional rejoinder (lines 1824–47), Loiauté (Loyalty) condemns the faithless behavior of the knight’s beloved. She argues that Amour is wrong in demanding that the knight continue to love someone from whom he gets nothing but misery. Loiauté agrees with Raison that the knight suffers more because Amour holds him fast in a sorrow from which he cannot recover. Jeunesse finds herself in accord with Amour, asserting that the knight will never give up his love as long as her power can prevent it (lines 1857–1891). Like Amour, Jeunesse argues that the experience of love is reward enough, even if its object has proved unworthy, a position at whose foolishness and impracticality the king gently laughs, reproving Jeunesse for wanting to

keep a faithful servant of Amour in such continual pain that he might die (lines 1900–14). So be it, says Jeunesse; he will then attain great honor as a martyr (lines 1915–20). Delivering his judgment, the king endorses the view that the knight suffers more than the lady. They have not assembled, he reminds them, to determine if that man should indeed continue to love the woman who has betrayed him (lines 1923–56).

And yet the debate does move from a weighing of the sorrows felt by the knight and the lady to a consideration of a much more difficult question, one that is, by royal command, never finally adjudicated: Should reason guide the behavior of those in love, who are under the powerful sway of both the affection itself and the impetuousness of their immature age? In this “digression,” we see Machaut coming to grips with a dilemma developed more fully, if never answered decisively, in the *Rose*. The king, a mature man, sides with Raison, that when her grief passes, she will find another lover in accordance with natural imperatives. The assembled court assents unanimously to this judgment, though we can imagine that Jeunesse and Amour are not happy with the outcome, which endorses Raison’s opinion that love does not survive the death of the body (lines 1716–23) and thus can exert but a limited power over those under its dominion. For eight days the courtiers attempt, with little apparent success, to assuage the suffering of the king’s two guests, who are finally allowed to depart after receiving generous gifts.

Beyond the two questions of who suffers more and whether lovers should heed the dictates of the head rather than those of heart, the debate, if only indirectly raises a third question, which will become the focus of the poem’s sequel: Who proves superior in love, men or women? The knight is judged the winner in the debate, an indication, perhaps, of the greater power of male reasoning and discernment — or it may be that the king has simply decided in favor of a fellow male. In any case, it is the knight’s continuing devotion to his lady, however undeserving, that occasions the court’s discussion of the relative claims of reason and emotion to direct human action. Moreover, the cause of the knight’s sorrow is his lady’s faithfulness, over which he has no control. Of the two women who figure in this poem, one is given to mistaken opinions (overestimating a misery that, it is predicted, will soon pass), while the other is a promiscuous betrayer of male trust, who inspires virtuous devotion only to inflict pointless pain on a man who merits, as all present agree, a quite different reward.

The poem’s two men, in contrast, reflect the highest masculine ideals. Both are submissive to love and mindful of the proper service due the women to whom they have pledged themselves. These exemplary men suffer only because of what lies beyond their jurisdiction: for one, the vagaries of fortune leading to an early death; and for the other, the instability of a woman’s heart that mocks the steadiness of the love bestowed upon it.

It could be argued, as a female figure of great authority does in the *Navarre*, that the author, who has created a fiction that so obviously favors men over women, has insulted the gentler sex. If this was unintentional, then she thinks that the author must be under the sway of that complex of incorrect notions about the “inferiority” of women that we term misogyny. Whether Machaut is guilty of this charge is the question that, with no little humor and irony, is debated in the *Navarre*, where the poet becomes his own main character. And so what was extratextual in the *Behaingne*, namely the author’s intentions and his responsibility to advance only “true” opinion, becomes the center of the new work, as Machaut himself — or, more precisely, a humorously inept, fictional version of the poet — is called to account.

This transformation, however startling, is by no means unanticipated. An important feature of the *Behaingne* is its reflexivity, that is, its self-conscious presentation of the role

the poet plays in court society. There is an unmistakable autobiographical strain in the poem, which gives voice to Machaut's likely uncertainties about his position — as clerk and commoner, but also as the designated spokesman of emotional idealism. At first, the narrator's solitude indexes both the importance of his subjectivity (which is a potential source of meditation on the love experience) and his openness to instruction or enlightenment, which should conventionally come, as in the *Rose*, in the dream that follows this figure's falling asleep in the springtime setting. The dramatic interchange between the knight and the lady, however, means that the narrator's solitude comes to indicate his sudden displacement from the debate to follow, as well as his conversion into an unseen and eavesdropping figure, the very image of Guillaume de Machaut the courtly poet, who attends to understanding the ideas advanced by the debating pair. Using his artistic powers, he will convert these ideas into poetry, as he confesses he has done in the work's coda (lines 2062–79). Giving way to the concerns of the class he serves, the narrator (and by extension Guillaume himself) is not content to be a simple witness, serving a narrating function that effaces itself behind the story. The role it fulfills is a larger one, for the poet, as Machaut sees it, is also a guide. His fictions are not just entertainments but are also intended to inform and comfort. If his experience in love must be denied the privilege of focus, the poet's duties as teacher and adviser cannot be so easily laid aside. That experience, however, offers no easy truths to be confidently endorsed. The conflict between Raison, on the one hand, and Jeunesse and Amour, on the other, does not finally admit a simple solution in favor of either clear-headed restraint or reckless self-abandon. The debate ends but does not conclude, much in manner of Machaut's most notable model, the *Roman de la rose*.

#### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE NAVARRE

The *Behaingne* displays its indebtedness to the *Rose* in order to mediate its reception as one of both sameness and difference. In the *Navarre*, the concern with a love question leads not only to a debate between allegorical characters (most prominently Raison, one of the most important characters in the earlier allegory); it also leads to a representation of the central contradiction which defines the clerkly poet's role (a subject never raised by the two authors of the *Rose*). Similarly, the *Navarre*, though composed as much as a decade later and for a different patron, mediates its reception through a series of references to the *Rose*, though these are not, as was the case before, to the first part of that poem written by Guillaume de Lorris, but rather to Jean de Meun's continuation of Guillaume's narrative. Like the second part of the *Rose*, the *Navarre* offers a lively, occasionally raucous debate that raises the issue of anti-feminism. Furthermore, the debaters frequently use exempla of different kinds to make their points, though these exempla are not as fully developed as the similar ones in Jean's *Rose*. In addition, there is an important structural resemblance between the two works. The *Navarre* is the only work in the Machaut corpus which explicitly takes a previous poem as its subject matter or pre-text; in fact the work's full title in manuscript A, BnF, fr. 1584, is *Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre contre le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne* (*The Judgement of the King of Navarre against the Judgement of the King of Bohemia*). The transtextual link between the two works is thus established from the outset, and it is characterized by a desire for a correction or emendation, something similar to Jean's motives (or those of his narrator, at least) in continuing Guillaume de Lorris' unfinished poem.

What prompted Machaut to write a sequel to one of his most popular works, a sequel that suggested the earlier poem was somehow deficient or faulty? Scholars have sometimes maintained that Guillaume had personal reasons for writing the *Navarre*. The *Behaingne*, it is inferred, must have been criticized for its unusual “doctrine” in noble circles; Guillaume’s second judgment poem, then, would be an answer to those charges, an answer that could be seen as a retraction of the earlier judgment that cunningly does not refute it. The fact is, however, that we know nothing about the reception of the *Behaingne* beyond an evident popularity attested to by the large number of surviving manuscripts. We therefore have no good reason to think that the second judgment poem was motivated by anything other than what the *Prologue*, which the poet wrote toward the end of his career, tells us about Machaut’s literary production; these “new” poems about love come into existence because Guillaume has undertaken to spend his intellectual career creating them. The *Fonteinne Amoureuse* and the *Confort*, it is true, are both motivated by extraliterary events: the departure of Jean of Berry for temporary exile as a hostage and Charles of Navarre’s imprisonment by the king of France respectively. These events, however, are very clearly established as extraliterary motivations within the texts themselves (i.e., Charles is addressed by name and the anonymous nobleman in the *Fonteinne Amoureuse* is revealed to be Jean in a closing anagram). In contrast, the allegorical character Bonneürté, whose dissatisfaction triggers Guillaume’s bungling defense of his earlier poem, can only perhaps be identified as a real figure in Guillaume’s life. A prominent noblewoman attached to the French royal family, Bonne (daughter of the king of Bohemia), might be a model for this character. Machaut was well acquainted with her and undoubtedly shared the view of the court that she was especially virtuous, living up to her name. Although pure speculation, there are some intriguing reasons to suppose she might have been the model for Bonneürté. Bonne seems to have been an affectionate name; she was christened Jutta (Judith). Married to Jean of France, duke of Normandy, she might well have known Charles of Navarre personally; Charles was born in Normandy, where he inherited extensive lands and spent much of his early life. Bonne died of the plague in 1349, the same year Charles became king of Navarre. Charles later became a deadly enemy of Bonne’s widower, Jean of Normandy, who became Jean II of France in 1350. But this is far from certain. The poem contains references to real events of that life; its opening section treats the narrator’s melancholic reaction to the plague and other disasters of the years 1349–50. But these real events do not include any mention of attacks on Guillaume’s reputation. It seems best, therefore, to conclude that the *Navarre* constructs the problems of Guillaume the protagonist for the purpose of generating a playful and entertaining text.

By making his previous poem the issue of a contentious debate, Guillaume is able to focus on a character other than the experiencing-I which he inherited from Guillaume de Lorris and which figures, as we have seen, in the opening of the *Behaingne*. In its place, the counter-judgment can offer a fictionalized version of the real Guillaume, a clerk protective of his literary reputation even as he is concerned about — must be concerned about — the reaction of the nobility to his representation of their experience. Thus Guillaume discovers in this poem a new way of understanding the “I” bequeathed him by tradition. The *Navarre* constructs the complexities and ironies of the producing-I, the self whose experiences with writing texts become the material of other texts written by the same self.<sup>25</sup> Machaut’s focus on his own experiences (even when these are only “imagined” for the purpose of

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<sup>25</sup> See Spearing, *Medieval Autographies*, for further discussion of this issue.

generating the text) is obvious from the beginning 540 lines of the poem, which treat, with accurate historical detail, the disturbing events of 1349–50 and the clerk’s reaction to them. This section starts with an evocation of fall, the season of death and loss which suits historical calamity, and ends with the joyful coming of spring, when the passing of the epidemic allows the poet to resume solitary enjoyments — especially hare-hunting — and be open to the love experience, which here assumes a very untraditional shape. The movement from fall to spring and the attendant transformation of the historical subject into a character more suited to the love themes of courtly poetry have both encouraged numerous critics to view the opening part of the poem as a tedious irrelevance. Readers more sympathetic to Machaut’s architectonic skill can stress thematic links of various kinds between the opening and the more conventional poetic fiction that follows. But the different parts of the poem become a difficulty only if we believe that Machaut was attempting to write a traditional love allegory and, for some dim reason, included an introduction which drew on tangential, historical material. The love allegory section itself, however, is hardly traditional, but in fact makes use of inherited structures in order to explore very different themes and issues.

Both parts of the *Navarre* in fact make it clear that the subject is the poet himself, first viewed, with great seriousness, as a historical person caught up in a tumult of events beyond his control, and then examined, rather humorously, as a bumbling versifier who slanders ladies even as he defends his attempts to exalt them. One important connection between the two parts of the poem is the poet’s melancholy: the state of the world saddens him and then, with the disappearance of the disease, allows him pleasure again. Soon after, his hare-hunting is interrupted by the “call” from Bonneürté (Happiness) who sinks him back into a melancholy from which he is somewhat rescued by the lightheartedness of the debate’s conclusion. Unlike the *Weltschmerz* that so affects him at the work’s beginning, this melancholy can be (and is) overcome by Guillaume’s gracious acceptance of the judgment against him and his cheerful agreement to do appropriate penance (which is the composition of three lyrical pieces in fixed forms with, this time, the “correct” doctrine).

If the true subject of the poem is the “real” Guillaume, then the historical references and analysis in the opening make good artistic sense: they ground the fiction which follows in the truth of the poet’s experience. After referring to the cold north wind which has destroyed the greenery of summer (lines 34–36), the narrator describes how in the contemporary world there is no justice or truth, only a rapacious avarice that destroys social and familial trust; the result is a constant warfare that has brought down a heavenly vengeance in the form of destructive weather (lines 37–108). This description is a conventional, apocalyptic one (the *topos* is usually called *mundus senescit* or “the world grows old”), but it is followed by a return to the narrator’s state of mind. The fall season had made him sad, and reflecting on the decay of the world sinks him into melancholy, which he tries to resist, following the wisdom of Ecclesiastes (lines 109–42). But, leaving behind the thoughts of social decay, the narrator considers those present ills which make him even more melancholic. These include ominous heavenly signs (lines 151–66), particularly the lunar eclipse of 17 January 1348, the various astrological configurations of that year widely interpreted as predicting the subsequent epidemic and the appearance of a fiery comet. Guillaume also makes reference to the great earthquake that devastated parts of Eastern Europe and Italy on 25 January 1348 (lines 167–80), a passage that mentions a heavenly rain of blood that boded ill. God revealed the meaning of these signs quickly by permitting a great outbreak of wars and killing, another apocalyptic reference with some basis in

contemporary reality (e.g., the continuing hostilities of the Hundred Years' War, in which Machaut himself took some minor part). This long passage (lines 181–228) mentions as well the outbreak of anti-Semitism that accompanied the first appearances of the plague in northern Europe; like many at the time, Machaut believed that the Jews had poisoned wells and thus deserved the murderous fury of the persecutions which followed the spreading of these rumors (lines 229–40). Guillaume connects the phenomenon of wandering companies of flagellants to the disastrous events predicted by the heavens, even though this bizarre form of religious piety had come into existence during the previous century and continued to be active in Bohemia during the 1340s (lines 241–56). Because men were so intent on destroying themselves, Guillaume suggests, Nature decided to assist in this destruction by sending terrible storms to the earth, in expectation that the world would soon end; this weather, Guillaume suggests, was connected to the terrible mists that were said by many to have caused the epidemic, which immediately followed (lines 271–346).

Throughout this part of the poem, Guillaume gives the distinct impression that he is following one of the numerous Latin chronicles of the period, though no specific source has been identified. His selection of events (and their explanation as well) closely resembles what contemporary historians have to say about the outbreak of the epidemic. In any case, it is interesting that Guillaume here assumes the voice and manner of an historian's first-hand experience. The last part of his account is by far the most dramatic. God sees from his house that the world is everywhere corrupted, and so he sets Death loose on suffering humanity. Death is a beast so greedy and insatiable that he consumes heaps of corpses every day. The towns and villages are soon emptied of people; ditches must be dug in churchyards to bury the unnumbered dead. Guillaume says that no one will be able to count how many have died or will die (lines 393–99), an important indication that this part of the poem was indeed written during the epidemic. Pasture and field go untended because there are none to work or tend them (lines 408–430). At this point the narrator returns to his own reactions. Horrified by an imminent death, he confesses his sins thoroughly and resigns himself to the inevitable, closing up his doors and staying inside the whole winter (a precaution that probably saved his life). In this way he suffered less melancholy than he would have, for many of his friends died and were buried, a fact of which he remained ignorant. Finally, the end of the epidemic is signaled by merrymaking throughout the town, which Guillaume hears in his house. Asking one of his friends what is happening, Guillaume learns that the survivors are celebrating. He decides that he will do the same and goes to his horse and dogs, proceeding to some hare-hunting in the springtime fields. This is an activity that he defends with great seriousness, saying that its practice so absorbed him he would not have recognized anyone had they ridden up to him and spoken (lines 431–540).

At this point Machaut begins to reprise and adapt the structure of his earlier judgment poem. In the *Behaingne* the sorrowing lady, lost in gloomy thoughts, ignores the knight's greeting; this prompts their conversation and leads to the debate. Similarly, Guillaume's enthusiasm for hare-hunting here blinds him to the arrival in the fields of a "lady of great nobility," who, alerted to the poet's identity by her squire, sends him a message to appear before her. Indeed, she is the very lady whom Guillaume serves, although it is only later that he learns her name. This inconsistency conceals a hidden meaning, namely that Guillaume is unthinkingly aware he owes service to Bonneürté without knowing who she truly is or the power she wields over him. Like the traditional instructress figures of love allegory or the mysterious, supernatural ladies of Arthurian romance, Bonneürté appears

to correct and enlighten her male subject. As it turns out, what she has to offer is advice about Guillaume's career; her judgment involves a renewal of the poet's contract to write about ladies and love in the appropriate fashion. As their debate develops, however, what is most significant is the fact that in this poem Guillaume takes the place of the knight as the male member of the debating pair. This change signals the most important difference of the *Navarre*. In the earlier poem, the narrator/clerk is displaced from the poem as the debate begins; here the narrator/clerk, no longer an anonymous and traditional figure but a fictional version of Guillaume himself, becomes the accused who must defend himself against the charges of Bonneürté. In the *Behaingne* the levels of traditional love allegory/debate and commentary on the poet's role in its making are kept distinct; the twist in the conventional structure of the poem calls attention to itself, focusing the reader on the narrator's role (and its reflection of the author's historical predicament as court poet/lyric voice). In the later judgment poem, on the contrary, the fiction itself becomes an examination of the poet's performance as poet.

Instead of a response to a conventional *demande d'amors* (question of love), the debate here is more like a law suit in which the plaintiff makes a complaint whose rightness or wrongness is to be determined by an impartial judge. Unlike the interlocutors in the earlier poem, Guillaume is literally put on trial for an alleged crime: the promulgation of the "incorrect" view that the man whose beloved has betrayed him suffers more than the lady who has experienced the death of her lover. Bonneürté begins by faulting Guillaume for not noticing her arrival on the scene, a charge against which he defends himself successfully (lines 760–801). Then she accuses him of having sinned against ladies, but does not tell him how or when. Frustrated, Guillaume pleads for more specific information which, apparently impressed by the persuasiveness of his argument, she finally furnishes him, making reference to the conclusion reached in the *Behaingne* (lines 801–1038). Though she advises that Guillaume admit his fault immediately and correct his error by promulgating the opposite opinion (lines 1031–38), the poet refuses to do so because the original judgment is his published view. He resolves to win the debate if he can even though this means opposing himself to a grand and noble person whom he ought to, perhaps, unquestioningly obey. Guillaume's attitude here contrasts sharply with that of the character Guillaume in the *Prologue*; the latter is appropriately obedient, humble, self-effacing, and eager to please, agreeing wholeheartedly with everything Nature and Amour ask. In fact, in the light of the circumstances of literary production set out in the *Prologue*, the reaction of Guillaume to Bonneürté's charges is most surprising. Nature gives the poet Meaning, Rhetoric, and Music so that "in writing poetry you cannot fail at all" (I, line 17); the three natural children of artistic technique and content will make sure that his works will never "contain anything which will cause you to be blamed" (I, line 20).<sup>26</sup> This command hardly makes room for error, and that is because it does not grant Guillaume any control over what his works will contain. Certainly it does not authorize his willful disagreement with anything a figure of authority — especially a heavenly lady — might offer by way of correction.

Agreeing to debate the issue of his "error," Guillaume and the lady decide that the young King of Navarre, a man with amorous interests, shall be their judge. The pair ride on, accompanied by the lady's entourage, to a handsome manor house where she holds court. Described as a state of absolute repose and enjoyment, this manor house is a more

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<sup>26</sup> See Volume 3 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

realistic version of the traditional *locus amoenus* where love allegory is often set. There the poet is introduced to the twelve damsels who comprise the lady's court: these include psychological personifications.<sup>27</sup> The narrator relates that the lady is served well by her courtiers, who insure that she does only what is right and avoids all evil. It should be added at this point that the scheme adopted here is a fluid one; an important allegorical personage, Mesure (Moderation), appears later but is not introduced at this point. This long passage of description (lines 1155–328) is the poem's most impressive set piece. The appearance of the lady and her court dazzles the impressionable Guillaume, who for a moment is tempted to give up his defense; his strength, however, is restored by Raison (lines 1329–56). The lady then wishes to rehearse her complaint to the assembled court and, despite Guillaume's wish that they wait for the arrival of their judge, she does so impressively. As she finishes, the King of Navarre arrives by chance and immediately agrees to judge the dispute, picking appropriate members of Bonneürte's court to advise him (lines 1443–628). The debate finally begins with a long presentation of the case by the lady, who uses examples drawn from the bestiary tradition — the turtledove and the stork (lines 1629–702) — to argue that Guillaume is wrong.

Though he refuses Bonneürte's request to change his mind, Guillaume answers with extreme politeness, asking the judge's permission to speak, and simply restating his contention that the pain a man feels because of his beloved's infidelity is more severe than any other (lines 1703–68). Guillaume ends by asking for the judgment on his behalf, and this arrogance angers Attemprance (Temperance), who chastises him for wanting to circumvent proper legal procedure and for deliberately misinterpreting one of the lady's points. Attemprance suggests that the man, even though betrayed, can find relief in many ways, while the woman, seeing her lover dead, will suffer unending sorrow. And to illustrate her point, Attemprance introduces the debate's first exemplum, the story of a young girl who, upon learning her lover had been killed, soon dies despite the efforts of a host of doctors (lines 1769–2024). Guillaume agrees that the story is compelling, but finds in it a point for his side, namely that the lady died quickly and did not suffer long, while the cuckolded man finds no end to his misery (lines 2025–76). Reminding the court of something he had maintained in his earlier work (see the *Behaingne*, lines 1110–21; 1716–23), Guillaume states that the dead are soon forgotten, making the heart recover from grief. Once again, he asks for the decision on his behalf.

This time Pais (Peace) objects to his impertinence, declaring that he has not made enough argument to win the judgment. Intending to give Guillaume more to think about, she relates the death of Dido, who, betrayed by Aeneas, committed suicide. This exemplum diverts the course of the debate in a new way, because Dido did not suffer the death of her lover, but rather his faithlessness. Such a divergence is anticipated in the original judgment poem where the debate between Jean's courtiers about the issue of who suffers more soon turns to the question of whether Raison or Jeunesse should command the lover. Pais seems to be implying here that women have a greater capacity to suffer, whatever the cause. In any case, she also reproves Guillaume for stating that Nature overrides the commands of Amour, allowing the grief-stricken beloved to forget her loss. Amour, Pais suggests, always rules lovers and does not heed the wishes of Nature in any way (lines 2077–206). Guillaume, still polite, begs to disagree, relating the story of a clerk from Orléans whose

<sup>27</sup> For an intelligent discussion of the tradition behind Machaut's allegory here see Ehrhart, "Medieval Treatments of the Virtues."

distant lover proves unfaithful to him, marrying another man. Learning of her betrayal in a letter, the clerk goes mad and for the next twenty years lives in the wild like an animal, speaking to no one. Such a man, Guillaume avers, suffered a hundred times more pain than any woman who lost her lover (lines 2207–314). Foy (Faith) takes exception to Guillaume's exemplum, noting that he has not proved that the letter which caused the man to go mad actually was written by his beloved; her angry tone distresses Guillaume, and he asks her to stop threatening him (lines 2315–80). At this point Foy confers with Charité (Charity), and the latter is chosen to relate another exemplum, one which surely will prove Guillaume wrong. Charité tells the story of a rich man who, planting a sapling in his garden, goes to see it one day and finds it a full-grown tree. The story, as Charité explains it, signifies the behavior of the proper lover who, seeing his beloved grow into marriage with a powerful man, rejoices at her new-found station and happiness (lines 2381–532). Guillaume then challenges his opponents to prove only that no lady has ever suffered so much as to offer herself to death (has he forgotten the story of Dido, just related to him by Pais?). Honnesté (Honesty) doesn't address this point, but attacks his story about the clerk of Orléans, maintaining that, once mad, the man did not suffer at all. Guillaume's response is typically clerical, a short disquisition on the distinction between primary and secondary causes which he thinks supports his view about the clerk's continued ordeal (though its relevance seems problematic at best).

At this point the debate turns completely toward the issue broached earlier by Pais, the supposed greater capacity of women to suffer. In a long speech (lines 2699–822), Franchise (Frankness) offers exempla from Classical literature, the stories of Ariadne and Medea, which, she believes, illustrate the point that women are made to suffer by men but emerge victorious in the end. Guillaume rudely attacks this argument, saying that he could easily find a host of examples to prove the opposite, namely that men have a greater capacity for suffering than women. He then relates one of the strangest exempla of the debate. A married woman has given her lover a ring on the condition that he never remove it unless she do it for him. One day her husband notices that the ring is missing and demands to see it. She sends a message to him asking for its return, and he sends it to her along with his finger in order not to break his word. Recognizing that extremes in loving are to be condemned, Guillaume suggests that the man surpassed all women in loyalty and suffering (lines 2823–924), Prudence (Prudence) does not agree, and she launches a long refutation of Guillaume's contention, which the poet ignores, preferring to return to the issue raised by Franchise. Though he recognizes that the debate has broadened to include an issue not mentioned in the beginning, Guillaume offers his opinion that men are far superior to women in love because there is nothing stable or firm about a woman's emotions or beliefs. These anti-feminist statements, he affirms, are endorsed by everyone, and that is why he advanced them in his poem (lines 3009–70).

These views give rise to an outburst which must eventually be settled by the judge, causing Guillaume to admit to some satisfaction and pleasure in seeing the assemblage of ladies so discomfited (lines 3157–62). Doubtance (Wariness) tells the story of Pyramus and Thisbé and Souffissance (Sufficiency) the tale of Hero and Leander as proof of women's capacity to endure. But Guillaume counters with the observation that in the latter case Leander suffered more since he suffered first (once again a somewhat dubious point). Thinking that the debate has continued long enough, the lady now asks the judge to go in private to deliberate. The judge and his advisers then leave, but Guillaume is informed of their proceedings by an attendant at court. Reviewing the aspects of proper judgment, the

advisers condemn Guillaume unanimously. Mesure rebukes Guillaume for daring to debate such a noble and respected personage, for advancing a mistaken opinion, and for offering insufficient and dubious evidence in support of his position. Raison agrees, and when the court has reassembled with the accused, condemns him on these three counts (lines 3767–832). Seeing Guillaume saddened by the outcome, Raison reveals to him the identity of the lady and describes her immense powers; in the tradition of Boethius' *Fortuna*, Bonneürté distributes talents and wisdom to those she favors. Raison's long description of her providence particularly emphasizes the different gifts she accords to clergy and knights (lines 3839–4006). More reconciled to his fate, Guillaume asks to be sentenced, and the judge signifies to him that he owes three amends for his three different faults. Raison and the judge confer about the specifics of the sentence, a meeting which, Guillaume perceives, is somewhat lighthearted. Meanwhile Avis (Discretion) recounts the allegorical meanings of the different parts of Bonneürté's dress (lines 4075–170). The judge then returns to Guillaume and tells him he must compose three lyric poems, of different types, as penance. The poem closes with Guillaume's confession that he has made this poem in order to recognize his fault better and intends to present it to the lady along with his promise of continued service. Guillaume then expresses his desire to complete his penance quickly by composing a lay concerned with love.

In manuscripts B, E, and M the *Lay de Plour* follows the end of the judgment immediately; in F–G and A, the lay either is missing entirely or is found among the other lyric poems.<sup>28</sup> It seems that Machaut initially thought it should follow the narrative poem which is its pre-text but later changed his mind. I have included it as a continuation of the *Navarre*. The reader may judge whether Machaut's original plan is artistically successful or not (I happen to think it is, of which more below).

In assessing the artistic achievement of the *Navarre*, we must, I think, read the poem metafictionally, in the same way the original audience likely did. For we must, as did they, distinguish between the seriousness of Guillaume the character, who resents the accusations of Bonneürté and loses his composure as the trial begins to slip away from him, eventually mouthing, somewhat gleefully, the very anti-feminist statements he declared himself innocent of at the beginning; and the seriousness of Guillaume de Machaut the poet, who with remarkable *sprezzatura* puts his own poetry on trial in a work whose sophistication and finesse equally testify to his commanding, confident talent. The poem playfully treats the relationship of the poet to his *métier* and to his patrons, problematizing the very traditional poetics later enunciated in the *Prologue* by turning the poet's individual control over the content of his works (and the reputation they make or do not make for him) into an issue to be debated. Within the fiction, Guillaume's temerity is roundly condemned, as much, if not more than, the anti-feminism of which he proves himself guilty. But the poem itself testifies to the ways in which Guillaume, as creative source of his works, can forge something entirely new from the givens of tradition, including a different sense in which "poetic identity" can be represented. Focusing on the producing-I, the *Navarre* traces the ways in which authorial intertext, rather than traditional techniques and subject matter, "creates" poetry. The *Behaingne* generates the *Navarre*, which in turn generates the *Lay de Plour*. The audacity here is that Guillaume produces poetry which is intensely self-reflexive, thematizing the discontents of an author controlled by the reader, who consumes his work,

<sup>28</sup> The full list of manuscripts and shelf marks can be found in the Textual Notes on p. 369. N.b., Manuscripts F and G are part of a two-volume set of the complete works.

even as *Navarre* asserts the power of the poet to exceed or contravert the position assigned to him by tradition (i.e., here Guillaume the *writer* not the *lover*, is the main character). For this reason I believe the poet's original plan to have the *Lay de Plour* follow the end of the judgment poem was most effective artistically.

The *Navarre* is unlike all other medieval works in its complex exploration of the poetics of authorship, in its meditations on and comic reduction of the difficulties posed by a literary tradition and its underlying ideology to the creative author.

#### THE LAY DE PLOUR AND THE DEBATE SERIES

Though separate, the two debate poems and their lyric continuation clearly constitute a transtextual series. Machaut intended the two *jugements* to be read together, arranging that in his later collected works' manuscripts; the *Navarre* was presumably moved from after the *Remede* to follow the much earlier *Behaingne* directly. The series features the producing-I, a fictional reflex of the poet who is represented as struggling with the demands (including angry readers) of his chosen profession. The producing-I, however, is also the reflex of a transformed matter. In the transtextual course of the debate series, the *dit amoureux* genre becomes an exploration of authorial experience because the poet's activity is now available as content. This textual series, in large measure a meditation on its own making, is an artifact best accounted for, in a purely formal sense, by modernist theories of self-containment and "spatial form." And yet the impulse toward reflexivity and autotelism, however intriguingly contemporary its structural effects might seem, finds its distinctly late medieval source in the poet's complex connection to his patron and the court. The judgment series confirms Terry Eagleton's view of a literary work's material symptomaticness, the way in which it "bears the impress of its historical mode of production as surely as any product secretes in its form and materials the fashion of its making."<sup>29</sup>

As a structural feature, the figure of the poet who as poet can become his own subject is related to an aspect of the Machaldian oeuvre that has received some important and valuable study from Kevin Brownlee, William Calin, and others: what is usually termed intertextuality. For Brownlee, a key aspect of Machaut's career is the poet's well-documented concern for his collected works and, hence, his reputation:

The arrangement of codices — in the thirteenth century largely the business of scribes . . . becomes with Machaut the business of the poet himself. Indeed the notion of organizing a codex is transferred by Machaut into the organizing of an oeuvre.<sup>30</sup>

And the *Prologue* that Machaut, late in his career, wrote for elaborate collections of his diverse works "involves the establishment of the poetic voice that will be speaking in all the works that follow."<sup>31</sup> A striking feature of some of Machaut's most renowned narrative

<sup>29</sup> Eagleton, *Criticism and Ideology*, p. 48.

<sup>30</sup> Brownlee, *Poetic Identity*, p. 15.

<sup>31</sup> Brownlee, *Poetic Identity*, p. 11.

poems is the manner in which they enfold other texts, particularly lyrical inserts, thus constructing themselves as self-generating or autotextual artistic objects.<sup>32</sup>

These aspects of intertextuality we might term global and textual respectively. They are concerned with the unity established for diverse works by a text that explains their compositional origin, and with the isolation of an individual text from the flow of literary tradition, the establishment of its self-sufficiency through the rhetorical figure of the *mise-en-abyme*. Though in divergent ways, both forms of intertextuality foster a sense of the uniqueness and separateness of Guillaume's artistic efforts. As such, they respond to the literary ideology of the court patronage system, which demanded adherence to traditional forms and materials, even as, by the end of the Middle Ages, that system had begun to encourage the building of an individual literary career by the artist called to make new his culture's literary inheritance.

The judgment series is an unusual if symptomatic response to late medieval literary ideology. In these works it is a question of the ties manufactured between texts in a series, a conception that depends on the ways in which subsequent texts can be understood as answers to previous ones. More than either global or textual intertextuality, such a method of connecting works emphasizes the role of the author, for he can now be imagined — and thus be represented — as a figure who must answer continually for (and hence in some way transform) what he has already written. The *Prologue* offers itself as an ur-text. In it Machaut delineates the hierarchies of creation which have brought about his selection as a creator of new poems (of which the *Prologue* itself, of course, is one). The individual works Machaut composes are imagined as generated by this call. The *Prologue* accounts for the oeuvre as a whole, not for the particularity and sequencing of separate works. The use of lyric inserts as *mises-en-abyme*, in contrast, creates autotexts whose rhetoric of self-generation belies any connection except to their poet-creator. The debate series offers yet another plan, for it imagines the poet in time, involved in a give and take with his patrons and with the literary tradition he serves. The difficult and multi-levelled connections among these three works index the vicissitudes (however fictionalized or idealized) of the poet's career, of creative acts that cannot be represented without reference to their reception (particularly judgments about their doctrinal conformity).

The judgment poems are thus dialogic or “open” in ways which the other works within the Machaut corpus are not. The debate which is the traditional (however modified) content of the *Bhaingne* becomes the form which dictates the conception of the series (i.e., a debate about the debate), as the earlier poem becomes the question debated hypertextually (because the *Navarre* is a response to and modification of the earlier poem) as well as diegetically, because this response is generated self-consciously within the fiction, becomes the thematic matter of the new text.<sup>33</sup> The connection between the two poems cannot be described simply as an instance of intertextuality, as the co-presence of two texts.

The writing of the *Navarre* transforms the meaning of the *Bhaingne*, identifying it as a problematic fulfillment of Guillaume's mission to write love poems with the proper doctrine; the *Navarre*, in fact, becomes a metatext, a commentary in the sense that it opens its hypotext to hermeneutic exploration, “speaking of it” as itself and thereby raising the question of what it says. We might go further and say that the diegetic transformation of

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<sup>32</sup> See Calin, *Poet at the Fountain*.

<sup>33</sup> See essays in Plumley, Di Bacco, and Jossa, eds, *Citation, Intertextuality, and Memory*.

the *Behaingne* within the *Navarre*, the presence of the earlier poem as summarized content, constitutes the reduction of the *Behaingne* to a pretext. Bonneürté's desire is that the earlier poem be thought of as what we might call a disposable pretext, for she wishes its message replaced by a new judgment, by the new poem that her complaint provides the material for and is produced by (for, having poeticized his experiences with Bonneürté, Guillaume dedicates the freshly produced work to her). The *Navarre* itself, in turn, becomes a pretext, the explanatory preface for the *Lay de Plour*, which is the artistic penance called into being through the judgment passed against Guillaume by his patron, the lady, and her courtiers. Here is yet another text generated by a preceding one (in fact, by the two which precede it, since the *Behaingne* furnishes the content to be rewritten). Perhaps even more important, it is called into being by the encounter of the poet with the court, who uphold traditional love doctrine. This relationship is restaged within the debate itself. Ironically and appropriately, the lyric penance recalls the first poem in the series; the lady's complaints from the *Behaingne* are transformed from argument into a lyric complaint, which is a transvestite performance whose true speaker is the poet himself, taking seriously the judge's admonition to see the merits in the female point of view. Here the strident male (and clerical) tones of the narrator's voice from the *Navarre* ventriloquize the sorrows of female experience, but of course, and here is the humor, in an authentically poetic rather than authentically womanly fashion. The feelings evoked in the lyric outburst must be read within the context of the series as evidence of Guillaume's reformation, not as the personal product of emotional experience.

The debate series generates its own tradition. Such a refiguration of the traditional ground of allegorical love vision/debate poetry generates a radically different narrative persona. In the *Navarre*, the "I" that speaks is not the experiencing-I of the *Rose*, nor the clerky narrator of an earlier literary tradition. Instead, it is the producing-I, the self whose experiences with writing texts become the material of yet other texts written by the same self (even, of course, as that self is written by its own texts). In the debate series, tradition becomes the earlier production of the poet; the rewriting that is the court poet's approach to newness becomes directed toward, and contained by, the oeuvre. The poet furnishes himself with a new voice, speaks through and beyond what he has already said, escaping thereby the power of what other writers have done before. At the same time, the *Navarre* constructs the dialogue of reception-production, fictionalizing the imagined negative response of listeners whose disagreement with the author furnishes the ground for a new, corrective series of texts, including the *Navarre* itself. In the debate series, the author's career is not represented as a command to produce which maps itself unproblematically over a series of texts that proceed like spokes from the hub of a wheel. Authorship, instead, is conceived as dialogic (like the texts it generates), as a series of bids and counterbids dependent for its continuation and shape on the answers furnished individual works by their aristocratic consumers.

The *Navarre* makes the reader understand the *Behaingne* as Guillaume's own, original contribution to textual production; and the *Navarre* identifies itself as, first, an exploration of that earlier text and as, finally, a rewriting of it. To put it somewhat differently, the new poem which inevitably transforms the old is required, but not because a tradition, in order to live, must be supported by the continuing production of new texts. The new work is required instead because a previous text has not been found to be the proper kind of rewriting (Guillaume allegedly has violated Love's command never to slander ladies). The *Behaingne* is allegedly nonconformist, unconventional. And so a new text is required to

answer, atone for, and revise the one already composed. In this way, the issue of rewriting, of making a new text from the givens of the love poetry genre, becomes most directly connected to the author's consistency and integrity. It is the producing-I who is therefore both the voice and the theme of the debate series. The doctrine and form of love debate poetry become merely the source of this poem's engagement with the dilemmas and discontents of authorship.

Machaut's playful problematizing of his own role is ultimately humorous. Found guilty of heterodoxy, he is nevertheless not punished by the loss of his authority, his mandate to write; instead, he is simply required to compose more texts. In the repentant poet's hands, even the text of the *Navarre* becomes a gift he might bestow on his angry audience. It is interestingly transformed from a record of his recalcitrance into a monument of his rededication to proper love service, as it changes from a narrative representing experience to a made object, a codex that can be presented. The producing-I who composes the work is ultimately distinct from the beset and confused producing-I whose troubles and stupidity generate it. It is this distinction, figured in the text by the narrator's frequent silence as he witnesses the predicament of his former self, which allows the textual series to function both as an indictment (albeit fictionalized) of Machaut and as a testimony to his inventive skill.

It is thus strangely appropriate that Guillaume is assigned the penance of composing three lyric poems with the correct doctrine. The *Navarre* confirms his authorship in the very act of making amends for its evident and proven deficiencies. The debate series is resolutely open-ended, its second text called into existence by the reception of the first, and the second, in turn, to be replaced by three further texts, whose value is similarly to be determined by Guillaume's readers. The ultimate meaning of the series is the self-generating continuity of authorship, which can only be interrupted by the poet's inability or unwillingness to write more.

Fittingly, the scene at the end of the *Navarre* is echoed by the dramatic encounter of the *Prologue* but with a crucial difference. Here Guillaume accepts the command to write from Bonneürté, just as he agrees to become an author in the *Prologue* at the instance of Nature (Nature) and then Amour. Once again Guillaume humbly takes up the burden of what appears to be social and existential necessity. Like Nature, Bonneürté represents a number of forces. Both figures point toward the fact of patronage, that is, toward the existence of a class whose concerns occasion courtly poetry and who must be pleased by it. At the same time each figure suggests that the poet's calling is a unique, either natural or fortunate, gift which depends on him for its realization and furtherance. The difference is that the *Navarre* conceives authorship dialogically; Bonneürté does not furnish Guillaume with a command, but engages him in a debate. His oeuvre is thus imagined here as a never-ending struggle over the generation of meaning. Guillaume must realize the command he so readily and unproblematically accepts in the *Prologue*, but to do so he must submit to the ultimate authorship of those for whom he writes. Or at least he must apparently do so. The *Navarre*, we must remember, is most likely not an occasional piece, a response to some real attack on Guillaume's abilities and dedication, but rather an ingenious fabrication that allows him to colonize the love poem genre, to transform its content into a pretext and convert the "I" of tradition into its subject matter.

Machaut conflates authorial and emotional experience in the *Navarre*, just as he does in the *Remede*,<sup>34</sup> written during the same period of his career. But there are important differences of structure and rhetoric between the two works. The Boethian poem features a poet-lover whose production of a beautiful lay in honor of his beloved serves as the hypotext for both the love sorrow he suffers and the consolation which, with the aid of the heavenly Hope, he eventually experiences. Similarly, the *Navarre* offers a protagonist whose writing of a poem gets him into difficulty with the lady he is bound to serve faithfully and love. The publication of this text leads to a fractious, nearly damaging debate between him and his lady's twelve damsels, which culminates in his censure. Here the writing which causes difficulty but ultimately leads to happiness is not enfolded within the text; it is a public part of Guillaume's oeuvre. It exists in the *Navarre* only as a short summary. The *Navarre* does not treat the judgment of the earlier poem as a "reality" whose story world it would extend in the manner of a sequel. Instead the earlier judgment is represented as a text for which the author, named as the poet Guillaume de Machaut, is held responsible. The fiction of the *Navarre* is second degree. It has been constructed by the absorption into a later text of that which was extra-textual in an earlier one (i.e., the facts of authorship and reception). There is no question of any coincidence between amorous and authorial experiences because these belong to different layers of textual "reality." Or, to put it another way, we might say that the only experience that the *Navarre* (and by extension the debate series itself) can treat is authorial.

The *Navarre* functions more as metatext than simple transformation. Similarly, the *Lay de Plour*, reverting to a genre in which pure emotionality and its appropriate technical expression are at issue, furnishes a commentary on the *Navarre*. As a lyric, it provides a "correction" that implicitly goes beyond scholastic disputation to the roots of authorial feeling about love experience. An important aspect of the penitential rhetoric of this lyric is that it is a transvestite performance. On the surface at least, the poet's conversion stages, in so far as possible, the abandonment of the gender position Guillaume allegedly adopts in the *Behaingne* and so wrongfully defends in the *Navarre*. Finally, the contextualizing of the lyric implicitly asks the reader to judge it as an important element of the author's career (i.e., as textual evidence of his rededication to the proper service of ladies required of him in the *Prologue*).

At the same time, it is significant that Guillaume "corrects" the error contained in his first judgment by closely repeating central elements of what he had written. If the *Navarre* replaces the *Behaingne*, embodying as a text the wish of lady Bonneürté that the first judgment poem be effaced, the *Lay de Plour* in effect restores the *Behaingne* by containing and transforming it. As a metatext, the lyric reads the earlier judgment "against the grain," emphasizing the elements which had there been improperly marginalized. Furthermore, the reversion to a lyric form at this point in the series allows Guillaume to restage a move made in the *Navarre*. Guillaume's judgment in the *Behaingne* is not proven wrong so much as it never receives an adequate defense from the producing-I, who actually winds up mouthing unquestionably anti-feminist sentiments that clinch the case for the opposition. Similarly, a lyric penance makes it possible for Guillaume to avoid retracting his viewpoint. He accords the emotional turbulence of the sorrowing woman a special place (repressing male unhappiness with female fickleness and betrayal in the process), but the form does not constrain him to admit directly the error of his opinion. The *Lay de Plour* is an

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<sup>34</sup> See Volume 2 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

ironically subversive text, a testimony to Guillaume's obedience as a character to the wishes of his lady, but sly proof as well that Guillaume the author never surrenders final control of his versifying to the powers that he himself has decided to summon into diegetic existence.

The *Lay de Plour* accommodates two different voices, the voice of the producing-I and the voice of the character he recycles in order to further his role as author. The traditional lyric form remains technically intact; but the transtextuality of the debate series, the transformation which links one text to another, has in effect altered the reading strategy which Machaut's courtly audience must adopt to consume it. The poet shifts the rhetoric of the text, making his readers attend more to the work as a poem written by an author to achieve a particular effect than as a pleasing imitation of feeling and grief. Machaut speaks through the simulated emotions of his constructed persona to delineate once again the producing-I, the implied poet whose experience is authorial rather than emotional. The *Lay de Plour* exists to express authorial desire, or, to be precise, the author's desire for authorship; it exists dramatically in the manner of the traditional lyric only to the extent that the producing-I reveals himself as the ultimate voice that speaks it.

#### EDITORIAL POLICY FOR THIS EDITION AND TRANSLATION

##### *Sources*

Unlike most poets of the Middle Ages, Guillaume de Machaut was eager to present to the public his poetical and musical works as a unified oeuvre that would testify, in its breadth and variety, not to mention its demonstrated finesse, to his talent and accomplishment. This understanding of his compositional activities seems, from the evidence, to have occurred to the poet relatively early in his career, but it achieved its most impressive textual form late in his career. Though Machaut's works are sometimes found individually bound with those of other authors (this is especially true of the *Behaingne*, which seems to have enjoyed an unusual popularity), the more authoritative manuscripts offer more or less complete versions of the oeuvre and do not contain works by others. In attempting to establish the best witnesses for Machaut's various works, textual scholars evaluated the surviving manuscripts on the basis of what might be called a "growing contents" theory. Thus, the more complete manuscripts should be thought of as later and hence representative of the poet's final version of his works.<sup>35</sup> In the *Voir Dit*,<sup>36</sup> the character Guillaume de Machaut speaks of the book "where I have put all my compositions" (after line 6281; L33), establishing that there was at least one manuscript whose contents did grow the poet's compilation of fair copies.<sup>37</sup> In the past three decades or so, this theory has been challenged, both as a global explanation of the affiliation of the surviving manuscripts and as a protocol for establishing the "best text" to be used in editions of individual poems.<sup>38</sup> It may well be that one or more of the surviving manuscripts is "incomplete" because its contents were meant to suit the tastes of a particular patron. So

<sup>35</sup> See Hœpffner, I: pp. xliv–lii for an elaborate and persuasive demonstration of this view.

<sup>36</sup> See Volume 5 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

<sup>37</sup> See Williams, "Author's Role," for a full discussion of this issue.

<sup>38</sup> See Keitel, "Musical Manuscripts" and Kibler and Wimsatt, eds, "Machaut's Text."

it follows that the dating and establishment of relative authority must rest on a careful examination of the evidence in each case. However, this does not mean that in deciding on the base text for an edition of an individual work the view that the more complete manuscripts carry no special authority can be laid aside lightly. How these issues affect the editing of the musical texts is discussed in full in the introductory materials of the several volumes of this edition devoted to Machaut's musical production.

The poems of Machaut are found either individually or in groups in seventy-three manuscripts that have either survived or can be postulated with some certainty.<sup>39</sup> Here follows a list of the five that include Machaut's last major work, the *Prise*, and thus seem to extend their completeness to the end of his active career:

A	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 1584
B	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 1585
E	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 9221
F–G	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MSS 22545–6
Vg	<i>olim</i> Marquis de Vogüé; now Ferrell 1, Parker Library, Cambridge

An earlier manuscript that lacks the final two major dits — the *Voir Dit* and the *Prise* — as well as the *Prologue*, but which, for a number of reasons carries considerable authority for the early works, is:

C	Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, fonds français MS 1586
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Of the five later, complete works manuscripts, only A and F–G include a full version of the *Prologue* that Machaut wrote late in his career to serve as a literary explanation of why he devoted himself to the composition of verse and music. B includes a short, perhaps preliminary version of the *Prologue*. Vg lacks not only the *Prologue*, but some of the shorter works of Machaut's later career, and even though it does contain the *Prise*, it lacks the *Voir Dit*. While, like Vg, E lacks some of the short, later *dits*, it does include full versions of both the *Voir Dit* and the *Prise*. C lacks the *Navarre*.

A, E, and F–G undoubtedly relate closely to one another, but direct affiliations are difficult to establish. Of the three, A and F–G may well have been copied from the same source, but these two manuscripts do not regularly agree with Vg, B, and E, as one might expect in such a case. E sometimes furnishes readings superior to those of A and F–G. We can hardly doubt that A, E, and F–G are no more than one or two removes from Machaut's own fair copy, which, it is entirely possible, he may have edited during the preparation of these omnibus manuscripts. The fact that two substantial passages of the *Behaingne* have apparently been excised from A, and that these lacunae cannot be accounted for as scribal error or other material reasons (such as a missing folio), raises the strong possibility of authorial intervention in the preparation of this manuscript which, as shall become evident, we have other good reasons to believe was copied and assembled under the supervision of the poet himself. In any case, "authorized" versions of the different works may have circulated in different "final" forms. For this reason, the principle of common error cannot be invoked with any certainty in establishing a "correct reading."

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<sup>39</sup> See Earp, *A Guide to Research*, for full details.

A has consistently, if not exclusively, been preferred by Machaut's literary (if not musical) editors because it offers reliable, if hardly error-free versions of his various texts. Ernest Hœpffner, Machaut's first modern, scientific editor, merits quoting on this point:

In so far as the establishment of the text is concerned, priority must be given to the most complete manuscripts which contain in one form or another the last redaction of the works of Machaut, the definitive forms that the author wished to give them: A and F–G.<sup>40</sup>

A bears an additional cachet that distinguishes it absolutely from F–G. Its index is headed by a rubric, unique among all the Machaut manuscripts, that reads “Vesci lordenance que Guillaume de Machaut wet qil ait en son livre” (This is the arrangement that Guillaume de Machaut wishes his book to have). If we interpret “ordenance” more broadly to mean something like “form,” this rubric might be understood as a testimony to the authenticity of the manuscript's witness to the author's intentions. Furthermore, the miniatures in *grisaille* throughout the body of the manuscript seem to be of provincial design, perhaps executed in Reims under the poet's supervision.<sup>41</sup> For these reasons, A has been selected as the base manuscript for the edition of the poetic works. Since there are compelling reasons to think it offers the best witness to Machaut's final intentions, the editorial policy adopted here accords priority to A in all matters. The two works in this volume are presented in fairly error-free form in A, and minor grammatical “errors” (if that is what they are) have been allowed to stand, while spelling variations have not been regularized. Obvious miswritings of various kinds (as opposed to misspellings, in so far as these two categories can be distinguished) have been noted and corrected. The several lacunae in the text of the *Behaingne* have been supplied from C; in the case of the two larger passages of this kind, the reader is invited to speculate on whether the cut-down or full version of the poem is the artistically superior. Accents, including the dieresis (or umlaut), are supplied to the original text; words written together that are normally separate are separated; abbreviations are expanded, but manuscript numerals are allowed to stand; u/v as well as i/j are treated in the modern fashion, with /v/ and /j/ reserved for consonantal use; capitalization follows modern practice, and the separation of initial letters from the first words in poetic lines has been abandoned. With these exceptions, the French text presented here is essentially the same as it appears in manuscript A, but of course with modern punctuation.

The facing English translations serve two quite different purposes which, in practice, have not always proved possible to reconcile. On the one hand, the English version is a guide for those reading the original, who might glance at it for assistance with a difficult construction or unfamiliar word. For such readers, the most useful translation is a version in which each French expression is rendered by an appropriate English equivalent. Basic syntactical and grammatical similarities between Middle French and Modern English make such translation possible, though often the result is awkward or unidiomatic. On the other hand, the translation also serves those with no knowledge of Middle French, for whom the best introduction to Machaut's poetry is a modern English version that reproduces not only the meaning of the original, but something of its style, though the version offered here

<sup>40</sup> Hœpffner, I:1.

<sup>41</sup> See Leo's “An Art Historical Overview” in the following section for further discussion of this important point.

does not pretend to equal the elegance of the original. Most lines of the translation do correspond to those in the original. To produce easily readable English, however, I have sometimes not been guided by Machaut's syntax. No attempt has been made to reproduce the rhyming octosyllabic couplets of the *Navarre* or the stanzaic form of the *Behaingne*.<sup>42</sup>

### *Music*

The musical reading of the *Lay de Plour* presented here follows A alone; even where adjustments are required from that reading, they are made here without recourse to any other manuscript sources (for details of such instances, see the notes to the music, p. 377). By adhering closely to our base source and integrating illuminations from it, we offer a snapshot of a single tradition of transmission. Combining music and image into the text in their original positions enables the reader to appreciate the richness and subtlety of this tradition. As a consequence, the musical edition offered here is subtly different from its counterpart in Volume 10: *The Lays*, where the weight of evidence from the other manuscript sources sometimes calls for the adjustment of the reading from the base source, even where the version stated in our base source is also technically viable. A full list of the musical variants will be presented there, while the textual variants will appear in Volume 8: *The Lyrics I*.

In the score presented here, sharps and flats appearing above the stave are editorial. Brackets distinguish between more and less controversial suggestions. Detailed discussion of our editorial policy will appear in the music volumes of this complete edition. Further discussion about editorial approaches can be found on our project website, along with accompanying tailored scores and illustrative sound clips made by The Orlando Consort and Le Basile; <http://machaut.exeter.ac.uk>.

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<sup>42</sup> Machaut's versification is discussed fully in the introduction to Volume 7: *The Lyrics I* of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.



## BNF, FR. 1584: AN ART HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

BY DOMENIC LEO<sup>1</sup>

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With 154 miniatures in partially tinted and gilded *grisaille*, an appended bifolium with two large miniatures by the renowned Master of the Bible of Jean de Sy, and an “original” index, manuscript A, BnF, fr. 1584, ranks as one of the three most luxurious, complete-work manuscripts of Guillaume de Machaut’s oeuvre, which were made in his lifetime.<sup>2</sup> Beyond MS A’s importance to Machaut studies in general, however, it holds a special place in art historical scholarship. The first two images for the *Prologue* are deservedly recognized as masterpieces of late-fourteenth-century French manuscript illumination.<sup>3</sup> They are as remarkable for the artist’s spectacular command of his medium as for his sophisticated and creative iconography.

The identification of the artists who painted in MS A is a critical issue. I believe there are five. Until now, it has been commonly accepted, based on the groundbreaking work of François Avril, that there are two artists: the well-known Jean de Sy Master who painted the two *Prologue* images; and the primary and otherwise unknown artist responsible for the main body of miniatures, the “Machaut Master.” The latter’s iconography is sometimes novel and nearly always inventive, making up for his maladroit style. Avril, foremost among the art historians to have analyzed MS A, wrote that, “[a]lthough this volume shows a strong stylistic kinship with other illuminated manuscripts executed for the court, it may

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<sup>1</sup> A fully expanded version of this essay with color images can be found on the website for *The Works of Guillaume de Machaut: Music, Image, Text in the Middle Ages* (<http://machaut.exeter.ac.uk/>).

<sup>2</sup> Henceforth, the Jean de Sy Master. Two other manuscripts were painted during Machaut’s lifetime. Manuscript C (BnF, ms. fr. 1586), of the mid to late 1340s, was in the collection of Charles, duke of Normandy, by 1363; Earp, *Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut Manuscript*, pp. 34–38, especially p. 31n20; Earp, *A Guide to Research*, 77–79; and Leo, “The Pucellian School,” pp. 153–63. The Ferrell-Vogüé manuscript (MS Vg), of the 1370s, was in the duc de Berry’s collection; on patronage see Earp, *Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut Manuscript*, especially pp. 38–44, and Leo, “Art-historical Commentary,” p. 126. Two other complete-work, heavily illustrated manuscripts were painted posthumously. MS F-G (BnF, ms. fr. 22545–22546), was painted in the early 1390s. See Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 90–92; Earp, *Ferrell-Vogüé Machaut Manuscript*, p. 38n72; and the forthcoming research on patronage by Plumley and Smilansky, “A Courtier’s Quest.” Manuscript E (BnF, ms. fr. 9921), of the 1390s, was also in the duc de Berry’s collection; see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 92–94. The latest manuscript, Pm (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library M. 396), of c. 1425–30 is a partial complete-works manuscript; its iconographic program closely follows that of MS A. On MS Pm, see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 101–02; and Drobinsky, “Recyclage et création.”

<sup>3</sup> On the *Prologue*, see Drobinsky, “*Peindre, pourtruire, escrire*,” pp. 553–69; Perkinson, *The Likeness of the King*, pp. 218–31; and for an expansive analysis devoted to these two miniatures, see Leo, “The Beginning is the End.” Leach, *Secretary, Poet, Musician*, pp. 87–103, has fused Leo and Perkinson’s interpretations in her own important discussions of the *Prologue*.

have been illustrated in Reims . . . by a local illuminator who worked under the poet's direction.”<sup>4</sup> In the 1981 exhibition catalogue for *Les fastes du gothique*, Avril added that the Machaut Master's style fits well within a group of manuscripts from the East of France, possibly Metz, that date to the third quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>5</sup> But, apart from the Parisian sartorial finesse, there is no indication that this was made for the court. The comparison of the Machaut Master's style to that of Eastern France in general, or Reims in particular, remains highly problematic.<sup>6</sup>

Some scholars follow Avril's comparison of MS A to a French translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* from Metz, though there is no substantial stylistic link between these manuscripts.<sup>7</sup> The artist of the Boethius manuscript uses a bold palette with a preponderance of brick red and orange whereas the artists of the Machaut manuscript use an elegant *grisaille*. Moreover, the *retardataire* style in the Boethius manuscript is most obvious, relatively speaking, in the cursory treatment of the drapery folds, the crude execution of the faces, and the ubiquitous use of figures with the so-called Gothic sway, an exaggerated *contrapposto*. In addition, although it is possible to recognize styles in general from Lorraine and Champagne c. 1300, is there a style specific to Reims in the 1360s and 1370s?<sup>8</sup>

The foundation of the Machaut Master's stylistic vocabulary is the adept use of *grisaille* for figures, buildings, plants, and animals. He uses contrasts between lighter and darker shades of gray for modeling but sharply defined grays and black to give the architectural components a three-dimensional appearance. The use of a heavy silhouette for the figures contrasts with the backgrounds, which are devoid of decoration (with the exception of the *Prise* frontispiece), and flattens the images. Certain elements of his style are fresh and spontaneous, as is his use of *portait à l'encre* tinting. He sparingly applies translucent washes of colored ink for more delicate modeling. To focus attention on the more important images, especially frontispiece images, he uses densely saturated colors; for example, the *Prise* and the highly detailed artwork of the opening image for the *Dit de la Rose* (*The Tale of the Rose*). In his more finished work, he relies on a sharp, fine black line to pick out details, most apparent in the strands of hair and the outlines of the eyes.<sup>9</sup>

The Machaut Master was proficient in his trade, and quite inventive. The iconographer, no matter if it was the painter or another person, was well-read, and the *Roman de la rose*, the *Bible historiale*, and the *Ovide moralisé* figure prominently in the images. As the *Ovide moralisé* was the visual source for mythological tales in, for example,

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<sup>4</sup> Avril, *Manuscript Painting*, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup> Avril, *Les Fastes du gothique*, p. 329, writes that this style “présente un caractère plus spontané et certains traits provinciaux qui cadrent bien avec la production de l'Est de la France telle qu'elle nous est connue par les manuscrits messins du milieu et troisième quart du siècle.”

<sup>6</sup> This does not, however, preclude the possibility that MS A was illustrated in this city by an artist trained elsewhere.

<sup>7</sup> Montpellier, Bibliothèque de la Faculté de Médecine, MS H. 43. Notably Leach, *Secretary, Poet, Musician*, writes that “[the Montpellier manuscript] is a close match for the *style* of the *rest of A*” (original emphases, p. 96).

<sup>8</sup> See Avril, *L'Art au temps des rois maudits*, pp. 313–24.

<sup>9</sup> The Machaut Master uses this type of black line for Lady Fortune and the texts on the wheels she holds.

*Fonteinne*, so too did the *Bible historiale* provide the iconographic programs for the lengthy biblical stories used as exempla in the *Confort*.<sup>10</sup> Surprisingly, the artist demonstrates an intimate familiarity with Machaut's texts. He used pre-existing iconographic moduli from well-known sources when Machaut did the same with citations which derive from pre-existing sources in the text. For example, Machaut and the Machaut Master mined the *Roman de la rose*. This is most obvious in the highly finished opening image for the *Dit de la Rose*, where a cleric leans over a wattle-and-daub fence to pluck a large rose in the midst of a thorny bush (fol. 365v, A150). In a more subtle fashion, the artist visually cites *Rose* miniatures in the opening images of three of the dits, thereby highlighting Machaut's use of a dream vision construct. In the opening miniatures for the *Vergier*, *Behaingne*, and *Lyon*, the narrator discovers, enters, and enjoys a garden: the very heart of the *Rose*.<sup>11</sup> Meradith McMunn writes that “[t]he artist of MS A clearly uses the same imagery, figure placement, and postures that appear frequently in *Rose* manuscripts and it is very plausible that he is deliberately referring to *Rose* images.”<sup>12</sup>

The Machaut Master created new imagery for Machaut's ever-growing body of poetry and music. The *Voir Dit*, for example, a late work, appears for the first time in MS A and the artist produced a rich body of innovative iconography. For example, he transformed an image of God creating land from a cloud-like mass in the frontispiece of an *Ovide moralisé* (Lyon, BM MS 742, fol. 1), into an erotic scene where Venus uses a perfumed cloud to envelop the narrator and his beloved who lie next to each other on a bed (fol. 255r, A130).<sup>13</sup>

Another artist, Hand 2, whose work only appears once, painted a man courting a woman in a large initial *L* on fol. 367r (A152), the first folio of a quire with the lays (L1, *Loyauté, que point ne delay*).<sup>14</sup> In keeping with the lyrics, a suppliant nobleman prepares to kneel, offering his folded hands in a sign of fealty and homage to his “liege.”<sup>15</sup> He is dressed in a lovingly rendered depiction of period fashion. The woman coyly looks back at the nobleman, elegantly holding her right hand high in a gesture usually associated with conversation. At odds with the painting style used throughout MS A, this artist produced

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, the tale of Ceyx and Alcyone in the *Fonteinne* (fol. 157d–159v, A82–88) and the story of Susannah and the Elders in *Confort* (fol. 127v–129d, A54–60). For a discussion of Machaut's use of Ovid in the *Voir Dit*, see Blumenfeld-Kosinski, *Reading Myth*, pp. 130–70; and Mühlethaler, “Entre amour et politique.” Drobinsky has worked extensively on the *Ovide moralisé* and its influence on illuminated Machaut manuscripts; see “Eros, Hypnos et Thanatos,” and “Amants péris en mer,” (for the latter, plates VI–IX are *hors-texte*).

<sup>11</sup> Respectively: fol. 1r, A4; fol. 9c, A8; fol. 80v, A25.

<sup>12</sup> I am very grateful to Meradith McMunn who gave invaluable insight, via private communication, into the visual rapport between opening images.

<sup>13</sup> The convention for depicting a couple having intercourse shows them under the covers. Jacques Boogaart, private communication, points out that the artist is not following the text, in which Toute Belle is nude, wearing nothing “fors que les oeuvres de nature” [except what Nature had provided] (line 4022).

<sup>14</sup> On this lay, see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 338–39.

<sup>15</sup> This iconography is represented by a vassal or knight who kneels before a king or lord who, in turn, places his hands over the knight's. See Ladner, *Images and Ideas*, who discusses “commendation”: “a sign of surrender connoting dependence, trust and fidelity” (pp. 220–21). For a detailed study of this iconography, see Carré, *Le baiser sur la bouche*, pp. 188–91.

an extremely fine miniature painted in the Parisian style. The artist uses a distinctive, thin, red-brown line to render their faces and hair. These portions are delicately modeled rather than heavily silhouetted.<sup>16</sup>

Hand 3, whose work only appears in the *Mass*, paints with a heavy line, which is reminiscent of a woodblock print. Despite the strokes of gray washes used for modeling, the images remain quite flat. This artist's most easily identifiable contribution comprises two historiated initials, both in the Agnus Dei of Machaut's *Mass* (fol. 449v).

#### *The Artists of the Prise Frontispiece*

The Machaut Master was fully capable of painting in a relatively finer style than that which predominates in the body of MS A. The best example is the dense composition on the opening page for the *Prise* (fol. 309, A 149). It is an ambitious, two column miniature, complete with bar extenders and marginalia.

Another artist painted a peacock in the right margin. His use of brilliantly colored green and blue washes and refined style demonstrates a command of the medium which appears nowhere else in MS A. The peacock may represent Juno, to whom the bird is sacred. The elderly man with shoulder-length white hair and a long beard in the historiated initial may be the work of another artist, as is evidenced by his treatment of the mouth as a single line making a “frown” with a red line transecting it in the middle. Furthermore, the colors of the background in the historiated initial and surrounding frame are not used elsewhere in MS A. The man in the initial cannot be Pierre de Lusignan, who wears a crown and wields a hatchet in the miniature. He is most likely Saturn, who plays an important role in the *Prise*, overseeing and directing the pantheon of Roman deities in the text (lines 169–180).<sup>17</sup> The lions on the lower bar extender and the butterfly above speckled with red, blue, and green, however, are the work of the Machaut Master. On the opening page of the *Prise*, the lion at left is a flip-side version of one on fol. 227, and the lion at right is a “finished” version of the sketch on the same folio. This treatment is a strong indicator that this quire was originally intended to stand on its own. Do the lions indicate a manuscript destined for royalty?

The Machaut Master took great care in painting this complex, crowded miniature. But who was responsible for the many roles necessary to create this manuscript? The sloppy application of the matte coral background may be a sign of hastiness. It is unique in MS A. Was it meant to be gilded? Perhaps, but a close observation reveals feathery, orange *rinceaux*. In sharp contrast to the amount of effort the Machaut Master expended to create the complex composition of the large miniature, the secondary decorative elements were finished hastily. The multi-colored sycamore leaves sprouting from the bar extenders do not relate in any manner to the sharply pointed leaves painted in *grisaille* on all other folios in the manuscript. This is a certain indication that the artist(s) responsible for this portion of the painting was pressed for time.

<sup>16</sup> See Earp, “Scribal Practice,” p. 171n129, who discusses this initial in terms of *mise-en-page*, stating that it was drawn too large to allow for the entry of music, and therefore the original line of text had to be erased and moved lower to accommodate a small staff. This error demonstrates that the decoration was done *before* the entry of music in this manuscript.

<sup>17</sup> I thank Jacques Boogart, private communication, for his identification of the peacock and elderly man.

### *The Master of the Bible of Jean de Sy*

The most refined work in MS A is by the well-known Jean de Sy Master, who painted on an appended bifolium at the head of the manuscript; perhaps his greatest and, surely, his most famous work of art (fols. E/A1 and D/A2).<sup>18</sup> He was active c. 1355–c.1380, although his most demanding works were in the late 1360s and throughout the 1370s.<sup>19</sup> He painted in at least fourteen major manuscripts during this period, and, based on the provenance of extant manuscripts, worked exclusively for the aristocracy.<sup>20</sup> The Jean de Sy Master's delicate creations and complex iconography are almost always fresh, unpredictable, and unique. His presence, in and of itself, and the superior quality of his work in MS A, are clearly signifiers of royal patronage.

### *The Prologue*<sup>21</sup>

Near the end of a very long life and career, Machaut wrote a narrative poem entitled the *Prologue*.<sup>22</sup> It is now in two parts at the head of MS A; the first is a mistakenly inverted, appended bifolium on which there are two large miniatures painted by the Jean de Sy Master.<sup>23</sup> They accompany the first, lyric section of this poem. The second part is the work of the Machaut Master. The Jean de Sy Master's images create a visual counterpart to Machaut's new text., exposing the breadth and complexity of his musico-literary creations and operating as “portraits” of him.<sup>24</sup> For Charles V, these images would have preserved the face, accomplishments, and artistry of Machaut as a coveted possession of the *patrimoine* (and, no doubt, a cherished memory of his mother, Bonne de Luxembourg).

### *Dating MS A*

Manuscript A was painted in the 1370s, ostensibly making it the last manuscript that Machaut himself may have supervised. Although Machaut's *Dit de la fleur de lis et de la marguerite* (*The Tale of the Lily and the Daisy*) and the *Prise* provide a *terminus post quem* of c. 1370, the assembly of separate fascicles may have been executed before, during, or after

<sup>18</sup> These images in the *Prologue* in MS A run “backward” because the folio was mistakenly inverted at one point in time, and it is still in that order. Hence, fols. E and D – A1 and A2 (in this order), are Earp’s numbers. On the foliation, see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 145–46, 203–05.

<sup>19</sup> The Jean de Sy Master painted miniatures in another complete-works Machaut manuscript, MS Vg, where he headed a large and varied atelier. See Leo, “Art-historical Commentary,” pp. 98–101.

<sup>20</sup> For a list of period manuscripts, including many painted by him, see Leo, “The Pucellian School,” especially pp. 167–68.

<sup>21</sup> The *Prologue* will be discussed in detail in a subsequent volume.

<sup>22</sup> On the foliation and placement of the *Prologue*, see Earp, “Scribal Practice,” p. 344; Earp, *A Guide to Research*, pp. 87–88; and Roccati, “Guillaume de Machaut.”

<sup>23</sup> The title may not be his since its first and only appearance is in the later MS E; see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, p. 203.

<sup>24</sup> The use of the term “portrait” here will be discussed in following volumes with the *Prologue* and the *Voir Dit*.

this date (and Machaut's death in 1377).<sup>25</sup> Elements of fashion in the *Prologue* look forward to a new trend for men. Love's child, *Dous Penser* (Sweet Thought), is wearing a tightly fitted, very short doublet (*pourpoint*) padded as was the style over the chest. This figure's clothing has a subtle, surprising development. Normally the sleeve is fitted from shoulder to wrist with buttons to the elbow, as in the main body of MS A. But *Dous Penser*'s doublet is blousy from shoulder to elbow, at which point it is tight to the wrist. This looks forward to a new fashion trend — where sleeves are blousy up to the wrist (*bombards*) — for men that began in the second half of the 1380s.

#### *Authorial Presence and Patronage*

One of the most contested topics in Machaut studies is the possibility that the poet himself played a role in the creation of the manuscripts with his complete works, particularly manuscripts C and A. An inscription at the head of the index — *Vesci l'ordenance que G. De Machau wet qu'il ait en son livre* (This is the order that G. de Machaut wants to have in his book) — suggests authorial presence in the creation of MS A, whether or not it was finished according to Machaut's instructions while he was alive or after his death in 1377.<sup>26</sup> The complex image-text-music rapport in the earlier MS C (c. 1350–c. 1356), which has folios incorporating all three elements — as well as an exceptionally high quality of the illumination, flourishing, and script — all point toward Machaut's guidance. Did Machaut play any role in making MS A? I believe he was involved, but to what degree I remain uncertain. Was the footwork involved in creating an illuminated manuscript in Paris, so well documented by Richard Rouse and Mary Rouse, reduced to production within one atelier in Reims, and eventually fueled by a single person's mental negotiations, namely Machaut himself?<sup>27</sup> It would certainly not be a new practice. And what precludes assigning the “compilation” to a date after Machaut's death? There was surely an interaction with the Jean de Sy Master, ostensibly living and working in Paris, at a late date in MS A's production. So why make Machaut's death in 1377 a *terminus ante quem*?

Anne Walters Robertson<sup>28</sup> and Sylvia Huot are proponents of authorial presence in MS A, the latter writing that “[t]he codices of Machaut and Froissart were almost certainly organized by the authors themselves; Machaut may well also have designed, or at least influenced, programs of illumination for his works.”<sup>29</sup> Using reception theory in part, Deborah McGrady, writes that “all lines of research point . . . to the vicinity of Reims where Machaut resided or . . . to an academic or cleric community.”<sup>30</sup> For example, she writes that “the material quality of [MS A] points to the idea that [the codex] was produced for a

<sup>25</sup> Lyon, 1342; Navarre, 1349; Alerion, before c. 1350; Confort, 1357; Fonteinne, 1360–61; Voir Dit, 1363–65; Marguerite, 1364–69; Lys, 1369; Prise, after 1369.

<sup>26</sup> See Earp, *A Guide to Research*, p. 87, in his detailed description of MS A. On the “Index,” most recently, see Leach, *Secretary, Poet, Musician*, pp. 86–87n3–4 and McGrady, *Controlling Readers*, pp. 88–105.

<sup>27</sup> Rouse and Rouse, *Manuscripts and Their Makers*, 1:261–84.

<sup>28</sup> Robertson, *Guillaume de Machaut and Reims*, p. 143.

<sup>29</sup> Huot, *From Song to Book*, p. 211 and especially p. 211n.

<sup>30</sup> McGrady, *Controlling Readers*, p. 83.

reader like Machaut.”<sup>31</sup> But McGrady does not take into account the Jean de Sy Master’s *Prologue* images, a certain stylistic signifier for royal ownership, thus precluding the possibility that MS A was ever intended for or kept in a cathedral library.

At present, I will have achieved my goal if this art-historical based study of MS A opens gateways for future scholars seeking out new interpretations of images, iconography, production, reception, patronage, and authorial presence. This in many ways defines the purpose and function of this project’s massive undertaking whereby new translations and editions of texts and music will become available to all. For now, many of my insights and theories must remain hypothetical, speculative, sometimes provocative, and purposely open-ended. Above all, they are meant to foster interdisciplinary work which will incorporate new findings and broaden our horizons.

#### ILLUSTRATION COMMENTARIES

##### *Le Jugement dou roy de Behaingne*

The opening image for this poem includes the key elements describing the *locus amoenus* in the text: an enclosed garden, a stream, a tower, and a bird atop a tree [A8]. The narrator’s identity, however, is blurred because he is dressed as a cleric and not a lover, as he describes himself in the text. The introduction to the crux of this poem begins on line 41. At this point the narrator first sees a knight approaching him on one side and a lady on the other, placing him in the area where they would converge. With his customary attention to detail, the artist has followed the text exactly in the second miniature [A9]. On the right, we see the knight, the lady, and her handmaid — even her small dog. At left, the artist has delicately painted three different types of trees. From an image-text perspective, the artist has captured the crucial moment when the narrator reveals himself (line 1215). The group, hands raised in astonishment, sees that the narrator is hiding amidst an area filled by leaves. The artist underscored the comedic element by showing only the narrator’s head popping out from the vantage point. This also comments more deeply on the hierarchy of roles here, as the emphasis will be on the narrator’s thoughts. His gendered body is obliterated by the forest, and his physical position is nearly as low as the dog’s. In fact, he uses the dog as a means of meeting the group, returning it to the lady.

This is a clear commentary on the role that the narrator will play in the poem. He will be an arbitrator of love, but only as a pale reflection of the king’s own role as magistrate. As the narrator defers judgment to the king, so too the king initially defers to the allegories Honor, Courtesy, Youth, Love, and Wealth. In the third miniature, the king is positioned frontally, a stiff figure seated on a throne [A10]. This symmetrical composition heightens the sense that the king is in perpetual stasis, a godlike figurehead, an eternally just persona, unlike the knight and the lady. This composition is unusual within this artist’s repertoire in MS A, and to some degree in contemporary manuscript illumination. It is meaningful, however, in relation to the image of Love in the *Vergier* [A5] and God in the *Confort* [A53]. In the first, Love sits on a tree in a frontal pose, holding an arrow and a torch; ladies and men flank him. This forefronts his power. The second miniature depicts God in his majesty. He sits on an invisible throne surrounded by clouds. His direct gaze engages the viewer. He is invested with regal and spiritual iconographic elements. As God,

<sup>31</sup> McGrady, *Controlling Readers*, p. 82.

he has a cruciform nimbus and blesses (the viewer) with one hand. In the other, he holds an orb surmounted by a cross, a sign of his rule over heaven and earth. By creating compositional cross-references, the artist forefronts the king's authority.<sup>32</sup>

The final miniature shows the moment where the king makes his judgment [A11]. His gesture of tapping his left index finger on the palm of his right hand clarifies this reading. The lady and knight, both with their right hands on their hips, make two different gestures, perhaps the artist's way of portraying the outcome of the judgment in the knight's favor. The knight holds his hand up as if in conversation and the lady holds her hand over her breast, a touching means of conveying the wound in her heart.

*Le Jugement dou roy de Navarre*

There is only one image for the *Navarre*. It shows a meditative man looking out from his window with his hands crossed on the sill [A12]. Instead of taking an enjoyable walk in a lovely garden on a fine spring day, the narrator has sequestered himself indoors. This inventive manner of “creating a mood” to reflect the narrator’s long-winded passages on the ills of the world attests to the artist’s skill.

NOTES ON ILLUSTRATIONS

This system follows the format in Earp, *A Guide to Research*.

1. Earp #
2. (fol. #)
3. Insertion point / line number — the image is above the line in question.
4. Rubrics, unless otherwise noted, are above the image.

For example: A35 (fol. 2r) line 290: “The narrator writes a ballade.”

To identify the placement of the miniature(s) on a single folio:

- a: Column 1, recto
- b: Column 2, recto
- c: Column 3, verso
- d: Column 4, verso

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<sup>32</sup> Although the king is shown seated on a throne in the miniature, the text reads: “[The king] Was seated / In very great contentment on a silk rug” (lines 1472–73). It is on line 1493 that we read that the king was “enthroned.”

## ILLUSTRATIONS

N.B.: All miniatures are from manuscript A, BnF, fr. 1584, and reproduced with permission of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.

*Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne* [4]

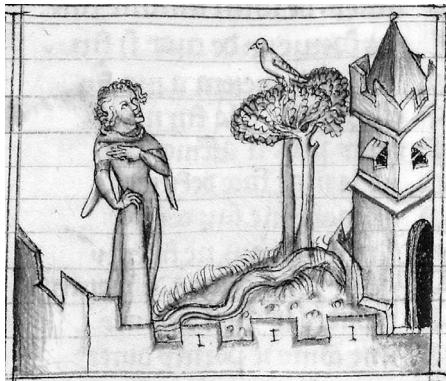
1. A8 (fol. 9r) Line 1; *Ci après commence le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne*. The Narrator, dressed as a cleric, stands in a lovely garden close to a castle with a stream; his hand to his heart as he watches a songbird atop a tree.
2. A9 (fol. 9d) Line 41; The narrator, hidden in bushes, is seen by the lady, with her handmaiden and dog, and the knight.
3. A10 (fol. 16v) Line 1185; The lady and fashionably-attired knight flank the King of Bohemia. The king is bearded and has long hair; he is wearing a crown and his garment is vaguely reminiscent of a toga. As with the depiction of God in Majesty (fol. 127b) in *Confort* and the enthroned Lady in *Le Dit de la Harpe* (*The Tale of the Harp*) (fol. 176v), he is depicted frontally, sitting on a throne with lion-head terminals.<sup>33</sup> The figures to each side gesture, denoting conversation, and the king raises his right hand as a priest would in blessing.
4. A11 (fol. 18v) Line 1509; The lady and knight stand at left with hands raised; the king, seated on a fabric-draped throne, taps his left finger in his right palm, as if meting out his decision.

*Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre* [1]

5. A12 (fol. 22v) Line 1; *Ci après commence le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre contre le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne*. Guillaume leans out the window of a castle.

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<sup>33</sup> For a full description of *Le Dit de la Harpe* with extensive bibliography, see Earp, *A Guide to Research*, p. 223.



**Figure 1.** A8 (fol. 9r); *Ci après commence le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne.* [Here begins the Judgment of the King of Bohemia.] The Narrator stands in a garden. (Photo: BnF)



## LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE BEHAINGNE

fol. 9v Au temps pascour que toute riens s'esgaie,  
 Que la terre de mainte colour gaie  
 Se cointoie, dont pointure sans plaie  
     Sous la mamelle  
 5      Fait Bonne Amour a mainte dame bele,  
     A maint amant et a mainte pucelle;  
     Dont il ont puis mainte lie nouvelle  
         Et maint esmay,  
     A ce dous temps, contre le mois de may,  
 10     Par un matin cointement m'acesmay,  
     Com cils qui tres parfaitement amay  
         D'amour seüre.  
     Et li jours fu attemprez par mesure,  
     Biaus, cleris, luisans, nés et purs, sans froidure.  
 15     La rousee par dessus la verdure  
         Resplendissoit  
     Si clerement que tout m'esbloïssoit  
     Quant mes regars celle part guenchissoit,  
     Pour le soleil qui dessus reluisoit.  
 20     Et cil oisel,  
     Pour la douceur dou joli temps nouvel,  
     Si liement et de si grant revel  
     Chantoint tui que j'alay a l'appel  
         De leur dous chant.  
 25     Si en choisi en l'air .i. voletant  
     Qui dessus tous s'en aloit glatissant:  
     “Ocy! Oci!” Et je le sievi tant  
         Qu'en .i. destour,  
     Sus .i. ruissel, pres d'une bele tour  
 30     Ou il avoit maint arbre et mainte flour



## THE JUDGMENT OF THE KING OF BOHEMIA

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At Eastertide, when every creature rejoices,  
When the earth with many a gay color  
Adorns herself, when Good Love leaves no wound but  
Pierces

5      The breasts of many pretty ladies,  
Lovers, and young girls  
(And this brings them many  
    New joys and many cares),

At this sweet time, close to the month of May,  
10     One morning I elegantly arrayed myself,  
In the fashion of a man who loved most perfectly  
    With a constant love.

And the day was just balmy enough,  
Beautiful, clear, sunny, crisp and pure, without a chill.

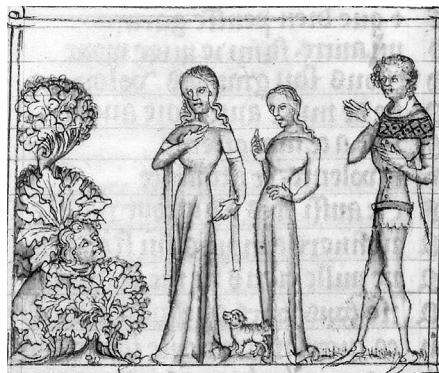
15     The dew on the greenery  
    Was shimmering  
So brightly it completely blinded me  
Whenever I looked upon it  
Because of the sun shining down from above.

20     And the birds,  
For the sake of the sweetness in that joyous new season,  
Happily and with such grand celebration  
Were all singing, so I moved to the call  
    Of their sweet song.

25     Then I spied one among them in flight  
Who soared above the others crying:  
“Ocy! Ocy!” And I followed him until  
    In a solitary byway

Above a stream, close by a beautiful tower,  
30     Where there were many trees and flowers

Souëf flairant, de diverse coulour,  
 S'ala seoir.  
 Lors me laissay tout belement cheoir  
 Et me coiti si bien, a mon povoir,  
 35      Sous les arbres, qu'il ne me pot veoir,  
             Pour escouter  
 Le tres dous son de son joli chanter.  
 Si me plut tant en oïr deliter  
 Son dous chanter, que jamais raconter  
 40      Ne le porroie.



**Figure 2.** A9 (fol. 9d); The lady and the knight see the narrator. (Photo: BnF)

Mais tout einsi, com je me delitoie  
 En son tres dous chanter que j'escoutoie,  
 Je vi venir par une estroite voie,  
     Pleinne d'erbette,  
 45      Une dame pensant, toute seulette  
 Fors d'un chiennet et d'une pucelette.  
 Mais bien sambloit sa maniere simplette  
     Pleinne d'anoy.  
 Et d'autre part, un petit long de moy,  
 50      Uns chevaliers de moult tres noble arroy  
 Tout le chemin venoit encontre soy  
     Sans compaingnie;  
 Si me pensay qu'amis yert et amie.  
 fol. 10r      Lors me boutay par dedens la fueillie  
 55      Si embuschiez qu'il ne me virent mie.  
             Mais quant amis,  
 En qui Nature assez de biens a mis,  
 Fu aprochiez de la dame de pris,  
 Com gracieus, sages, et bien apris  
 60      La salua.  
 Et la dame que pensee argua,  
 Sans riens respondre a li, le trespassa.  
 Et cils tantost arriere rappassa,

Of different colors that smelled sweet,  
He perched.  
Then I simply dropped to the ground  
And hid myself as well as I could beneath the trees  
35 So that he could not see me,  
In order to hear  
The full sweet sound of his pleasant song.  
It pleased me so to delight in hearing  
His sweet singing that I could never  
40 Describe it.

But as I was enjoying  
His very sweet singing, on which I was intent,  
I saw approach by a narrow path  
Covered with grass  
45 A lady deep in thought and all alone,  
Save for a little dog and a serving maid.  
But her forthright demeanor showed clearly  
She was sorely distressed.  
And on the other side, a short distance from me,  
50 A knight of quite noble array  
Came toward her right down the path  
With no companions;  
So I thought they might be lover and beloved.  
Then I pushed myself into the leaves  
55 And was so hidden they didn't see me at all.  
Now when that lover,  
To whom Nature had granted considerable gifts,  
Approached that worthy lady,  
He greeted her like a gentleman gracious,  
60 Wise, and well mannered.  
And so oppressed by thought was the lady  
She passed him by with no response.  
And at once the man retraced his steps,

Et si la prist  
 65 Par le giron, et doucement li dist:  
 "Tres douce dame, avez vous en despit  
 Le mien salut?" Et quant elle le vit,  
 Si respondi  
 En soupirant que plus n'i atendi:  
 70 "Certes, sire, pas ne vous entendi  
 Pour mon penser qui le me deffendi;  
 Mais se j'ay fait  
 Riens ou il ait villonne ou meffait,  
 Vuelliez le moy pardonner, s'il vous plait."  
 75 Li chevaliers, sans faire plus de plait,  
 Dist doucement:  
 "Dame, il n'affiert ci nul pardonnement,  
 Car il n'i a meffait ne mautalent;  
 Mais je vous pri que vostre pensement  
 80 Me vueilliez dire."  
 Et la dame parfondement souspire  
 Et dist: "Por Dieu, laissiez me en pais, biau sire,  
 Car mestier n'ay que me facies plus d'ire  
 Ne de contraire  
 85 Que j'en reçoy." Et cils se prist a traire  
 Plus pres de li, pour sa pensee attraire,  
 Et ha dit: "Tres douce debonnaire,  
 Triste vous voy.  
 Mais je vos jur et promet par ma foy,  
 90 S'a moy volez descouvrir vostre anoy,  
 Que je ferai tout le pooir de moy  
 De l'adrecier."  
 Et la dame l'en prist a mercier,  
 Et dist: "Sire, nuls ne m'en puet aidier,  
 95 Ne nuls fors Diex ne porroit alegier  
 La grief dolour  
 Qui fait palir et teindre ma coulour,  
 Qui tient mon cuer en tristesse et en plour,  
 Et qui me met en si dure langour  
 100 Qu'a dire voir  
 Nuls cuer qui soit n'en porroit plus avoir."  
 "Dame, et quels mauls vos fait si fort doloir?  
 Dites le moy; que je cuit recevoir  
 Si tres grief peinne,  
 105 Si dolereuse, si dure, si greveinne,  
 Si amere, que soiez bien certainne,  
 Il n'est dame, ne creature humeinne,  
 Ne n'iert jamais,  
 Qui tele peinne endurast onques mais."  
 110 "Certes, sire, je croy bien que tel fais

Took her  
65 By the robe, and said softly:  
“Sweet lady, do you scorn  
My greeting?” And when she saw him,  
With a sigh  
She answered so he waited no longer:  
70 “To be sure, sir, I did not hear you at all  
Because my thoughts prevented me;  
But if I’ve done  
Something improper or wrong,  
Please pardon me if you would.”  
75 The knight, making no further argument,  
Said softly:  
“Lady, no pardon is needed,  
For here there is no misdeed or ill will;  
But I beg you please tell me  
80 Your thoughts.”  
Then the lady sighed deeply  
And said: “For God’s sake, leave me in peace, fair sir,  
Because I don’t need you to increase the grief  
Or frustration  
85 That they give me.” With this, he began moving  
Closer to her to draw out her thoughts,  
And said: “Sweet and noble lady,  
I see you are sad.  
But I swear to you and promise upon my faith  
90 That if to me you reveal your trouble,  
I’ll do all in my power  
To put it right.”  
And the lady undertook to thank him for this,  
Saying: “Sir, no one can help me,  
95 And no one save God could alleviate  
The terrible grief  
That mars and pales my complexion,  
Binds my heart in sorrow and weeping,  
Keeps me in such bitter misery  
100 That, truth to tell,  
There is no heart that could have more.”  
“Lady, what misfortune makes your pain so great?  
Tell me, for I think I suffer  
A hurt so painful,  
105 So miserable, so strong, so grievous,  
So bitter that — of this you may be sure —  
There’s no woman, no human being,  
Nor was there ever one  
Who endured such pain.”  
110 “Surely, sir, I firmly believe you

Ne portez pas a vo cuer que je fais.  
 Pour ce sarez  
 Ma pensee qu'a savoir desirez.  
 Mais tout avant, vos me prometterez  
 115 Que sans mentir la vostre me dirés.”  
 “Tenez, ma dame.  
 Je vous promet par may foy et par m’ame  
 Que le penser qui m’esprent et enflame,  
 Et qui souvent mon cuer mort et entame  
 120 Vous jehirai  
 De chief en chief, ne ja n’en mentiray.”  
 “Certes, sire, et je le vous diray.”  
 “Or dites donc; je vous escouteray  
 Moult volentiers.”  
  
 125 “Sire, il a bien .vij. ans ou .vij. entiers  
 Que mes cuers a esté sers et rentiers  
 A Bonne Amour, si qu’apris ses sentiers  
 Ay tres m’infance.  
 Car des premiers que j’eus sa congoissance,  
 130 Cuer, corps, povoir, vie, avoir, et puissance  
 Et quanqu’il fu de mi, mis par plaisirance  
 En son servage.  
 Et elle me retint en son hommage  
 fol. 10v Et me donna de tres loial corage  
 135 A bel et bon, dous, gracieus, et sage,  
 Qui de valour,  
 De courtoisie et de parfaite honnour,  
 Et de plaisant maintient avoit la flour,  
 Et des tres bons estoit tout le millour:  
 140 Et s’ot en li  
 Gent corps faitis, cointe, apert, et joly,  
 Juene, gentil, de maniere garny,  
 Plein de tout ce qu’il faut a vray amy.  
 Et d’estre amez  
 145 Par dessus tous estoit dignes clamez,  
 Car il estoit vrais, loiaus, et secrez,  
 Et en trestous fais amoureus discrez;  
 Et je l’amoie  
 Si loiaument que tout mon cuer mettoie  
 150 En li amer, n’autre entente n’avoie;  
 Qu’en li estoit m’esperence, ma joie,  
 Et mon plaisir,  
 Mon cuer, m’amor, mon penser, mon desir.  
 De tous les biens pooit mes cuers joir  
 155 Par li veoir seulement et oir.  
 Tous mes confors

- Bear not the same burden in your heart that I do.  
For this reason you shall learn,  
These thoughts you wish to know.  
Yet right away you'll promise  
115 To tell me all your own without any lies.”  
“Agreed, my lady.  
Upon my faith and soul, I promise  
That the thought that scorches and inflames me,  
Often eating at my heart and rending it,  
120 I'll reveal to you  
Completely, and in nothing will I lie.”  
“Agreed, sir, and now I'll tell you.”  
“Speak, then, and I'll listen  
Most willingly.”
- 125 “Sir, altogether now it's seven years or eight  
That my heart's been serf and vassal  
To Good Love, whose ways I've come to know  
Since childhood.  
For when I encountered Love the first time,  
130 I gladly put heart, body, strength, life,  
My goods and power, what I had,  
At her disposal.  
And as her vassal she retained me  
And with a very loyal heart gave me  
135 To a man handsome and good, gentle, wise, and gracious,  
Who was  
The very flower of courtesy,  
Perfect honor, and pleasant demeanor;  
Of the very good indeed he was the best.
- 140 And the man had  
A noble body, elegant too, gracious, well-formed and pleasing;  
Young, genteel, graced with charm he was,  
Full of all that a true lover requires.  
And he was acclaimed
- 145 Worthy of being loved above all others,  
For he was true, loyal, and circumspect,  
Discreet in what pertained to loving.  
And I loved him  
So loyally I devoted all my heart  
150 To loving him (no other thought was mine);  
So in him was my hope, joy,  
And pleasure,  
My heart, love, thoughts, and desire.  
In every kind of goodness my heart could rejoice  
155 Simply by seeing and hearing him.  
All my comfort

160 Estoit en li; c'estoit tous mes depors,  
Tous mes solas, mes deduis, mes tresors.  
C'estoit mes murs, mes chastiaus, mes ressorts  
Et il m'amoit;  
Par dessus tout me servoit et cremoit;  
Son cuer, s'amour, sa dame me clamoit.  
Tous estoit miens; mes cuers bien le savoit;  
Ne riens desplaire  
165 Ne li peüst qui a moy dehust plaire.  
De nos .ij. cuers estoit si juste paire  
Qu'onques ne fu l'un a l'autre contraire;  
Einsois estoient  
Tuit d'un acort; une pensee avoient.  
170 De volenté, de desir se sambloient;  
Un bien, un mal, une joie sentoient  
Conjointement,  
N'onques ne fu entre eaus .ij. autrement;  
Mais c'a esté toudis si loyaument  
175 Qu'il n'ot onques un villain pensement  
En nos amours.  
Lasse, dolente! Or est bien a rebours.  
Car mes douceurs sont dolereus labours,  
Et mes joies sont ameres dolours,  
180 Et mi penser,  
En qui mes cuers se soloit deliter  
Et doucement de tous maus conforter,  
Sont et seront dolent, triste, et amer.  
En obscurté  
185 Seront mi jour, plein de maleürté,  
Et mi espoir sans nulle seürté,  
Et ma douceur sera dure durté  
Car sans failrir  
Teindre, trambler, muer, et tressaillir,  
190 Pleindre, plourer, souspirer, et gemir,  
Et en paour de desespoir fremir  
Me couvendra;  
N'a mon las cuer jamais bien ne vendra,  
N'a nul confort n'a joie n'atendra,  
195 Jusques atant que la mort me prendra,  
Qui a grant tort  
Par devers moy, quant elle ne s'amort  
A moy mordre de son dolereus mort,  
Quant elle m'a dou tout tollu et mort  
200 Mon dous amy  
Que j'amoie de fin cuer et il my.  
Mais aprés li, lasse! Dolente! Eimy!  
Ne quier jamais vivre jour ne demi

Lay in him; he was all that pleased me,  
All my solace, delight, and treasure.  
He was my wall, my castle, and my refuge.

160      And he loved me;  
Above all else he served and respected me.  
He called me his heart, his love, his lady;  
He was mine completely; my heart knew this well.  
    Nor could anything  
165      Displease him that should please me.  
So true a pair were our two hearts  
That one never opposed the other;  
    Rather they were  
Always in accord; one thought they shared.

170      They were the same in will and desire;  
A single good, one ill, one joy they felt  
    Together,  
And it was never otherwise for these two;  
Instead our love was so faithful

175      It never gave rise to an immoral thought  
    Of any kind.  
Alas! What sorrow! Now the opposite is true.  
For my sweetness now is painful suffering.  
My joys are bitter hurt,

180      And my thoughts,  
In which my heart used to delight  
And find sweet solace for every hurt,  
Are, and will remain, painful, bitter, sad.  
    My days

185      Will be dark and filled with misfortune,  
My hope will lack all certainty,  
And my pleasure will become enduring sorrow,  
    For without fail  
I will pale and tremble, startle with a change of mood,

190      Moan, cry out, sigh, and wail,  
And in fear of despair  
    Even shudder;  
Nor will my sad heart experience any good;  
No comfort, no joy will ever touch it

195      Until death seizes me,  
    Death, who greatly  
Wronged me by not bringing herself  
To bite me with her painful bite  
When of everything she stripped me and killed

200      My lover sweet,  
Whom I loved with a pure heart, as he did me.  
But alas — sorrow — what pain! I do not wish  
To live on after him even a day or half of one

En si grief dueil;  
 205 Eins vueil morir dou mal dont je me dueil."  
 Et je, qui fui boutez dedens le brueil,  
 Vi qu'a ce mot la dame au dous acueil  
 Cheï com morte.  
 Mais cils qui fu de noble et gentil sorte  
 210 Souventes fois li deprie et enorte  
 Moult doucement qu'elle se reconforte,  
 Mais riens ne vaut;  
 Car la dame que grief doleur assaut  
 fol. 11r Pour son ami sent .i. si dur assaut  
 215 Qu'en li vigour et alainne deffaut.  
 Et quant il voit  
 Que la dame pas ne l'entent në oït,  
 Tant fu dolens qu'estre plus ne pooit.  
 Mais nonpourquant tant fait que bien parçoit  
 220 Qu'elle est pasmee.  
 Lors en sa main cueilli de la rousee  
 Sus l'erbe vert; si l'en a arrousee  
 En tous les liex de sa face esplouree  
 Si doucement  
 225 Que la dame qui avoit longuement  
 Perdu vigour, scens, et entendement  
 Ouvri les yeus et prist parfondement  
 A soupirer,  
 En regrettant celui qui desirer  
 230 Li fait la mort par loiaument amer.  
 Mais cils qui ot le cuer franc sans amer  
 Dist: "Dame chiere,  
 Pour Dieu merci, reprenez vo maniere;  
 Vous vous tuez de faire tele chiere,  
 235 Car je voy bien que moult comparez chiere  
 L'amour de li.  
 Si n'aies pas le cuer einsi failly,  
 Car ce n'est pas preus, ne honneur aussi."  
 "Vous dites voir, sire: mais trop mar vi  
 240 L'eure et le jour  
 Qu'onques amay de si parfaite amour,  
 Car je n'en puis eschaper par nul tour:  
 Eins y congnois ma mort sans nul retour."  
 "Dame, or oiez  
 245 Ce que diray, et a mal ne l'aiez.  
 N'est merveille se vous vous esmaiez,  
 Car bien est drois que dolente soiés.  
 Mais vraiment  
 On trouveroit plus tost aligement  
 250 En vostre mal qu'en mien." "Sire, et comment?"

205        In such terrible grief;  
I'd rather die from the pain that grieves me."  
And I, who lay hidden within the brush,  
Saw that at this word the lady with the gracious manner  
Fell down as if dead.  
210        Now he who was a type gentle and kind  
Many times begged and exhorted her  
Quite tenderly to take comfort,  
But to no avail;  
For assaulted by a grievous pain, the lady  
Felt such a severe attack for her lover's sake,  
215        Both breath and strength did fail her.  
              And when he saw  
How the lady neither heard nor attended to him,  
He was as pained as he could be.  
Nonetheless the man realized  
220        She had fainted.  
In his hand he then gathered up some dew  
From the green grass and sprinkled it over  
Her tear-stained face  
              So gently  
225        That the lady who for so long  
Had lost strength, reason, and understanding  
Opened her eyes and began to sigh  
              Deeply,  
Bemoaning the man who made her desire  
230        Death because of his faithful love for her.  
But the man, whose noble heart lacked bitterness,  
              Said: "Dear lady,  
For the mercy of God, get hold of yourself.  
Carrying on like this will be your death  
235        Since I see well that you pay most dearly  
              For loving him.  
Yet let your heart not fail so.  
It is neither worthy nor honorable."  
"You tell the truth, sir, but it was quite bad luck I saw  
240        The hour and day  
I ever loved with such a perfect love  
Because in no way can I escape it.  
Instead, I see a death with no respite."  
              "Lady, now hear  
245        What I will say, and please don't take it ill.  
No wonder you are distraught  
Since you are saddened.  
              Yet truly  
A person could much sooner find relief  
250        For your troubles than for mine." "Sir, how so?

Dites le moy, et de vo sairement  
 Vous aquitez.”  
 “Moult voulentiers, mais que vous m’escoutez,  
 Et que vo cuer de tristec gettés,  
 255 Par quoy toute vostre entente metez  
 A moy oîr.”  
 “Certes, sire, po me puis resjoîr.  
 Mais j’en feray mon pooir, sans mentir.”  
 “Dont vous dirai quels maus j’ay a sentir,  
 260 Sans plus attendre.  
 Dame, tres dont que je me sos entendre  
 Et que mes cuers pot sentir et comprendre  
 Que c’est amer, je ne finay de tendre  
 A estre amez;  
 265 Si que lonc temps, pour estre amis clamez  
 Eins que mes cuers fust assis ne donnez  
 N’a dame nulle otroiez n’assenez,  
 A Bonne Amour  
 Par maintes fois fis devote clamour  
 270 Qu’elle mon cuer asseïst a l’onnour  
 De celle en qui il feroit son sejour,  
 Et que ce fust  
 Si que loange et gloire en receüst  
 Et que, se ja mes cuers faire peüst  
 275 Chose de quoy souvenir li deüst  
 Ou desservir  
 Nul guerredon de dame par servir,  
 Qu’en aucun temps li deingnast souvenir  
 De moy qui vueil estre siens, sans partir,  
 280 Toute ma vie.  
 Tant qu’il avint qu’en une compaingnie  
 Ou il avoit meinte dame jolie,  
 Juene, gentil, joieuse, et envoisie,  
 Vins par Fortune,  
 285 Qui de mentir a tous est trop commune,  
 Si en choisi entre les autres l’une  
 Qui, tout aussi com li solaus la lune  
 Veint de clarté,  
 Avoit elle les autres seurmonté  
 290 De pris, d’onneur, de grace, et de biauté,  
 Et tant estoit humble et simple, a mon gré,  
 Car, a voir dire,  
 On ne porroit en tout le monde eslire  
 fol. 11v Sa pareille, ne tous li mons souffire  
 295 Ne porroit pas por sa biauté descrire  
 Parfaitement.

Tell me, and you'll fulfill  
Your agreement."

"Quite willingly, but listen to me  
And abandon the sadness in your heart

255 So you can give all your attention  
To hearing me."

"Surely, sir, I can scarcely cheer up.  
Still, I'll do my best, and that's no lie."

"Then I'll reveal to you what pains are mine  
260 With no more delay.

Lady, from that time I knew myself  
And my heart could feel and understand  
What loving is, I've never ceased striving  
To be loved;

265 So for a long time, to have the name of lover,  
Before my heart was securely placed or given,  
Or granted, or even inclined to one lady,  
I many times

Devoutly requested that Good Love

270 Place my heart to the honor  
Of a woman in whom it would find a home,  
And that this would be  
So she would receive glory and praise thereby;  
And that if my heart could ever do

275 Anything to be worthy of attention  
Or earn  
Some reward from a lady through serving her,  
Love might sometime deign to remember  
Me, who would be her vassal, never to depart

280 For all my life.

Finally it happened that among a company  
Including many pretty ladies  
Who were young, noble, happy, and amusing,  
I chanced by Fortune,

285 Whose custom is to lie to all,  
And from the others I picked out one  
Who, just as the sun surpasses the moon  
In brightness,

Conquered all the others

290 In esteem, honor, grace, and beauty;  
And she was so modest and unpretentious, to my taste,  
That, truth to tell,

No one could in the entire world find  
Her equal, nor could the whole world itself

295 Suffice to describe her beauty  
Perfectly.

Car je la vi dancier si cointement  
Et puis chanter si tres joliment,  
Rire et jouer si gracieusement  
Qu'onques encor  
Ne fu veus plus gracieus tresor.  
Car si cheveus ressambloient fil d'or  
Et n'estoient ne trop blont ne trop sor.  
Son front estoit  
Blanc et poly, ne fronce n'i avoit,  
Sans vice nul compassé si a droit  
Que trop large n'estoit, ne trop estroit;  
Et si sorcil,  
Qui estoient de taille tres gentil,  
Dessus le blanc sambloient .i. noir fil,  
Dont il fussent prisié entre cent mil.  
Mais si .ij. oueil,  
Qui de mon cuer vorrent passer le sueil  
Par leur rigour et par leur bel acueil,  
Pour moy donner le mal dont je me dueil,  
Furent riant,  
Nom pas moult vair, por estre plus pognant  
Et plus agu, dous, humble, et attraiant,  
Tous pleins de las pour loier .i. amant  
En amour pure;  
Et s'estoient clungnetant par mesure,  
Fendus a point, sans trop grant ouverture,  
Tout acquerant par leur douce pointure;  
N'a l'entrouvrir  
Ne se peüst nuls homs qui soit couvrir  
Qu'en mi le cuer ne l'lassent ferir  
S'il leur pleüst, et pour euls retenir.  
Mais leurs regars,  
Merci donnant par samblant, aus musars  
N'estoit mie folettement espars;  
Car quant lancier voloit .i. de ses dars,  
Si sagement  
Le savoit faire et si soutivement  
Que nuls savoir nel peüst bonnement,  
Fors cils seur qui il cheoit proprement.  
Net, odorant,  
Lond et traitif, de taille bien seant  
Avoit le nés au viaire afferant;  
Car il n'estoit trop petit, ne trop grant.  
Mais sa bouchette,  
Petite a droit, vermillette, grossette,  
Toudis riant, savoreuse, doucette,  
Me fait languir, quant mes cuers la regrette.

For I saw her dance so debonairly  
And then sing so very beautifully,  
Laugh and play so graciously  
300      That never yet  
Was seen a treasure more elegant,  
For her hair resembled golden threads,  
And these neither too light nor dark.  
      Her forehead was  
305      White and smooth, no wrinkle there,  
Without a flaw, of such correct proportion  
It was neither too broad nor narrow.  
      And her brows  
Had a very noble shape  
310      Beneath that whiteness and were like black thread,  
And to be prized among a hundred thousand.  
      But her two eyes,  
Intent on passing the threshold of my heart  
By their strength and fair welcome  
315      To give me the pain that grieves me so,  
      Were smiling,  
Not really very gray, to be more piercing,  
More striking, sweet, humble, and alluring,  
All full of traps to snare a lover  
320      In pure affection.  
And they were modestly lowered,  
Just big enough, not opened too wide,  
Conquering all by their sweet piercing;  
      Nor as they opened  
325      Could any man prevent  
Their going to strike his heart a blow,  
If it pleased them, and claim him for their own.  
      But their glance,  
Seeming to grant mercy, to dawdlers  
330      Was not at all unwisely parceled out,  
For wishing to throw a dart,  
      So craftily  
Could it do so — and so subtly —  
No one could ever truly know  
335      Save him upon whom it properly fell.  
      Flawless, dainty,  
Long, and straight, of the proper shape  
Was her nose, suited to her face,  
For it was neither too big nor small.  
340      But her little mouth,  
Just small enough, rose in hue, somewhat rounded,  
Always smiling, delicious, and sweet  
Makes me languish whenever my heart sadly recalls her.

- Quar qui l'oïst  
 345 Parler a point, et rire la veïst,  
 Et les douceurs par saveur recueillist,  
 Il la prisast seur toutes et deïst;  
 Que .ij. fossettes  
 En sousriant faisoient ses joëttes,  
 350 Qui estoient blanches et vermillettes,  
 Pour embelir, et un petit grassettes.  
 Et encor plus:  
 Les dens avoit blans, sarrez, et menus,  
 Et ses mentons estoit un po fendus,  
 355 Votis dessous et rondes par dessus.  
 Mais a merveille  
 Fu sa coulour, des autres nompareille,  
 Car elle fu vive, fresche, et vermeille,  
 Plus que la rose en may, eins qu'on la cueille;  
 360 Et, a briés mos,  
 Blanche com noif, polie, de biau gros  
 Fu sa gorge, n'i ot fronce ne os;  
 Et s'ot biau col dont je la pris et los.  
 Aussi est drois  
 365 Que je parle de ses bras lons et drois,  
 Qui estoient bien fais en tous endrois;  
 Car elle avoit blanches mains et lons dois.  
 A mon devis  
 Avoit le sein blanc, dur, et haut assis,  
 370 Pongnant, rondet, et si estoit petis,  
 Selonc le corps, gracieus, et faitis.  
 Sans nul mestret  
 fol. 12r Avoit le corps par mesure pourtret,  
 Gent, joint, joly, juene, gentil, grasset,  
 375 Lonc, droit, faitis, cointe, apert, et graillet.  
 Tres bien tailliez  
 Hanches, cuisses, jambes ot, et les piez,  
 Votis, grossez, bien et bel enjointiez,  
 Par maistrise mignotement chauciez.  
 380 Dou remenant  
 Que pas ne vi, dame, vous di je tant  
 Que d' nature tout estoit respondant,  
 Bien fassonné et de taille excellent.  
 Et ce seurplus,  
 385 Dont je ne vueil maintenant dire plus,  
 Devoit estre sans comparer tenus  
 A plus tres dous et a plus biaus que nuls.  
 Delié curien  
 Blanc et souëf avoit, sus toute rien

For whoever heard it  
345 Speak so well and saw it laugh,  
Received with pleasure its sweetness,  
Would value it above all others and say as much;  
For her smile brought  
Two dimples to her cheeks,  
350 So white and colored like a rose,  
Making them prettier and rounder.  
And there's even more:  
Her teeth were white, small, and even,  
Her chin a little cleft,  
355 Arched below and rounded all above.  
Wondrously soft and clear,  
Was her complexion, surpassing all others,  
For it was vibrant, fresh, and pink,  
More than any May rose before it's picked;  
360 And, in a few words,  
White as snow, smooth, pleasantly plump  
Was her throat, not wrinkled or bony;  
Her neck was beautiful, for which I prize and praise her.  
It's also fitting  
365 I speak of her arms long and straight,  
Which were in every way well fashioned;  
For her hands were white, her fingers long.  
Just to my taste  
Were her breasts — white, firm, and high-seated,  
370 Pointed, round, and small enough,  
Suiting her body, gracious and well shaped.  
Without a flaw  
In proportion was her body,  
Noble, well-shaped, lovely, youthful, genteel, amply fleshed,  
375 Long, straight, pleasing, resilient, agreeable, and svelte.  
Very well shaped  
Were the hips, thighs, and legs — the feet  
Arched, plump, and well formed,  
Cunningly shod with exquisite shoes.  
380 Of the rest,  
Which I did not see, lady, I'll tell you this:  
All answered the requirements of Nature.  
It was well fashioned and elegant in form.  
And this remainder,  
385 Of which right now I'll say no more,  
Must be considered beyond compare,  
Sweeter and more beautiful than any other.  
Her delicate skin  
Was white and soft; more than other women's

- 390 Resplendissant, si qu'on si mirast bien;  
 Vice, tache n'i avoit fors que bien.  
     Douce et serree  
     Avoit la char, tendrette de rousee,  
     Mais de maniere humble et asseuree  
 395 Et de tres biau maintien estoit paree.  
     Et vraiment,  
     Tant fu bele, que je croy fermement,  
     Se Nature, qui tout fait soutilment,  
     En voloit faire une aussi proprement,  
 400 Qu'elle y faurroit,  
     Et que jamais assener n'i saroit,  
     Se l'exemple de ceste ci n'avoit,  
     Qui de biauté toutes autres passoit.  
     Et se vous di  
 405 Qu'onques encor en ma vie ne vi  
     Corps de dame si tres bien assevi.  
     Mais elle avoit .xiiij. ans et demi  
     Ou environ.  
 410 Si que, dame, quant je vi sa fasson,  
     Qui tant estoit bele sans meffacon,  
     Dedens mon cuer la douce impression  
     De sa figure  
     Fu telement empreinte qu'elle y dure,  
     Ne onques puis n'en parti, dont j'endure  
 415 Mainte doleur et meinte durté dure.  
     Et sans doubtance,  
     Eins que partis fusse de sa presence,  
     Dedens mon cuer se ficha si Plaisence,  
     En remirant sa douce contenance,  
 420 Que sachiez bien,  
     Se j'eüssse l'avoir Othevien,  
     Et sceüssse le scens de Galien,  
     Et avec ce tuit li bien fussent mien,  
     Je tout heüssse  
 425 Guerpi par si, que veoir la peüssse  
     A mon voloir, ou que faire sceüssse  
     Chose a son vueil, dont plaire li deüssse.  
     Mais Fine Amour,  
     Qui vit que pris estoie par le tour  
 430 De Plaisence, qui m'ot mis en sa tour,  
     En remirant son gracieus atour,  
     Sans menacier  
     .I. dous regart riant me fist lancier  
     Parmi le cuer, et moy si enlacier,  
 435 Qu'il me sousmist en son tres dous dangier,  
     Sans repentir.

- 390      Resplendent — and one marveled;  
There was no flaw or fault, only goodness.  
    Sweet and firm  
Was her flesh, tender with moisture,  
But she was endowed with a manner humble  
395      And assured — and she was beautifully groomed.  
    And truly  
She was so beautiful, I strongly believe,  
That if Nature, who makes all things craftily,  
Intended to make another woman just like her,  
400      She would fail;  
And that she'd never know how to do so  
Had she not for a model the one  
Who surpasses all others in loveliness.  
    And so I tell you  
405      I have never seen in all my life  
A woman's body of such perfect shape.  
And she was aged fourteen and a half,  
    Or thereabouts.  
So, lady, when I beheld her appearance,  
410      Which was so beautiful, without any flaw,  
Within my heart the sweet impression  
    Of her face  
Was so imprinted it still endures,  
Nor ever since has it departed, so I suffer  
415      Many pains and enduring miseries.  
    And beyond all doubt,  
Before I left her presence,  
Pleasure so fixed itself within my heart  
From marveling at her sweet face  
420      You may be sure  
If I possessed Octavian's riches  
And knew all Galen's science,  
If all goods were mine,  
    I would have thrown over  
425      Everything in order to see her  
As I wished, or to accomplish something  
She might have liked that would please her.  
    But Noble Love,  
Who saw me captured by the snare  
430      Of Pleasure, who'd locked me in her tower  
Because I'd marveled at the lady's gracious presence,  
    Without threatening  
Made a sweet and smiling look go  
Straight through my heart to trap me  
435      So I had to submit to her very sweet dominion  
    Without repenting.

Si me plut tant cils dangiers a sentir,  
 Quant cils resgars se deingnoit assentir  
 A descendre sus moy que, sans mentir,  
 440            Je ne savoie  
 Qu'il m'avenoit, ne quele part j'estoie,  
 Car scens, vigour, et maniere perdoie;  
 Si durement par ses yex me sentoie  
                   Enamourez.  
 445            Adont desirs d'estre de li amez  
 En mon cuer fu si tres fort enflamez  
 Que puis m'en suis cent fois chetis clamez  
                   En soupirant;  
 Car tel doleur sentoie en desirant  
 450            Que ma vigour en aloit empirant  
 Et meint penser avoie, en remirant  
                   Son dous viaire;  
 fol. 12v      Car volentiers li alasse retraire  
                   Comment de cuer l'amoie, sans retraire.  
 455            Mais la paour d'escondire ce faire  
                   Me deffendoit;  
 Et d'autre part Bel Acueil m'apelloit;  
 Son Dous Regart riant m'asseüroit,  
 Et Dous Espoirs doucement ce disoit  
 460            En loiauté,  
 Et m'affermoit qu'onques si grant biauté  
 Ne pot estre, qu'il n'i heüst pité.  
 Si m'ont cil troi tant dit et enorté  
                   Que toutevoie  
 465            Je m'acorday que m'amour li diroie.  
 Helas! Einsi tous seuls me debatoie.  
 Mais quant mes maus retraire li cuidoie,  
                   Si paoureus,  
 Si veins, si mas, si las, si engoisseus,  
 470            Si desconfis, si tramblans, si honteus  
 Estoit mes cuers, et dou mal amoureus  
                   Si fort espris,  
 Qu'en li n'avoit scens, maniere, n'avis,  
 Einsois estoit com transis et ravis,  
 475            Quant bien veoir povoie vis a vis  
                   Sa biauté pure.  
 Lors estoit mors d'amoureuseuse morsure  
 Mes cuers et poins de joieuse pointure  
 Et repeüs de douce norreture  
 480            Par Dous Penser,  
 Qui ma dolour faisoit toute cesser  
 Et garison me faisoit esperer.  
 Einsi souvent avoie pour amer

- So pleased was I to feel this domination  
When her look deigned  
To fall upon me that (I do not lie)
- 440      I didn't know  
What was happening to me or where I was  
Since senses, strength, and bearing I had lost,  
So forcefully through her eyes was I  
         Brought to love.
- 445      And thus the desire to be loved by her  
Was so hotly inflamed within my heart,  
I've since called myself 'poor captive' a hundred times  
         While sighing;  
For such misery did I feel in my desiring
- 450      My strength began to fail me,  
And many thoughts I had while marveling at  
         Her sweet countenance.  
Now willingly I'd have gone to tell her  
How with my heart I loved her with no hesitation.
- 455      Yet the fear of being refused prevented me  
         From doing so;  
Still Fair Welcome beckoned me;  
His Sweet Look, smiling, reassured me,  
And Sweet Hope sweetly told me this
- 460      In faith  
And affirmed that so great a beauty  
Could never exist without pity.  
So these three spoke and encouraged me so much  
         I agreed
- 465      After all to tell her of my affection.  
Alas! In this fashion I declaimed all alone to myself.  
But when I thought to rehearse my pains to her,  
         So fearful,  
Weak, beaten down, so weary and full of anguish,
- 470      So troubled, trembling, and shamed  
Was my heart, and with lovesickness  
         So grievously infected,  
It lost all reason, composure, and wit.  
In contrast, my heart was transformed and overwhelmed
- 475      When clearly, face to face, I could look upon  
         Her pure beauty.  
Then my heart was stung  
By an amorous sting, pierced with a joyful point,  
And nourished with sweet nourishment
- 480      By Sweet Thought,  
Who relieved all my pain  
And gave me hope for cure.  
Thus often for Love's sake I experienced

Joie et tourment.

485 Si demouray en ce point longuement,  
Une heure lie et l'autre heure dolent,  
Qu'onques n'osay requerre aligement  
De ma dolour.

490 Mais nompourquant grant destresse d'amour,  
Ardant desir, la crueuse langour,  
Ou j'avoie demouré par maint jour,  
Son Bel Acueil,

495 Esperence de terminer mon dueil,  
Sa grant biauté, si dous riant vair oueil,  
Et ce qu'en li n'avoit goute d'orgueil,  
Le hardement

500 De requerre merci couardement  
Me donnerent; si li dis humblement,  
Moult tresmuez et paoureuseusement:  
'Ma chiere dame,

505 Vostre biauté mon cuer art et enflame,  
Si que seur tout vous aim, sans penser blame,  
De cuer, de corps, de vray desir, et d'ame.  
Si vous depri,

510 Douce dame, qu'aies de moy merci;  
Car vraiment je morrai d'amer ci  
Se de vo cuer, qui a le mien nercy,  
N'ay aligence.'

515 Et quant einsi li os dit ma grevance,  
Un pou muer vi sa douce samblance,  
Ce me fu vis, dont je fui en doubtance  
D'estre escondis.

520 Mais ses regars m'asseüroit toudis,  
Et sa douceur et son gracieus ris,  
Si que par euls encor fu enhardis  
De dire: 'Helas!

525 Gentil dame, pour Dieu, n'ociez pas  
Vostre loial amy, qui en vos las  
Est si laciez qu'il en pert tout solas  
Et toute joie.'

Lors se treï vers moy la simple et coie,  
Pour qui Amours me destreint et maistroie,  
Et dist: 'Amis, certes, riens ne vorroie  
Faire a nelui,

Dont il heüst grevence ne annuy;  
Ne l'en ne doit faire chose a autrui  
Qu'on ne vosist que l'en feïst a lui.  
Et, biaus amis,

Il n'est nuls biens qui ne soit remeris,

- Joy and torture.
- 485 And I remained a long time in this state,  
One hour happy, sorrowful the next,  
For I never dared seek relief  
For my pain.
- Nonetheless this great distress from love,  
490 This burning desire, this cruel languor  
In which I remained for many days,  
Her Fair Welcome,  
The hope of ending my pain,  
Her great beauty, her sweet, smiling gray eyes,  
495 And that no whit of pride was in her —  
All this gave me  
The strength to beg for mercy  
Like a coward. And so I said humbly to her,  
Flushed and fearful:  
500 'My lady dear,  
Your beauty so burns, inflames my heart,  
I love you above all else without impure thoughts,  
With my heart, my body, with true desire and soul.  
So I beg you,  
505 Sweet lady, have mercy on me;  
For truly, I will die of love  
If from the heart that has turned mine black  
I find no relief.'
- And when in this fashion I dared tell her my grief,  
510 I watched her sweet expression slightly change,  
As I thought, so I feared  
Being rejected.  
Yet all the time her look assured me,  
As well as her sweetness and gracious smile,  
515 So by these I was emboldened enough  
To cry 'Alas!  
Gentle lady, for God's sake, don't kill  
Your faithful lover, who in your snares  
Is trapped so tight he forfeits all joy  
520 And comfort.'
- Then she drew toward me, quiet and demure,  
The woman on whose account Love tortures and abuses me,  
And said: 'Friend, surely I would never want  
To do to anyone  
525 What might pain or grieve him;  
And no one should do to others  
What he would not have done to him.  
And, sweet friend,  
No good deed goes unrewarded,

- 530 N'il n'est aussi maus qui ne soit punis.  
 Si que, s'Amours vos a d'amer espris,  
 Son guerredon  
 Vous en rendra en temps et en saison,  
 Se vous l'amez sans penser traïson.
- fol. 13r Et s'elle vous trouvoit autre que bon,  
 536 Ne doubtés mie  
 Qu'elle ne fust vo mortel anemie,  
 Ne que jamais garison ne aïe  
 Vous fust par li donnee, n'ottoïe  
 540 De vos dolours.  
 Si que, biau sire, alez devers Amours,  
 Si li faites vos plains et vos clamours;  
 Car en li gist vos mors et vos secours,  
 Nom pas en moy.
- 545 Et pas ne sui cause de vostre anoy,  
 Ce m'est avis, si que souffrir m'en doy.  
 Plus ne vous say que dire, en bonne foy.  
 Adieu vous di.'
- 550 Adont de moy la bele se parti  
 Qui de si grant doleur me reparti  
 Que par un po que mes cuers ne parti  
 De son depart.  
 Mais la douceur de son plaisant regart  
 Par son dous art fist que j'en os regart
- 555 Que au departir de moy, se Diex me gart,  
 Si doucement  
 Me regarda qu'il m'iert vis proprement  
 Que ses regars me disoit vraiment:  
 'Amis, je t'aim tres amoureusement.'
- 560 Si que je fu  
 Tous confortez par la noble vertu  
 De ce regart qui puis m'a tant valu  
 Qu'il m'a toudis norri et soustenu  
 En bon espoir.
- 565 Et s'il ne fust, certainnement j'espoir  
 Que je fusse cheüs en desespoir,  
 Mais riens qui soit ne me feïst doloir  
 Quant ses regars  
 Estoit seur moy en sousriant espars,
- 570 Si que, ma dame, einsi de toutes pars  
 Me confortoit et aidoit ses regars  
 De ma dolour.
- La demouray tous seuls en grant frêour,  
 Si qu'en pensant commensai son atour,

- 530     No evil one unpunished.  
          Thus if Love has urged you to love,  
            She will reward you  
          In her time and season  
          If you love her with no thoughts of trickery.  
535     And if she found you other than good,  
            Don't doubt at all  
          She would be your mortal enemy  
          And that no help or cure  
          Would ever be granted you by her, or given  
540     For your pains.  
          Therefore, fair sir, present yourself to Love  
          And to her rehearse your moans and cries,  
          For your rescue and your death lie in her,  
            But not in me;  
545     I am not the cause of your discomfort  
          (Or so it seems to me) and should not suffer for it.  
          In good faith I know not what else to tell you.  
            I say goodbye.'
- 550     At this that beauty took her leave from me,  
          She who had portioned out to me such pain  
          My heart nearly broke in two  
            At her leaving.  
          But the sweetness of her pleasant look  
          By its agreeable artfulness made me dare look upon her,  
555     For as she left (may God protect me!)  
            So sweetly  
          Did she look my way it truly seemed  
          Her expression actually said:  
            'Lover, I love you with great affection.'
- 560     Therefore I was  
          All comforted by the noble power  
          Of the look that since has proved so precious  
          It has always nourished and sustained me  
            In good hope.
- 565     And had it not been so, I certainly expect  
          I would have fallen into despair,  
          But nothing on earth could pain me  
            When her glance  
          In a smile had so settled on me
- 570     That, my lady, in every way  
          Her look consoled me, aided me  
            In my distress.
- There in great turmoil I remained alone,  
          And in my mind I began to marvel at

- 575 Sa grant douçour, sa coulour, sa valour  
     A remirer,  
     Son biau maintieng, son venir, son aler,  
     Son gentil corps, son gracieus parler,  
     Son noble port, son plaisant regarder,
- 580     Et son viaire,  
     Qui tant estoit dous, humble, et debonnaire  
     Que de toute biauté fu l'exemplaire.  
     Et quant j'eus tout remiré son affaire,  
         Certes, j'avoie
- 585     Moult grant deduit et moult parfaite joie,  
     Et pour tres boneüreus me tenoie,  
     Pour ce, sans plus, que loiaument l'amoie,  
         Si que depuis
- 590     A li servir sui si tournez et duis,  
     Qu'en li servir s'est mis tous mes deduis,  
     N'autre labour ailleurs faire ne puis.  
         Si la servi,  
     Amay, celay, doubtai, et oubéï  
     Moult longuement, que riens ne me meri.
- 595     Mais en la fin tant l'amay et chieri  
         Qu'elle vit bien  
     Que je tendoie a s'onneur et son bien,  
     Et que mes cuers l'amoit sus toute rien;  
     Si que tant fis qu'elle me tint pour sien
- 600     En tel maniere  
     Que de bon cuer riant, a lie chiere,  
     Me dist: 'Amis, vesci t'amie chiere  
     Qui plus ne vuët envers toy estre fiere,  
         Qu'Amours le vuët,
- 605     Qui de bon cuer ad ce faire m'esmuët;  
     Et vraiment, estre autrement ne puet,  
     Car moult grant chose a en faire l'estuet;  
         Pour ce m'amour  
     Avec mon cuer vous doin, sans nul retour,
- 610     Si vous depri que vous gardez m'onnour,  
     Car je vous aim dessus tous et honnour.'
- fol. 13v     Et quant je vi  
     Que ma dame m'apelloit son amy  
     Si doucement, et que le dous ottri
- 616     M'avoit donné de s'amour, sans nul si,  
         Se je fui liez,  
     Douce dame, ne vous en mervilliez;  
     Car j'estoie devant desconsilliez,  
     Povres, perdus, despris, et essiliez,
- 620     Sans nul ressort,  
     Quant je failloie a son tres dous confort,

575     Her bearing, her great sweetness, her appearance,  
          Her courage,  
Her fair looks, the manner of her comings and goings,  
Her noble body, her gracious speech,  
Her genteel carriage, her pleasant look,  
580     And her expression,  
Which was so sweet, so humble and elegant  
She was the paragon of all beauty.  
And having marveled at all she did,  
          I found, to be sure,  
585     Much great delight and perfect joy  
And considered myself quite fortunate  
For no other reason than that I have since  
          Felt such love,  
Been so bent and dedicated to her service  
590     That in serving her I find all my delight;  
I have been able since to perform no other labor.  
          And so I served her,  
Loved, protected, respected, obeyed her  
A very long time, and my reward was nothing.  
595     At the last, however, I loved and cherished her so much  
          She saw well  
I intended only honor for her and good,  
And also that my heart did love her above all else;  
Thus I did enough so that she took me for her own  
600     In such a way  
That with a good and happy heart, a pleasant face  
She told me: 'Lover, see here your own dear love  
Who no longer will treat you haughtily,  
          Since this is the wish of Love,  
605     Who with a good heart has directed me to do this;  
And, in truth, it cannot be otherwise,  
Because something grand moves me to do so  
          Since my love  
And heart as well I present you, never to be returned,  
610     And so I beg you guard my honor well,  
For I love and honor you above all else.'  
          And when I saw  
My lady called me her lover  
So sweetly and had bestowed upon me  
615     Without reservation the delightful gift of her love,  
          If I was happy then,  
Do not marvel, sweet lady;  
For until that moment I had been discouraged,  
Forlorn, lost, exiled, and wretched,  
620     With no recourse,  
Lacking her quite sweet comfort,

Mais recourez, ressuscitez de mort,  
 Riche au dessus, pleins de grant reconfort,  
 Et sans anoy  
 625 Fui, quant me dist: 'Amis, a ti m'ottroy  
 De tres bon cuer.' Et ce tres dous ottroy  
 Cent mille fois me fist plus grant qu'un roy,  
 Si que la joie  
 Ne porroit nuls raconter que j'avoie.  
 630 Car tant fui liez que je ne l'en pooie  
 Remercier ne parler ne savoie.  
 Mais en la fin,  
 Com fins loiaus amoureus, de cuer fin,  
 Espris d'amer, sans penser mal engin,  
 635 Moult humblement li dis, le chief enclin,  
 Et sans effroy:  
 'Dame que j'aim plus qu'autre, ne que moy,  
 En qui scens, temps, cuer, vie, amour employ,  
 Tant com je puis, nom pas tant que je doy,  
 640 Vous remercy  
 Dou noble don de vo douce mercy,  
 Quar tant m'avez puisamment enrichi,  
 Tant resjoï, si gari, tant mery,  
 Que vraiment  
 645 Se quanqu'il ha dessous le firmament  
 Et quanqu'il fu et sera, quittement  
 Me fust donnez pour faire mon talent,  
 Je ne l'amassee  
 Tant de cent pars que je fais vostre grace.  
 650 Si pri a Dieu que jamais ne mefface  
 Chose envers vous qui nostre amour efface,  
 Et que vo vueil  
 Puisse accomplir, einsi com je le vueil  
 Faire, humblement, sans hautesse, n'orgueil,  
 655 Car, se je puis, assez miex que ne sueil,  
 Vous serviray  
 Tres loiaument de cuer et ameray,  
 Et vostre honneur en tous cas garderay.  
 N'en dit, n'en fait, n'en penser ne feray  
 660 Chose envers vous,  
 N'envers autrui dont vous aies courrous.  
 Einsois serés ma dame et mes cuers dous,  
 Mes diex terriens, auarez dessus tous.  
 Et sans doubtance,  
 665 Se je fais riens contre vostre plaisir,  
 Ne dont vos cuers ait courrous ne grevence,  
 Sachiez de voir que c'iert par negligence.'  
 Ma dame, einsi

- But now I was recovered, brought back from death,  
Enriched beyond belief, filled with great consolation,  
    And without tribulation
- 625 When she told me: 'Lover, I give myself to you  
Most willingly.' And this quite sweet boon  
Made me a hundred thousand times grander than a king,  
    So that no one  
Could describe the joy I felt.
- 630 For I was so happy I could not  
Utter my thanks, was not able to speak.  
    But in the end,  
Like a lover loyal and pure, with a noble heart,  
Inflamed to love, without a devious thought,
- 635 Very humbly, with lowered head, I told her  
    Without difficulty:  
'Lady, whom I love above all others, myself included,  
To whom I devote reason, heart, time, life, and affection,  
As much as I have power, but not as I should,
- 640 I thank you  
For the noble gift of your sweet mercy  
Since you have so greatly enriched,  
So elated, so cured, so rewarded me  
    That truly
- 645 If everything beneath the sky  
Or all that was or will be  
Had been given me entirely to do my will,  
    I would not value it  
A hundredth part as I do your mercy.
- 650 So pray God I never wrong you  
In anything that might sully our love,  
    And also that I might fulfill  
Your will as much as I intend,  
Humbly, not haughtily, not proudly,
- 655 For, if I can, much better than has been my wont  
    I will serve you  
Quite faithfully from my heart and love you;  
And in all things I will guard your honor well.  
Not in word, deed, or thought
- 660 Will I do anything  
Against you or anyone that will make you angry.  
Instead you will be my lady and my sweetheart,  
My divinity on earth, adored above all others;  
    And without a doubt,
- 665 If I do something against your pleasure,  
Whatever might anger or torment your heart,  
Know truly it would be through oversight alone.'
- My lady, in this manner

670      La merciay com vous avez oy,  
 Dou noble don de sa douce mercy.  
 Et elle aussi me jura et plevi  
         Moult durement  
 Qu'a tous jours mais m'ameroit loiaument  
 Sans moy guerpir et sans departement.  
 675      Einsi regnay en joie longuelement  
         Que je n'avoie  
 Nulle chose qui fust contraire a joie,  
 Mais envoisiez et reveleus estoie,  
 Jolis et gais, trop plus que ne soloie.  
 680      Et c'estoit drois  
 Qu'a mon pooir fusse gens et adrois,  
 Car par cuidier estoie en tous endrois  
 Li miex amez des amans et li rois.  
         Mais quant Fortune,  
 685      La desloial, qui n'est pas a tous une,  
 M'ot si haut mis, com mauvaise et enfrune,  
 Moy ne mes biens ne prisa une prune;  
         Einsi fist la moe,  
 Moy renoia et me tourna la joe;  
 690      Quant elle m'ot assis dessus sa roe,  
 Puis la tourna, si cheï en la boe.  
         Mais ce fist elle,  
 La traïtre, toudis preste et isnele  
 De ceaus traïr qu'elle met dessous s'ele,  
 fol. 14r    Pour ce que Diex et Nature la bele,  
 696      Quant il formerent  
 Celle que j'aim, si fort se deliterent  
 En la tres grant biauté qu'il li donnerent  
 Que loyauté a mettre y oublierent.  
 700      Et bien y pert!  
 Que je say bien et voy tout en apert  
 Que ma dame, qui tant a corps apert,  
 Que mes cuers crient, aime, obeïst, et sert,  
         A fait amy  
 705      Nouvelement, sans cause, autre que my.  
 Si que, dame, se je pleure et gemy  
 Parfondement et di souvent: 'Aimy!'  
         N'est pas merveille  
 Quant sa fine biauté qui n'a pareille  
 710      Et sa colour vive, fresche, et vermeille,  
 Et son tres doux regart qui me traveille,  
         M'ont eslongié,  
 Et qu'elle m'a dou tout donné congé  
 Et de tous biens privé et estrangié.  
 715      Helas! Comment aroie je cuer lié?

- I thanked her, just as you have heard,  
670 For the noble gift of her sweet mercy.  
And she in turn pledged to me and swore  
Quite adamantly  
She would from this day forward love me loyally,  
Never forsaking or deserting me.  
675 And so for a long time I was crowned with joy.  
Nothing  
Contrary to joy did I experience,  
Instead was happy and full of celebration,  
Much more jolly and gay than I had ever been.  
680 And it was proper  
I did my best to be kind and thoughtful,  
Since it seemed in all ways I was  
The best loved of lovers and their king.  
But when Fortune,  
685 The betrayer, who does not treat everyone the same,  
Had lifted me up so high, in an evil and miserly fashion  
She valued my goods and me no more than a fig;  
Instead she frowned,  
Denied me, turned her face away.  
690 After she had seated me atop her wheel,  
She turned it, and I tumbled into the mud.  
But she did this,  
That traitress quick and ready on all occasions  
To undo those she puts beneath her wing,  
695 Because God and beautiful Nature,  
When they shaped  
The woman I love, so greatly delighted  
In the incredible beauty they bestowed upon her  
They forgot to give her faithfulness.  
700 And how evident it is!  
For I know well and clearly see  
That lady, whose body is so lovely,  
Whom my heart respects, loves, obeys, and serves,  
Has taken a new  
705 Lover without cause, someone other than me.  
And so, lady, if I moan and cry  
Quite bitterly and often utter 'Oh me!'  
It is no wonder  
Since her pure beauty without peer,  
710 Her vibrant complexion, fresh and rosy,  
And that sweet look that tortures me still  
Have abandoned me,  
And she has uttered her last goodbye  
And, also, has deprived me of my every good.  
715 Alas! How could my heart be happy?

Et a grant tort  
 M'a retollu ma joie et mon confort,  
 Et si m'a mis en si grant desconfort  
 Que je say bien que j'en aray la mort,  
 720                    Ne riens deffendre  
 Ne m'en porroit, nés .i. seul confort rendre.  
 Mais ce qui fait mon cuer partir et fendre,  
 C'est ce que je ne me say a qui prendre  
                    De mon anuy,  
 725                    Car il m'est vis, se par Fortune sui  
 Jus dou degré ou jadis montez fui,  
 Par li en qui je ne me fi, n'apui,  
                    A dire voir,  
 730                    Que nul mal gré ne li en doy savoir,  
 Car elle fist dou faire son devoir;  
 N'elle ne doit autre mestier avoir  
                    Fors de traïr  
 Ceaus qu'elle voit monter et enrichir,  
 Et de faire le bas en haut venir;  
 735                    N'elle ne puet personne tant chierir  
                    Que seürté  
 Li face avoir de sa bonneürté,  
 Soit de joie, soit de maleürté,  
 Que sus ou jus ne l'ait moult tost hurté.  
 740                    C'est sa nature:  
 Si bien ne sont fors que droite aventure;  
 Ce n'est qu'uns vens, une fausse estature.  
 Une joie est qui po vaut et po dure.  
                    C'est fols s'i fie!  
 745                    Chascun deçoit et nelui ne deffie.  
 Et se je di que la mort qui m'aigrie  
 Puis demander a ma dame jolie,  
                    Par quel raison  
 Le ferai je, ne par quel occoison?  
 750                    Elle s'est mise en la subjection  
 D'Amours, a qui elle ha fait de li don  
                    Entierement,  
 Et vuet qu'elle ait tres souvereinnement,  
 Com ses souvreins, seur li commandement  
 755                    Si qu'el ne puet contrester nullement  
                    A son plaisir;  
 Eins li couvient en tous cas oubéir,  
 Dont, se ma dame ha plaisirce et desir  
 De moy laissier pour un autre enhierir,  
 760                    Ce fait Amour,  
 Nom pas ma dame, en qui tout a valour.  
 Car elle fait son devoir et s'onnour

- And quite wrongfully  
She has taken back my joy and comfort,  
Putting me in such great distress  
I know well it will be my death,  
720      Nor might anything  
Save me from this or provide a single comfort.  
But what tears and breaks my heart  
Is that I don't know whom to blame  
For my suffering  
725      Since it seems that if I was shoved down  
The ladder I once had climbed through Fortune,  
Whom I do not trust or depend upon,  
Then, to tell the truth,  
I should feel no bitterness toward her,  
730      Since in the deed she simply did her duty;  
And she ought have no other task  
But betraying  
Those she watches mount up, grow rich,  
As well as raising high those of low estate;  
735      Nor can she love any person so dearly  
She would issue  
A guarantee for him to keep his luck,  
Whether it is happiness or disaster,  
And she would not suddenly move him up or down.  
740      Such is her nature.  
Her goods are but lucky happenstance,  
Which is merely breeze, deceptive form.  
They are a joy that hardly lasts and is worth little.  
He's a fool who trusts it!  
745      She deceives and defies all,  
And if I say that the death destroying me  
I can blame on my pretty lady,  
By what logic  
Would I do so and for what cause?  
750      She has become subject to the rule  
Of Love, to whom she gives herself  
Completely,  
And she is eager for Love to govern her  
As her sovereign and to be under Love's command.  
755      So she cannot go against  
The wishes of Love;  
Instead she finds it always necessary to obey,  
And so it is my lady's pleasure and desire  
To abandon me and cherish some other man,  
760      Love does this,  
Not my lady, who is completely worthy.  
For she did her duty and the honorable thing

- D'obeir a son souverein signour.  
 Si qu'il m'est vis,
- 765 Quant par Amour d'amer estoie espris,  
 Qu'en ce faisant Amours ha plus mespris  
 Par devers moy que ma dame de pris,  
 C'est a entendre,  
 S'Amours pooit par devers moy mesprendre.
- 770 Mais nullement je ne puis ce comprendre,  
 Car longuement, com douce mere et tendre,  
 M'a repeü  
 De ses dous biens au miex qu'elle ha peü,  
 Ne je n'ay pas encor aperceü,
- 775 Pour nul meschief que j'aie receü,  
 Que tout adés  
 Elle ne m'ait com amie esté pres  
 Et qu'el ne m'ait servi de tous mes més,  
 De plours devant et de soupirs après.
- fol. 14v C'est ma viande;  
 Mon appetit plus ne vuet ne demande,  
 Ne, par m'ame, riens n'est a quoy je tende  
 Fors seulement a ce que mes cuers fende.
- Einsi Amour
- 785 Croist en mon cuer au fuer de ma dolour,  
 Ne ne s'en part, ne de nuit, ne de jour,  
 Eins me compaingne en mon dolereus plour  
 Par sa bonté;
- 790 Si que je di que c'est grant amité  
 Qui m'a esté mere en prosperité,  
 Et encor est en mon adversité.
- Si ne me puis  
 Pleindre de li, se trop mauvais ne suis,  
 Car sans partir de moy toudis la truis,
- 795 Ne je ne suis mie par li destruis,  
 Qu'elle ne puet  
 Muer les cuers, puis que Diex ne le vuet.  
 Car quant Diex fist ma dame qui me suet  
 Clamer amy, dont li cuers trop me duet,
- 800 S'il et Nature,  
 Quant il firent sa biauté fine et pure,  
 Plaisant a tous seur toute creature,  
 Heüssent lors en sa douce figure  
 Loyauté mis,
- 805 Je fusse encor appellez ses amis,  
 Et ses cuers qui tant bien m'avoit promis  
 N'eüst jamais esté mes anemis.
- Pour ce di qu'en ce  
 Nature et Diex feïrent ignorance,

In obeying her sovereign lord.  
And so, when Love  
765 Inflamed me to love, I think  
Love, so doing, wronged me more  
Than my worthy lady did,  
That is to say  
If Love indeed could wrong me.  
770 But that I cannot understand at all,  
Since for a long time like a sweet and tender mother  
She nourished me  
As best she could with her sweet goods,  
Nor have I yet perceived,  
775 For any hurt I might have received,  
That she has been  
Less than a friend by my side,  
Serving me with all her meals,  
Tears for starters and sighing for a sweet.  
780 Such is my meat;  
My appetite does not wish or ask for more;  
And, by my soul, I am not drawn toward anything  
Save what breaks my heart.  
And therefore Love  
785 Grows in my heart in proportion to my pain,  
Nor does she leave by night or day.  
Instead she's my companion in my painful weeping  
Because of her goodness;  
And so I maintain it is great friendship  
790 To be my mother in prosperity  
And in adversity the same.  
Then I should be  
Quite wicked if I complained of her,  
For I find her always at my side,  
795 Nor does she destroy me in the least,  
For she cannot  
Alter hearts since God does not wish it.  
But when God made the lady who was wont to  
Call me lover, for whom my heart feels such pain,  
800 If He and Nature,  
When they created her noble and pure beauty,  
More pleasing to all men than that of any other,  
Had they then in that sweet form  
Put loyalty,  
805 I would yet be called her lover,  
And her heart, which promised me so much,  
Would never have been my foe.  
So in this matter I say  
God and Nature did act in ignorance

- 810    Sauve l'onner d'eaus et leur reverence,  
       Quant il firent si tres bele samblance  
       Sans loiauté.  
       Car s'elle heüst cent fois meins de biauté,  
       Et elle fust loyal, la grant bonté  
 815    De loiauté l'eüst plus honnouré  
       Que s'elle fust  
       Cent mille fois plus bele, et miex pleüst,  
       Et en tous cas trop miex plaire deüst,  
       Pour ce qu'en li riens a dire n'eüst.  
 820    Si que je croy  
       Qu'a Bonne Amour, a Fortune, n'a soy  
       Riens demander de mes dolours ne doy.  
       Et en puis je riens demander a moy?  
       Certes oïl!  
 825    Car je me mis de richesse en essil,  
       De seürté en .i. mortel peril,  
       De joie en dueil, par son regart soutil,  
       Et de franchise  
       En servitute ou on n'aimme, ne prise  
 830    Moy, ne mes biens, m'amour, ne mon servise,  
       Ne ma vie vaillant une cerise.  
       Et nompourquant,  
       Il m'est avis que pas ne mespris, quant  
       Je l'enamai, qu'en ce monde vivant  
 835    N'avoit dame qui fust si excellent,  
       Ce disoit on.  
       Si devins siens en bonne entention,  
       Ne jamais n'i cuidasse, se bien non,  
       Pour la grandeur de son tres bon renon,  
 840    Qui m'a destruit.  
       Mais ce n'est pas tout d'or quanque reluit  
       N'on ne doit pas tant amer son deduit  
       Qu'on ne s'en puist retraire, quant il cuit.  
       Et se je fusse  
 845    Tous li mieudres dou mont, je n'esleüsse  
       Autre que li, ne miex je ne peüsse,  
       Se loiauté en li trouve heüsse.  
       Si ne m'en say  
       Que demander et a qui m'en penray  
 850    Des griés dolours et des meschiés que j'ay.  
       S'on m'en demande, a tous responderay  
       Que ç'a fait Dieus  
       Et Nature; dont c'est meschiés et diex,  
       Quant il firent son corps en trestous lieus  
 855    Si bel, si gent, si dous, qu'on ne puet mieus,  
       S'il fust loyaus.

- 810 (Saving their honor and the respect due them)  
When they fashioned such a beautiful being  
Without loyalty.  
For if she had been a hundred times less beautiful  
And yet faithful, the great virtue  
815 Of loyalty would have done her more honor  
Than if she had been  
A hundred times more lovely — she'd then have pleased more;  
And she should have been more kind-hearted  
Because there would have been nothing to fault.
- 820 So I believe  
That not Good Love, not Fortune, nor my lady  
Should be blamed for my sorrows.  
Then can I blame myself in any way?  
Yes, certainly!
- 825 For I betook myself from riches to wretchedness,  
From safety to mortal peril,  
From joy to pain through her subtle look,  
And from freedom  
Into a servitude where no one loves or values
- 830 Me, my honor, affection, or service,  
Or even my previous life as much as a cherry.  
Nonetheless  
It seems I did no wrong  
By falling in love with her, for in this world  
835 There was no lady living as excellent,  
So they said.  
Thus with good intention I became hers  
And never hoped for anything but good  
Because of the grandeur of her most impressive fame,
- 840 Which has destroyed me.  
But all that glitters is not gold,  
And no one should love his delight so much  
He cannot abandon it when he thinks to.  
And had I been
- 845 The world's greatest man, I would not have chosen  
Anyone save her, nor could I have done better  
Had I found loyalty in her.  
So I do not know  
Whom to blame or accuse
- 850 For the grievous pain and misfortune I suffer.  
Were I asked, to all I would answer  
That God and Nature  
Did this; so it is misadventure and sorrow  
They made her body so beautiful
- 855 In every way, so noble, so sweet no one could do better  
Had it been faithful.

- Si me penray a eaus .ij. de mes maus?  
 Je non feray, car il me sont trop haus;  
 Eins soufferray, c'est mes milleurs consaus  
 860                   D'ore en avant.
- Or vous ay dit la maniere comment  
 Amours me fist estre loyal amant,  
 L'estat, la guise, et tout le couvenant;  
 Ce qui m'avint,  
 865                   Comment pris fui, comment on me retint;  
 Comment de moy ma dame ne souvint;  
 Les biens, les maus qu'endurer me couvint  
                       Jusqu'au jour de hui;  
 Comment je n'ay aïe de nelui;  
 870                   Comment vengier ne puis mon grief anui,  
 Dont a par mi me moudri et destrui,  
                       Si que je di,  
 Se bien m'avez entendu et oÿ,  
 Que la doleur dont en morant langui,  
 875                   Qui mon viaire a desteint et pali  
                       Par sa rigour,  
 Est de vos maus cent mille fois gringnour;  
 Car fine joie et parfaite douçour  
 Sont vostre mal encontre la dolour  
 880                   Qui me martyre."
- “Certes, sire, pas ne vous vueil desdire  
 Que vous n'aiez moult de dolour et d'ire,  
 S'einsi perdez ce que vos cuers desire.  
                       Mais toutevoie,  
 885                   Il m'est avis, et dire l'oseroie,  
 Consideré vo dolour et la moie,  
 Qu'il a en vous meins dolour et plus joie  
                       Qu'il n'ait en moy.
- Si vous en vueil dire raison pourquoy;  
 890                   Vous m'avez dit que vous amez en foy  
 Ceste dame qui tant vous fait d'anoy  
                       Et amerez  
 De loyal cuer, tant comme vis serez.  
 Et puisqu'il est einsi que vous l'amez,  
 895                   Certes, je croy que s'amour desirez,  
                       Car avenir  
 Voy po souvent qu'amours soit sans desir,  
 Ne que desirs d'amours se puist souffrir  
 D'esperence; et s'avez souvenir  
 900                   Aucune fois  
 Dont, quant vos cuers est par desir destrois,  
 Il vous souvient de la bele aus crins blois,



Dont vous avez des pensers plus de .iij.  
 Si ne puet estre

905 Que vous n'aiez aucun penser qui nestre  
 Aucune joie face en vous, qui remestre  
 Fait la dolour qui si vous tient a mestre,  
 Si qu'a la fie  
 Par souvenir avez pensee lie

910 Qui vo dolour espart et entroublie.  
 Mais la mienne jour et nuit monteplie  
 Sans nul sejour,  
 Et toudis croist li ruissaus de mon plour,  
 N'avoir ne puis pensee par nul tour,  
 915 N'esperence de recouvrer m'amour.  
 Mais par servir,  
 Par honnouer, par celer, par cremir,  
 Par endurer liement et souffrir,  
 Par bien amer de cuer et oublier  
 920 Tres humblement  
 Povez encore avoir aligement,  
 Joie et l'amour de celle ou vos cuers tent.  
 Si que je di que j'ay plus de tourment,  
 Et moult visible  
 925 Est la raison, ce m'est vis, et sensible:  
 Car de ravoir vo dame, c'est possible;  
 Mais mon amy ravoir, c'est impossible  
 Selonc nature.”

“Dame, d'onour, de sens, et de mesure  
 930 A plus en vous qu'en autre creature.  
 Car par vo sens mis a desconfiture  
 Moult tost seroie,  
 S'a vos raisons respondre ne pooie.  
 Car vraiment faire ne le saroie  
 935 Si sagement, com mestier en aroie.  
 Mais repeter  
 Vueil vos raisons se j'y puis assener.  
 fol. 15v Vous arguez que j'aimme sans fausser  
 Et amerai tant com porrai durer  
 940 Sans repentir;  
 Et puis que j'aim, il faut qu'aie desir  
 Qui ne se puet deporter ne souffrir  
 D'esperence; et si ay souvenir,  
 Qui esmouvoir  
 945 Me fait souvent a maint penser avoir.  
 Certes, dame, ce vous ottroi pour voir,  
 Fors seulement que je n'ay point d'espoir.  
 Mais sachiez bien,

- Of whom you have more thoughts than three.  
Then it cannot be
- 905 You never have a single thought to make  
Joy grow within you and relieve  
The pain so tightly binding you;  
So in the end
- Through memory you have happy thoughts  
910 That shove the sorrow out and make you forget it.  
But mine multiplies day and night  
Without a rest,  
And every day the stream of my tears increases,  
And I cannot ever think about
- 915 Or have hope of recovering my love.  
But by serving,  
By honoring, remaining discreet, respecting,  
By happily enduring and suffering,  
By loving well from the heart and obeying
- 920 Quite humbly  
You still might find relief, joy,  
And the love of the woman your heart is drawn toward.  
So I say I'm more tormented,  
And quite evident
- 925 Is the reason, it seems to me, and sound;  
For it is possible to have your lady back,  
But to have my lover back, that is impossible  
According to Nature's law."
- "Lady, there's more honor, wisdom,  
930 And moderation in you than in anyone else.  
Now by your reasoning I should be undone  
Quite quickly  
Could I not answer your arguments.  
Yet truly I cannot accomplish this
- 935 With as much wisdom as required.  
But I intend  
To go over your reasons if I can manage it.  
You argue I love without deceit  
And will as long as I live
- 940 Without repenting;  
And since I love, I must experience desire,  
Which cannot do without or lack  
Hope; and so I have memories  
That often
- 945 Move me to thinking many thoughts.  
Lady, I certainly grant all you say  
Save only that I have no hope at all.  
But mark well,

Dame, comment qu'il n'ait partout que bien,  
 950 Qu'en ce vostre entendement et le mien  
 Ne se joingnent, ne acordent en rien;  
 Eins sont contraire,  
 Einsi com je le vous pense a retraire,  
 Quant poins sera. Mais ce ne vueil pas taire  
 955 Que vous dites qu'encor puis je tant faire  
 Par honnourer,  
 Par bien servir, par souffrir, par doubter,  
 Par oublier, par loyaument amer,  
 Qu'en joie puis ma dame recouvrer;  
 960 Mais ce seroit  
 Moult grant maistrie au garder qui l'aroit.  
 Car en .i. lieu son cuer n'arresteroit  
 Nés que feroit .i. estuef seur .i. toit.  
 Et vostre amour,  
 965 Qui tant avoit de pris et de valour,  
 Ne povez mais recouvrer par nul tour,  
 Dont vous avez veinne et pale coulour.  
 Si qu'einsi dites  
 Que mes dolours sont assez plus petites  
 970 Que les vostres, dont je ne suis pas quites,  
 Ne que pas n'ay acquis par mes merites.  
 Si respondrai  
 A ces raisons au mieus que je porrai,  
 Et sus chascune un po m'arrestera;  
 975 Si en dirai ce que j'en sens et say  
 De sentement.

Dame, il est voirs que j'aim tres loiaument  
 Ce qui me het, c'est ma dame au corps gent,  
 Qui est ma mort et mon destruiselement  
 980 Quant je li voy  
 Autrui amer, et n'a cure de moy,  
 Qu'elle deüst amer en bonne foy;  
 Si qu'a paine que tout ne me marvoy  
 De ceste amour.  
 985 Car, s'elle amast ma vie, ne m'onnour,  
 En la doleur ou je vif et demour  
 Ne me laissast languir l'eure d'un jour  
 Pour tout le monde.  
 Mais en vertu font monteplier l'onde  
 990 De la doleur qui en mon cuer habonde:  
 Amours premiers et ma dame seconde.  
 Pour ce ay desir.  
 Mais quels est il? Il est de tost morir,  
 Car il n'est riens qui me peüst venir

Lady, though our intentions here are only good,  
950 In this your understanding and my own  
Do not accord at all, agree in nothing;  
Rather they are opposed,  
As I think to make clear to you  
When the time is right. But I will not pass over  
955 In silence your statement that I can still do so much  
By honoring,  
By serving well, suffering, respecting,  
By obeying, by loving loyally  
That I can in joy get my lady back.  
960 For it would be  
Quite a trick to keep her, whoever could  
Since her heart would not remain in one place,  
No more than a ball on a roof.  
And your lover,  
965 Who was so strong and worthy,  
You cannot recover in any fashion,  
And so your color is wan and pale.  
So you say  
My pains are much less  
970 Than your own; and thus I have not triumphed,  
Nor have I earned the judgment by my merits.  
For this reason I will answer  
Your arguments as best I can,  
And I will spend time on each one;  
975 Also I will reveal what I think and know  
About my feelings.

Lady, it's true I love quite faithfully the woman  
Who hates me, that is, my lady of noble form  
Who is my death and destruction  
980 When I witness her  
Love another man and think no thoughts of me,  
Whom she in good faith ought to love;  
So I am almost driven mad  
By this love.  
985 For if she loved my life or honor,  
She would not for all the world  
Let me languish one hour of a day  
In the state where I live and dwell.  
But with great force they increase the tide  
990 Of suffering that floods my heart:  
Love first, and my lady second.  
For this reason I feel desire.  
But what for? To die swiftly,  
For nothing could possibly happen

- 995      Dont je peüssse esperer le garir.  
             Et se j'avoie  
             L'amour de li miex que je ne soloie,  
             Ne sai je pas se je m'i fieroie.  
             Certes, nennil! Pourquoy? Je n'oseroie.
- 1000     Car nourreture,  
             Si com on dit, vaint et passe nature,  
             Et toudis va, s'il ne se desnature,  
             Li leux au bois — c'est la verité pure.  
             Et par ce point
- 1005     En mon desir d'esperance n'a point,  
             Mais a li joint desespoir si apoint  
             Que je serai matez en l'angle point  
             Dou souvenir,  
             Que vous dites, qui fait en moy venir
- 1010     La pensee qui me fait resjoïr.  
             Certes, de li ne puis jamais joïr,  
             Ne n'en joï,  
             Ne ne le vi, ne senti, ne oy,  
             Puis que ma dame ot fait nouvel ami,
- 1015     Car adonques se parti il de mi.  
             Si voeil prouver  
             Que c'est la riens qui plus me puet grever  
             Et qui plus fait mon cuer desesperer  
             Que souvenir. Vous savez (et c'est cler;
- 1020     Chascuns le voit),  
             Que, se jamez il ne me souvenoit  
             De ma dame qui me tient moult destroit,  
             Que ma doleur oubliee seroit.  
             Et s'elle estoit
- 1025     Oubliee, l'oubliance feroit  
             Qu'elle dou tout morroit ou cesseroit;  
             Et ce garir de tous maus me pourroit.  
             Mais qu'avient il?  
             Cils souvenirs, par son engin soubtil,
- 1030     Me ramentoit le viaire gentil  
             Et le gent corps pour qui mon cuer exil;  
             Més engenrez,  
             Nez et fenis est, et continuez  
             Tous en dolour. Pour quoy? Pour ce qu'amez
- 1035     Cuiday estre quant amis fui clamez  
             Tres doucement.  
             Helas! Dolens! Or est bien autrement  
             Quant ma dame aimme autre nouvellement.  
             Et puet on pis, dame, s'on ne se pent?
- 1040     Certes, nennil!  
             Car c'est pour mettre un amant a essil;

- 995      That would give me hope for cure,  
            And had I  
            A better love from her than I once had,  
            I don't know if I would trust it.  
            Surely I would not! Why? I would not dare.
- 1000     For nurture,  
            As they say, conquers and overcomes nature,  
            And always, if he doesn't go against his kind,  
            The wolf makes his way to the woods — that's the simple truth.  
            For this reason
- 1005     My desire has no hope at all,  
            But despair is so confounded with it  
            I will be checkmated  
            By memory,  
            Which, you said, gives rise in me
- 1010     To the thought that makes me rejoice.  
            Surely I'll not be able ever to find joy in this thought,  
            Nor have I yet enjoyed it  
            And I have not seen, felt, or heard it  
            Since my lady took a new lover,  
1015     For that thought parted from me then.  
            So I intend proving  
            That this memory is what grieves me  
            More and makes my heart  
            Despair more. You know (it's clear,
- 1020     Everyone sees it)  
            That if I never thought about  
            My lady, who binds me so tightly to her,  
            My pain would be forgotten.  
            And were she
- 1025     Forgotten, the forgetting would make  
            The pain die out completely or cease;  
            And this could cure me of all my sickness.  
            But what would happen?  
            This memory, by its subtle trickery,
- 1030     Recalls to me the gentle face  
            And the noble body for whom my heart breaks;  
            Yet this memory is conceived,  
            Born and perfected, endures  
            All in suffering. Why? Because I considered myself
- 1035     Loved when I was called lover  
            Quite sweetly.  
            Alas! Sorrowful! Now it is quite otherwise  
            When my lady has taken to loving another man.  
            And could one do worse, lady, unless he hanged himself?
- 1040     Surely not!  
            For such a thing sends a lover into ruination,

N'eschaper hors de si mortel peril  
 N'en devroit pas un d'entre cinq cent mil,  
 Dont il avient  
 1045 Par maintes fois, quant de ce me souvient,  
 Que mes las cuers dedens mon corps devient  
 Si dolereux que pasmer me couvient.  
 Et se pensee  
 Par souvenir est en moy engendree,  
 1050 Quelle est elle? Elle est desconforte,  
 Triste, mourne, lasse, et desesperee.  
 Et, par may foy,  
 Je n'ai penser qui ne soit contre moy;  
 Et se le pren au pis. Savez pour quoy?  
 1055 Pour ce qu'aler ma dame en change voy.  
 Et se la joie  
 Que j'avoie, quant en sa grace estoie,  
 Ne fust plus grant que dire ne saroie,  
 Ne ymaginer ne penser ne porroie,  
 1060 La grief dolour  
 Qui me destreint en fust assez menour.  
 Mais de tant plus que j'eus joie grignour,  
 De tant est plus crueuse ma langour.  
 Et que ravoir  
 1065 Puisse ma dame, ou je n'ay nul espoir  
 — Ymaginer ne le puis, ne veoir.  
 Se vous diray ce qui m'i fait doloir:  
 Dame, y me samble  
 Q'une chose qui se part et assamble  
 1070 En pluseurs lieus, et avec c'elle tramble  
 Et n'arreste ne que fueille de tramble,  
 fol. 16r Et n'est estable,  
 Eins est toudis changant et variable,  
 Puis ci, puis la, or au feu, a la table,  
 1075 Et puis ailleurs, c'est chose moult doutable.  
 Car nullement  
 On ne la puet avoir seürement.  
 C'est droitement li gieus d'enchantement  
 Que ce qu'on cuide avoir certainnement,  
 1080 On ne l'a mie.  
 Einsi est il, dame, quoy que nuls die,  
 De ma dame, qui se change et varie,  
 Donne et retolt, or het, or est amie,  
 N'en une part  
 1085 N'est tous ses cuers, et s'aucuns y repart,  
 Certes, je croy qu'il en ha povre part,  
 Et que de li celle part tost se part.  
 N'a droit jugier,

- And not one man in five hundred thousand  
Is apt to escape such deadly danger,  
    And so it happens
- 1045 Often when I remember this  
That the weary heart in my body becomes  
So full of pain I have to faint.  
    And if thought
- Takes shape through memory in me,  
1050 What is it? It's something with no comfort,  
Sad, mournful, filled with sorrow, and despairing.  
    And, by my faith,  
I have no thought that is not my foe.  
So this makes it worse. Do you know why?
- 1055 Because I witness my lady change her heart.  
    And if the joy  
I had when in her grace  
Had not been greater than I could describe,  
Or was able to imagine or even conceive,
- 1060 The grievous pain  
Gripping me would be rather less.  
But as much as I did once possess great joy  
So is my suffering crueler.  
    And that I could
- 1065 Get my lady back or have any hope of doing so  
— This I cannot imagine or conceive.  
And I'll tell you what makes me suffer:  
    Lady, it seems  
That something which separates and then unites
- 1070 In several places and likewise is in motion,  
Keeps no more still than an aspen leaf,  
    And lacks stability,  
Instead is always variable and changing,  
Now here, now there, at the hearth, at the table,  
1075 And then elsewhere, is something to be very wary of.  
    For in no way  
Might any man possess it in security.  
It must truly be the play of some spell,  
For believing to have it for certain,
- 1080 One does not at all.  
So it is, lady, whatever anyone might say,  
With my beloved, who changes and varies,  
Gives and takes back, now hates, now is a friend,  
    And all her heart
- 1085 Is not in one place, and if anyone shares in it,  
I certainly believe his portion is a poor one  
And will soon be taken from him.  
    Nor, to judge rightly,

- 1090 Amans ne puet avoir homme si chier  
 Qu'il le vosist avoir a parsonnier  
 En ses amours, sans plus nés par cuidier.  
 Et pour ce a plain;  
 Ne puis avoir son cuer, dont je me plein;  
 Car cuers qui va einsi de main en main,  
 1095 S'on l'a ennuit, on ne l'a pas demain;  
 Et toute voie  
 Et vrais amans li drois oisiaus de proie,  
 Car il ne vuet avoir pour toute joie  
 Fors tout le cuer de celle ou il s'otroie.
- 1100 Si que je di  
 Que vous rariés aussi tost vostre amy,  
 Comme on avroit mué le cuer de ly  
 Ad ce qu'il fust entierement en my  
 Mis sans retraire.
- 1105 Car on ne puet le leu de sa piau traire  
 Sans l'escorchier, n'on ne puet d'un buef faire  
 .I. esprivier, ne aussi le contraire.  
 Et, douce dame,  
 La coustume est partout d'omme et de fame
- 1110 Que, quant dou corps s'est departie l'ame  
 Et li corps est en terre sous la lame,  
 Qu'en petit d'eure  
 Est oubliez, ja soit ce qu'on en pleure.  
 Car nuls n'en voy ne nulle qui demeure
- 1115 Tant en son pleur qu'a joie ne requeure  
 Eins que li ans  
 Soit accomplis, tant soit loiaus amans,  
 Ne excepter n'en vueil petis ne grans.  
 Et vraiment, je croy que ce soit scens.
- 1120 Si en ferez  
 La coustume; pas ne la briserez  
 Car ja de nul reprise n'en serez,  
 Et de bon cuer pour l'ame prierez.  
 Mais en oubli
- 1125 Ne puis mettre celle que pas n'oubli,  
 Car Souvenir la tient moult pres de mi  
 Sans departir jour, heure, ne demy;  
 Et si la voy  
 Assez souvent, dont tous vis me desvoy,
- 1130 Quant longuement de mes yex la convoy,  
 Et je n'en ay joie, ne bien, n'avoy.  
 Eins voy autrui  
 Qui joie en a. C'est ce dont me destrui;  
 Car s'elle amer no vosist moy ne lui,
- 1135 Les maus que j'ay ne pleingnis a nelui,

- Could a lover hold another man so dear  
1090 He would want that one to share  
His loving, plain and simple — that's not even in his thoughts.  
And because I clearly cannot  
Possess all her heart, I lament;  
For a heart that goes this way from hand to hand,  
1095 Should some man own it at night, he won't come morning.  
And in any case,  
The true lover is a proper bird of prey  
Since he, as his joy, wishes nothing  
But the whole heart of the woman to whom he is devoted.
- 1100 And so I say  
You will get your lover back as quickly  
As her heart will be so transformed  
It will be granted me completely,  
Never to be withdrawn.
- 1105 For no man can remove the wolf's pelt  
Without flaying him, nor can anyone turn  
An ox into a sparrowhawk or vice versa.  
And, sweet lady,  
The custom is universal among men and women
- 1110 That when the soul has departed the body,  
And the body is in the ground beneath the tombstone,  
It is forgotten  
In a brief while, though wept over.  
For no man or woman I have seen has remained
- 1115 So long in mourning they fail to seek out joy again  
Before a year  
Has passed, however faithful the lover,  
And I will except neither those of high or low degree.  
And truly I believe this is reasonable.
- 1120 So you will follow  
This custom; you will not violate it at all,  
For no one will reproach you;  
And you will pray for the soul with a good heart.  
But I cannot
- 1125 Ignore the woman whom I do not forget  
Because Memory keeps her very close to me  
Without leaving for a day, an hour, not even half an hour,  
And I see her  
Rather often, which at once undoes me
- 1130 Whenever I follow her with my eyes a long time  
And I find no joy, no good, no guidance there,  
Instead witness another man  
Taking joy in her. This is what destroys me;  
For if she would not love either him or me
- 1135 I should have complained of my pains to no one;

- Eins les portasse  
 Dedens mon cuer humblement et celasse,  
 Et en espoir de joie demourasse,  
 Si que meschief ne dolour ne doubtasse.  
 1140      Ne departir  
 N'en vueil mon cuer, pour doublet dou partir,  
 Qui trop demeure en vie, et, sans mentir,  
 Je ne saroie amer a repentir.  
 Et si seroie  
 1145      Faus amoureus se je me'en departoie,  
 Car sans nul 'si' li donnai l'amour moie.  
 Si l'ameray, que qu'avenir m'en doie;  
 Et, par ma foy,  
 Si loiaument l'aim que j'ay plus d'anoy  
 1150      Cent fois pour li que je n'aie pour moy  
 Quant s'onneur voy amenrir; car au doy  
 La mousterront  
 Ceuls et celles qui ceste ouevre saront,  
 fol. 16v    Et meins assez en tous cas la croiront,  
 1155      Qu'a tous jours mais pour fausse la tenront.  
 Car de meffait  
 C'est un vice si villain et si lait,  
 Car qui le fait, ja de pooir qu'il ait,  
 N'iert de tous poins effacié ne deffait.  
 1160      Pour ce conclus,  
 Dame, que j'ay de doleur assez plus,  
 Et que plus tost a garison venus  
 Seroit vos maus que cils dont sui tenus.  
 Et jugement  
 1165      En oseroie atendre vraiment,  
 Se nous aviens juge qui loiaument  
 Vosist jugier, et veritablement."  
 "Par m'ame, sire,  
 Et de ma part je vueil et ose dire  
 1170      Que de mon cuer le jugement desire.  
 Or regardons qui nous volons eslire  
 Qui sans deport  
 Sache jugier li quels de nous a tort;  
 Car avis m'est que li maus que je port  
 1175      Est si crueus qu'on ne puet plus sans mort."  
 "Dame, je vueil  
 Que li juges soit fais tout a vo vueil."  
 "Mais au vostre, biau sire, et si conseil  
 Qu'il ne soit fais fors par vostre conseil,  
 1180      Car vous l'avez  
 Premiers requis; pour ce dire devez."  
 "Certes, dame, or ne vous en lavez,

- Instead, I would have borne them  
Humbly within my heart and kept them secret,  
Enduring in the hope of joy,  
And thus I would fear neither misadventure nor pain.
- 1140            And because I fear desertion  
I do not wish to take back my heart,  
I who remain too long alive, and — it's no lie —  
I do not know how to repent of loving.  
          And I would be
- 1145            A faithless lover if I left her,  
Because with no 'but' I gave her my love.  
And I will love her whatever happens to me;  
          And, by my faith,  
So faithfully do I love her I feel a hundred times
- 1150            More pain for her than for myself  
Because I see her honor ruined; for with their finger  
          They will point her out,  
The men and women who learn of this business,  
And they will trust her much less in every way,
- 1155            For they will always consider her false.  
          Now deception  
Is a vice so base and ugly  
That the person who indulges in it, however powerful,  
Will never be completely cured or reformed.
- 1160            So I conclude,  
Lady, that I feel much more pain  
And that your ill will come sooner  
To a cure than the one that grips me tight.  
          And I would truly dare
- 1165            To expect the judgment,  
Had we a judge who would decide  
Faithfully and according to the truth.”  
          “By my soul, sir,  
I intend and dare to say for my part
- 1170            That with all my heart I wish a judgment.  
Let us look now to whom we would choose,  
          Some man who without foolishness  
Could determine which of us is wrong;  
For the trouble I bear, it seems to me, is so cruel
- 1175            No one this side of death could endure more.”  
          “Lady, I want  
The judge to be whom you wish.”  
“I yield to you, fair sir, and so I counsel  
He be chosen by your advice alone,
- 1180            For you have  
First sought him; so you must say.”  
“Surely, my lady, don't wash your hands of this now;

Mais vous, dites, pour ce que plus savez  
Que je ne fais."



**Figure 3.** A10 (fol. 16v); The lady and knight flank the King of Bohemia. (Photo: BnF)

- 1185 Et quant je vi qu'il voloient que fais  
Fust jugemens de leurs dolereus fais,  
Mes cuers en fu de joie tous refais.  
Si ne savoie  
De .ij. choses la quele je feroie;
- 1190 D'aler vers eaus, ou se je m'en tenroie.  
Car volentiers mis les heüsse en voie  
De juge prendre  
Tel qu'a jugier leurs fais peüst entendre,  
Si souffissant qu'il n'i eüst qu'aprendre,
- 1195 Et qu'aprés lui n'i heüst que reprendre.  
Si m'avaisay  
Moult longuement et pris mon avis ay  
Que j'iroie a eaus. Lors sans delay  
Je me levay et devers eaus alay
- 1200 Tout le couvert  
Parmi l'erbe qui estoit drue et vert;  
Et quant je vins si pres d'eaus qu'en apert  
Les pos veoir et tout a descouvert,  
Le petit chien
- 1205 Prist a glatir qui ne me congnut rien,  
Dont la dame qui moult savoit de bien  
En tressailli (je m'en aperçu bien),  
Si l'apella.  
Mais moult petit prisié son apel a,
- 1210 Qu'en abaiant li chiennes m'aprocha,  
Tant que ses dens a ma robe acrocha.  
Si le hapay,  
Dont il laissa de paour son abay.  
Mais en mon cuer forment m'en deportay,
- 1215 Pour ce qu'a sa dame le reportay,

Please, you say because you know much more  
Than do I."

- 1185 And when I saw they desired  
A judgment rendered in their painful cases,  
Joy flooded my heart.  
    And I did not know  
    Which of two things I would do:  
1190 Move toward them or restrain myself.  
    For I would have willingly put them on the path  
        Of finding a judge  
    Able to undertake ruling on their cases  
    So skillfully there would be nothing to do but learn from it,  
1195 And afterward there should be no cause for dispute.  
    So I deliberated  
    Quite a while and decided  
    I would go to them. Then I rose up  
    Without delay and made my way toward them,  
1200      All unseen  
    Through the grass so green and thick;  
    When I had drawn near enough  
    To see them all in the open,  
        The little dog,  
1205 Who did not know me at all, began to bark;  
    And because of this the lady, who knew much of virtue,  
    Startled (this I clearly witnessed)  
        And called him.  
    But he thought little of her summons  
1210 Since, barking, the dog drew nearer  
    Until he tore with his teeth at my robe.  
        So I picked him up,  
    And he stopped barking out of fear.  
    Now in my heart I secretly quite enjoyed this  
1215 Because I returned him to his mistress

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
|          | Pour avoir voie  |
| 1220     | Et occoison d'aler ou je voloie;<br>Si que toudis son poil aplanioie,<br>Mais quant je vins ou estre desiroie,                       |
|          | Je ne fui mie  |
|          | Mus, n'esbahis; einsois a chiere lie<br>Ay salué toute la compaingnie,<br>Si com faire le sos de ma partie.                          |
|          | Li chevaliers  |
| 1225     | Qui sages fu, courtois, et biaus parliers,   |
| fol. 17r | Grans, lons, et drois, biaus, et gens, et legiers,<br>Et d'onner faire apris et coustumiers,   |
|          | Sans plus atendre  |
|          | Courtoisement me vint mon salut rendre.  |
| 1230     | Et la dame ou Nature volt entendre<br>Si qu'on ne puet sa grant biauté comprendre  |
|          | Vers moy se trait  |
|          | Moult humblement, doucement, et a trait.   |
|          | Car elle avoit moult gracieus attrait  |
| 1235     | Et le maintieng humble, dous, et parfait;  |
|          | Et cheveus blons,  |
|          | Les yex rians, plus vairs que nuls faucons,<br>Et ses corps fu gens, joins, gentils, et lons,<br>Et plus apers que nuls esmerillons; |
| 1240     | Et s'ot l'entrueil   |
|          | Grandet a point, maniere et dous acueil,<br>Mais son attrait et son gent appareil<br>Qui simples fu n'avoit point de pareil;         |
|          | Et si fu blanche   |
| 1245     | Plus que la noif quant elle est sus la branche,<br>Sage, loial, courtoise, et de cuer franche,<br>Et si parfaite en toute contenance |
|          | Qu'en loiauté  |
|          | Estoit assez plus bele que biauté;   |
| 1250     | N'en li n'avoit orgueil, ne cruauté,<br>Ne riens qui fust contraire a amité.   |
|          | Mais esplouree   |
|          | Fu moult forment sa face coulouree;  |
|          | Et nompourquant de coulour esmeree   |
| 1255     | Et de fine douçour estoit paree.   |
|          | Si m'apella  |
|          | La dame, et puis m'enquist, et aparla  |
|          | Moult sagement dont je venoie la.  |
|          | Et je qui fu desirans d'oïr la,  |
| 1260     | La verité  |
|          | De chief en chief li ay dit et compté<br>Comment la vins et ou j'avoie esté,   |

- And so to have the chance  
And excuse to go where I wanted;  
And all the time I stroked his fur,  
But when I got where I wanted to be,  
1220                   I was not silent  
Or embarrassed at all; instead with a cheerful face  
I saluted all the company,  
As I knew how to do for my part.  
The knight,  
1225 Who was wise, courteous, and well-spoken,  
Big, tall and straight, handsome, noble and graceful,  
Well taught and accustomed to do the honorable thing,  
Without further delay  
Graciously came forward to return my greeting.  
1230 And the lady, in whom Nature wished to make clear  
How no man could comprehend her great beauty,  
Drew toward me  
Quite softly, quietly, and slowly,  
For her appearance was very gracious  
1235 And her carriage meek, pleasing, and beyond reproach;  
And her hair was blond,  
Her eyes smiling, grayer than any falcon's,  
And her body noble, well-shaped, pleasing, and long,  
Formed better than a hunting bird's.  
1240                   And attractively spaced  
Were her eyes, her manner and bearing pleasant,  
Yet while her demeanor and noble dress  
Were simple, they were beyond compare.  
Whiter she was  
1245 Than snow on the bough,  
Wise, faithful, genteel, generous at heart,  
And in all aspects of her character so perfect  
Her loyalty  
Was much more attractive than her beauty.  
1250 In her was neither haughtiness nor cruelty,  
Nothing contrary to friendship.  
Yet her face  
Was stained by tears, much discolored by them;  
Nonetheless she was endowed  
1255 With a perfect complexion, a pure sweetness.  
And so the lady  
Beckoned, then questioned me, asked  
Very wisely how I had come to that place.  
And I, eager to hear her,  
1260                   Related and told  
Her the truth from beginning to end  
Of how I had come there and where I had been

- En tant qu'il ont leur meschief raconté.  
 Lors dist en bas
- 1265 Li chevaliers par maniere de gas:  
 "Je croy qu'il ait oÿ tous nos debas."  
 Et je li dis: "Sire, n'en doubtez pas,  
 Que voirement  
 Les ay je oÿs moult ententivement
- 1270 Et volentiers; mais n'aiez pensement  
 Que je y pense fors bien; car vraiment  
 Venus estoie  
 Sus .i. ruissel, par une herbue voie,  
 En ce vergier ou je me delitoie
- 1275 Es oisillons que chanter escoutoie.  
 Et quant einsi  
 Y fui venus, sire, je vous choisi,  
 Et d'autre part ma dame venir vi.  
 Si vous dirai, comment je me chevi:
- 1280 Je regardai  
 Le plus fueillu dou brueil; si m'i boutai,  
 Car de vous faire anui moult me doubtay;  
 Et la vos biens et vos maus escoutai  
 De chief en chief.
- 1285 Or m'est avis que de vostre meschief,  
 Et ma dame qui tient enclin son chief  
 Dou sien, sauriés volentiers le plus grief  
 Par jugement.
- 1290 Si ne volez penre premierement  
 Vostre juge, ne ma dame ensement.  
 Pour ce venus sui aviseement,  
 Pour vous nommer  
 .I. chevalier qui moult fait a amer;  
 Car de ça mer n'a pas, ne de la mer,
- 1295 Plus gentil cuer, plus franc, n'a meins d'amer;  
 Car de largesse  
 Passe Alixandre et Hector de prouesse.  
 C'est li estos de toute gentillesse,  
 N'il ne vit pas com sers a sa richesse;
- 1300 Eins ne vuet rien  
 Fors que l'onner de tout le bien terrien,  
 Et s'est plus liés, quant il puet dire: 'Tien,'  
 Qu'uns couvoiteur n'est de penre dou sien.  
 Dieu et l'église
- 1305 Et loyauté aimme, et si bien justise  
 Qu'on le claimme l'Espee de Justise.  
 Humbles et dous est, et pleins de franchise  
 fol. 17v A ses amis,  
 Fiers et crueus contre ses anemis.

- While they were recounting their misfortunes.  
Then the knight spoke
- 1265 Softly, in a joking way:  
"I think he has heard all our debate."  
And I said to him: "Sir, do not doubt it,  
For truly  
I listened to it most attentively
- 1270 And willingly; but you must not think  
My intentions are anything but good; for in truth  
I came here  
From above the stream by a grassy path  
Into these woods, where I found delight
- 1275 In the birds whose song I listened to.  
And after coming  
To this spot, I noticed you,  
And from over there, sir, I saw this lady arrive.  
And I will tell you what I did.
- 1280 I searched out  
The leafiest part of the greenery and hid,  
For I greatly feared annoying you two;  
And there I listened to your joys and sufferings  
From beginning to end.
- 1285 Now it seems to me you would  
Eagerly learn through a judgment which one might be  
The more grievous: your mischance or that of the lady  
Whose head is bowed.  
You did not wish to be the first
- 1290 To select the judge, and neither did my lady.  
So I have come forward here advisedly  
In order to name for you  
A knight who does much to make himself loved,  
For on this side of the channel or the other
- 1295 No heart is nobler, none more generous, none less cruel.  
Because in generosity  
He surpasses Alexander and in prowess Hector,  
He is the pillar of all nobility,  
Nor does he live as a slave to his wealth.
- 1300 Instead he wishes nothing  
Save the honor from every worldly good,  
And he is happier when he can say 'It's yours!'  
Than the greedy man is to take from his riches.  
He loves God,
- 1305 The Church, and loyalty, and governs so justly  
He is called the Sword of Justice;  
He is humble and pleasant, full of generosity  
For his friends,  
Fierce and cruel toward his enemies;

- 1310 Et, a briés mos, de scens, d'onieur, de pris  
 En porte adés au dit des bons le pris  
 Quel part qu'il veingne.  
 Et s'il avient que son anemy teingne  
 A son dessous, Nature li enseingne,  
 1315 Et ses bons cuers, que pité li en prengne.  
 C'est noble sorte,  
 Car Prouesse partout s'espee porte,  
 Hardiesse le conduit et enorte,  
 Et Largesse si li oueve la porte  
 1320 De tous les cuers.  
 A ceaus qui sont bon (je n'en met nuls fuers),  
 Avec euls est com sont freres et suers,  
 Grans et petis, moiens, et a tous fuers.  
 Sire, et d'Amours  
 1325 Congnoist il tous les assaus, les estours,  
 Les biens, les maus, les plaintes, et les plours  
 Miex qu'Ovides, qui en sot tous les tours.  
 Et se son nom,  
 Qui tant est bons et de noble renom,  
 1330 Volés savoir, dites le moy, ou non.”  
 “Certes, amis, dou savoir vous prion,  
 Car onques mais,  
 Si come je croy, ne fu, ne n'iert jamais  
 Home qui fust en tous cas si parfais  
 1335 Comme cils est, et par dis et par fais.”  
 “Sire, s'enseingne  
 Crie Lembourc, et est roys de Behaingne,  
 Fils de Henry, le bon roy d'Alemaingne,  
 Qui par force d'armes, qui que s'en plaingne,  
 1340 Comme emperere  
 Fu coronnez a Romme avec sa mere;  
 Dont s'il est bons, c'est bien drois qu'il appere:  
 Car il le doit de mere et de pere.  
 Si que, biau sire,  
 1345 Un tels juges seroit bons a eslire  
 Qui vous saroit bien moustrer et descrire  
 Li quels de vous sueffre plus de martyre.  
 Et le prenez.”  
 Li chevaliers respondi com senez:  
 1350 “Je croy que Diex nous ait ci amenez.”  
 Et dist: “Dame, s'a juge le tenez,  
 Je m'i ottroy.”  
 Et la dame respondi sans desroy:  
 “Sire, tant oy dire de bien dou roy,  
 1355 Tant est sages, preus, et de bon arroy  
 Que je l'acort.”

- 1310 And to be brief, he always earns, so good men say,  
The highest esteem for his intelligence, honor, and worthiness  
Wherever he might go.  
And if it happens he gets the upper hand  
On his enemy, Nature teaches him,  
1315 As does his own good heart, to pity the man.  
He sets a noble example,  
For Prowess everywhere carries his sword,  
Hardihood accompanies, encourages him,  
And for him Generosity opens the door  
1320 Of every heart.  
To the virtuous (I make no exceptions),  
To those of all conditions, the great and small, those in between,  
He is like a brother and sister.  
Sir, of Love  
1325 He knows all the assaults, the skirmishes,  
The joys, the pains, the sorrowing and moaning  
Better than did Ovid himself, who knew all its intricacies.  
And if his name,  
So excellent and of such gentle renown,  
1330 You wish to know — or don't — then tell me.”  
“Certainly, my friend, tell us, we beg you,  
For never yet,  
So I think, has any man been,  
Nor will ever be, as perfect in every way  
1335 As is this one in both word and deed.”  
“Sir, his battle flag  
Proclaims Luxembourg, and he is king of Bohemia,  
Son to Henry the good king of Germany,  
Who by force of arms, no matter who might bemoan it,  
1340 Was crowned  
Emperor at Rome with his mother;  
So if this man is good, it is surely right he appears so,  
For this he owes to his mother and father.  
And so, fair sir,  
1345 To choose such a judge would be wise,  
A man who could with skill demonstrate and explain  
To you both which one suffers greater pain.  
So choose him.”  
Like a wise man, the knight answered:  
1350 “I believe God has led us to this spot.”  
And he said: “Madam, if you accept him as our judge,  
I will agree to it.”  
With no foolishness, the lady responded:  
“Sir, I have heard so much good spoken of this king,  
1355 Who is so wise, so brave, of such magnificence  
That I concur.”

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
|          | “Grant merci, dame; or sommes en acort.<br>Si pri a Dieu que le bon roy confort<br>Et qu'il nous maint temprement a bon port   |
| 1360     | Si que parler<br>Puissiens a lui, ou il nous faut aler.”<br>Je respondi: “Bien vous say assener<br>La ou il est et, s'il vous plaist, mener.<br>Certeins en sui,                                 |
| 1365     | Car vraiment, je mengay yer et bui<br>Avec sens gens en chastiau de Durbui.<br>Et il y est, ne n'en partira hui;<br>Ne ce n'est mie<br>Loing, qu'il n'i a ne lieue ne demie,                     |
| 1370     | Nom pas de ci le quart d'une huchie.”<br>Li chevaliers d'aler la dame en prie<br>Sans plus attendre.<br>La dame dist: “Je ne m'en quier deffendre,<br>Mais je ne say quel part la voie prendre.” |
| 1375     | Je dis: “Dame, bien le vous vueil apprendre.<br>Venés adés.<br>Je iray devant et vous venrez après.”<br>Si q'en chemin me mis, d'aler engrés,<br>Et quant il ont veü Durbui de pres,             |
| 1380     | Si s'arrestoient,<br>Et dou veoir forment se mervilloient,<br>Car onques mais en leur vie n'avoient<br>Veü si bel, ne si gent, ce disoient.<br>Et, sans doubtance,                               |
| 1385     | Il est moult fors et de tres grant plaisirce,<br>Biaus et jolis et de po de deffence.<br>Car se li rois d'Alemaingne et de France  |
| fol. 18r | Devant estoient,<br>Cil de dedens ja pour ce ne lairoient<br>Qu'il n'lassent hors et ens s'il voloient,<br>Toutes les fois qu'a besongnier aroient   |
| 1391     | En la contree.<br>C'est une roche en mi une vallée<br>Qui tout entour est d'iaue environnée,<br>Grande, bruissant, parfonde, roide, et lee;  |
| 1395     | Et li vergier<br>Sont tout entour si bel qu'a droit jugier,<br>On ne porroit nuls plus biaus souhaidier.<br>Mais d'oisillons y a si grant frapier  |
| 1400     | Que jour et nuit<br>La vallée retentist de leur bruit;<br>Et l'iaue aussi seriement y bruit,<br>Si qu'on ne puet en nul milleur deduit.  |

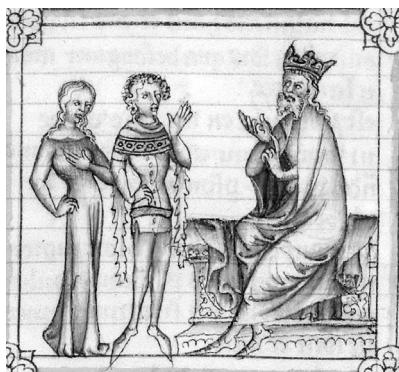


- Et puis après  
 1405 A grans roches tout entour, nom pas pres,  
 Eins sont si long dou chastel qu'il n'est fers,  
 Engiens, ne ars qui y getast jamés.  
 Mais la maison  
 Sus la roche est si bien qu'onques mais hom  
 1410 Ne vit autre de plus belle façon,  
 Car il n'i a nesune meffaçon.  
 Et la fonteinne  
 Est en la court, qui n'est mie villeinne;  
 Eins est vive, de roche clere et seinne,  
 1415 Froide com glace et plus douce que Seinne.  
 Mais le vaissel  
 Ou elle chiet est tailliez a cisel  
 D'un marbre fin, blanc, et bis, et si bel  
 Que tels ne fu depuis le temps Abel.  
 1420 Sus la riviere  
 Est la pree large, longue, et pleniere,  
 Ou on trueve d'herbes mainte maniere.  
 Mais revenir m'estuet a ma matiere.  
 Quant la maison  
 1425 Orent veü, je les mis a raison,  
 Et si leur dis: "De l'aler est saison.  
 Alons nous en: car ci riens ne faison."  
 Si en alames  
 Tout le chemin et le pont trespassames,  
 1430 Ne ça ne la, nulle part n'arrestames  
 Jusques a tant qu'a la porte hurtames.  
 Mais li portiers  
 La porte ouvri de cuer et volentiers.  
 Je qui hurtai et qui fui li premiers  
 1435 Et de laiens estre assés coustumiers  
 Parlai einsi:  
 "Cils chevaliers et ceste dame aussi  
 Viennent parler au roy s'il est yci."  
 Et li portiers tantost li respondi  
 1440 Qu'il y estoit.  
 Je dis: "Amis, pren garde s'on porroit  
 Parler a li." Et li dist qu'il iroit.  
 Mais tout einsi com de nous se partoit  
 Pour aler sus,  
 1445 Uns chevaliers, biaus, et gens, et corsus,  
 Jolis et gais, en est a nous venus;  
 Honneur ot nom, et s'en sot plus que nuls.  
 N'il ne vint mie  
 Tous seuls a nous; eins li fist compaingnie  
 1450 Une dame bele, gaie, et jolie;

- And then beyond  
1405 There are cliffs all around, but not too close,  
Instead at such distance from the castle that no weapon,  
No siege machine, no arbalest could ever shoot at it.  
But the keep  
Above the rocks is so ably fashioned  
1410 No man ever saw one of more beautiful form  
Since it lacks faults of any kind.  
And the spring  
In the courtyard is by no means unpleasant;  
Rather it flows free from clean and healthy rock,  
1415 Cold as ice, sweeter than the Seine.  
But the fountain  
Into which it falls was chiseled  
From fine marble, white and gray-brown, so beautiful  
There has been none its equal since the time of Abel.  
1420 Above the riverbank  
The meadow is broad, long, and ample,  
Where many kinds of grasses are found.  
To my story, however, I must return.  
After they had looked over  
1425 The residence, I advised them,  
Saying: "It's time to go.  
Let us proceed; for we accomplish nothing here."  
So we walked along  
The length of the path and crossed the bridge,  
1430 Halting neither here nor there  
Until at last we knocked on the gate.  
Now the porter  
Opened the gate cordially and willingly.  
I took the lead and knocked,  
1435 Being rather familiar with the place,  
And I said:  
"This knight and this lady too  
Have come to speak with the king if he is here."  
And the porter answered me at once  
1440 That he was within.  
I said: "Friend, please find out if one might  
Speak with him." And he said he would go.  
Yet just as he was leaving us  
To make his way above,  
1445 A knight who was handsome, noble, broad-shouldered,  
Friendly, and attractive approached;  
His name was Honor, and he knew more about it than anyone.  
And in no way did he come  
All alone to us; instead a beautiful lady,  
1450 Pleasant and friendly, was his companion,

- Si ot a non la dame Courtoisie.  
 Bien y parut,  
 Car aussi tost qu'elle nous aperçut  
 Nous salua, et puis biau nous reçut.  
 1455 Si fist Honneur, si com faire le dut.  
 Adont endoy  
 Courtoisement, en riant, sans effroy,  
 Prirent chascun l'un d'eaus .ij. par le doy.  
 Mais Courtoisie, einsi com dire doy,  
 1460 Le chevalier  
 Acompaingna liement, sans dangier,  
 Et Honneur volt la dame accompaingnier.  
 Lors se prirent ensamble a desraisnier  
 Si s'en alerent,  
 1465 Tout en parlant, la ou il les menerent,  
 Par les degrez de marbre qu'il monterent,  
 Tant qu'en la chambre au bon roy s'en entrerent.  
 Et li bons rois,  
 Qui moult estoit sages en tous endrois,  
 1470 Loiaus, vaillans, liberaus, et adrois,  
 Et envers tous dous, humbles, et courtois,  
 En moult grant joie  
 fol. 18v Estoit assis sur .i. tapis de soie,  
 Et ot .i. cleric que nommer ne saroie  
 1475 Qui li lisoit la bataille de Troie.  
 Mais Hardiesse  
 L'accompaingnoit, et sa fille Prouesse,  
 Et doucement tint par la main Largesse,  
 Une dame de moult grant gentillesse.  
 1480 S'i fu Richesse,  
 Amour, Biauté, Loiauté, et Leesse,  
 Desir, Penser, Volenté et Noblesse,  
 Franchise, Honneur, Courtoisie, Jeunesse.  
 Cil .xvj. estoient  
 1485 Avec le roy, n'onques ne s'en partoient.  
 Diex et Nature otroie li avoient  
 Dés qu'il fu nez; pour ce tout le servoient.  
 C'estoit grant grace.  
 Et s'il y a nul ne nulle qui face  
 1490 Chose dont nuls puist dire qu'il mefface  
 Raisons y est q'le meffait efface.  
 Einsi se sist  
 Li gentils rois, et quant la dame vist,  
 Il se leva, et par la main la prist,  
 Car Courtoisie a faire li aprist.  
 1495 Après pris ha  
 Le chevalier, et forment l'esprisa

- And she was called Lady Courtesy.  
And, truly, this she seemed to be,  
For as soon as she spied us,  
She offered a greeting, then received us graciously.  
1455 Honor did the same, just as he should do.  
And then the two of them,  
Courteously, smiling, without ado,  
Each took one of the couple by the hand.  
But Courtesy, I should say,  
1460 Merrily  
Accompanied the knight with no haughtiness,  
And Honor intended to escort the lady.  
Then they began to converse and in this manner  
They set out,  
1465 Talking all the while, to where they were leading them,  
Climbing some marble stairs  
Until they at last entered the good king's hall.  
And the good king,  
Who was wise in all circumstances,  
1470 Loyal, valiant, generous, and well-mannered,  
Kind, unassuming, and courteous to all,  
Was seated  
In very great contentment on a silk rug,  
And some clerk whom I cannot name  
1475 Was reading to him the battle of Troy.  
But Hardihood  
Was his companion, and Prowess too, that one's daughter,  
And quite gently he was holding the hand of Generosity,  
A lady of quite great nobility.  
1480 Wealth was present,  
Love, Beauty, Loyalty, and Happiness,  
Desire, Thought, Will, and Nobility,  
Liberality, Honor, Courtesy, Youth.  
These sixteen were  
1485 With the king and never left his side.  
God and Nature had bestowed them upon him  
At birth; and so all did him service.  
The favor was great.  
And if a gentleman or lady ever did  
1490 Something that could be called misdeed,  
Reason was present to erase the fault.  
And in this way  
Was the noble king enthroned, and seeing the lady,  
He rose and took her by the hand,  
1495 For this was what Courtesy had taught him.  
Afterward he received  
The knight, and esteeming him greatly



**Figure 4.** A11 (fol. 18v); The lady and knight stand before the King of Bohemia. (Photo: BnF)

- 1510     “Sire,” dist il, “Ci pres a .i. jardin  
          Vert et flouri ou il a grant tintin  
          De rossignols; s’i vins hui a matin,  
          Pour escouter  
          Leur biau service et leur joli chanter,  
          Comment que po s’i peüst deporter  
1515     Mon cuer que riens ne porroit conforter.  
          Mais toute voie  
          Einsi venus d'aventure y estoie,  
          Pleins et pensis de maus qu'Amours m'envoie,  
          Si vi venir par une estroite voie,  
1520     Verde et herbue,  
          Ceste dame qu'avec moy est venue.  
          Si me sambla de maniere esperdue,  
          Si que tantost pris parmi l'erbe drue  
          Mon adresse ay,  
1525     Et mon chemin droit vers li adressai.  
          Et quant je fu pres, je la saluay,  
          Mais mot ne dist, dont je me mervillay,  
          Ne onques chiere  
          Ne fist de moy, ne de oueil, ne de maniere.  
1530     Et je qui fu mervilleus pour quoy c'iere,

In his heart, then asked these two  
Quite wisely why they had come,  
1500            Inquiring about  
How they were, which greatly interested him.  
The knight asked the lady  
If she would speak to the king, and she said  
She would not do so;  
1505 Instead, he should explain, it being more fitting for him.  
Then he answered that he'd tell him  
Everything step by step, just how the matter stood  
Right to the end.

“Sire,” he said, “close by is a garden  
1510 Green and flowery, where is a grand chorus  
Of nightingales; I went there this morning  
To listen to  
Their beautiful service and pleasant singing,  
Though my heart could take  
1515 Little pleasure because nothing can comfort it.  
However  
When I had come to that spot by chance,  
Full of the pains Love provides and thinking on them,  
I saw arrive by a narrow path,  
1520            Green and grassy,  
This lady who has accompanied me here.  
And I thought her manner distraught;  
So at once I made my way  
Through the thick grass,  
1525 Directing my steps toward her.  
And, approaching, I greeted her,  
But she said not a word, at which I wondered,  
And took no notice  
Of me, not with her eye or manner.  
1530 And, bewildered why this was so,

- Dis belement: 'Tres douce dame chiere,  
 Pour quel raison  
 Ne volez vous entendre a ma raison?'  
 Et la tirai par le pan dou giron.  
 1535 S'en tressailli, dont sa belle façon  
 Coulour mua.  
 Si respondi, que plus n'i arresta,  
 fol. 19 Et durement envers moy s'escusa  
 De son penser a quoy elle musa.  
 1540 Et li enquis  
 Pourquoy son cuer estoit einsi pensis.  
 Finablement tant parlai et tant fis  
 Qu'elle me dist tout ce que je li quis,  
 Voire par si  
 1545 Que par ma foy li juray et plevi,  
 Quant elle aroit son parler assevi,  
 Que le penser li diroie de mi.  
 Et dist einsi  
 Qu'elle soloit avoir loial amy  
 1550 Qui loyaument l'amoit, et elle li.  
 Mais la mort l'a de ce siecle parti,  
 Et la valour,  
 Le scens, le pris, la prouesse, l'onnour,  
 Qui fu en li, si comme elle dist, flour,  
 1555 Le fist estre des bons tout le millour.  
 Pour ce pensoit  
 Parfondement, n'e onques ne cessoit,  
 Et en pensant le plouroit et plaignoit,  
 Si que son vis en larmes se baingnoit.  
 1560 Pour ce maintient  
 Que la dolour est plus griés qui li vient  
 Pour son amy que celle qui me tient.  
 Sire, et je di, faire le me couvient,  
 Tout le contraire.  
 1565 J'aim loyaument de cuer et sans retraire  
 La plus tres bele et le plus doux viaire  
 Qu'onques encor Nature peüst faire,  
 Qui me donna  
 Jadis son cuer tout et abandonna.  
 1570 Son cuer, s'amour, son amy me clama,  
 Et par son dit seur tous autres m'ama.  
 Or est ainsi,  
 Sire, qu'elle n'a mais cure de my;  
 Eins m'a guerpi, et fait nouvel amy.  
 1575 Et, par m'ame, pas ne l'ay desservi.  
 Et d'autre part,

- I said pleasantly: 'So sweet dear lady,  
    Why is it  
You will not heed my words?'  
And at the panel of her skirt I tugged.  
1535 And she startled and her pretty face  
    Changed color.  
Without further pause she responded,  
    Fervently apologizing  
For the thoughts preoccupying her.  
1540      And I asked  
Why she was so melancholy at heart.  
At last I said and did enough  
    That she answered me  
    So truthfully  
1545 I swore upon my faith and pledged  
    That when she had finished speaking,  
I would tell her my own thoughts.  
    And so she said  
She once had a faithful lover  
1550 Who loved her loyally, as she did him.  
But death took the man from the world,  
    And the valor,  
The intelligence, the worthiness, the prowess, the honor  
That, she said, had in him their flower —  
1555 These had made him the very best among good men.  
    For this reason she was deep  
In thought and never ceased being so,  
And, while thinking, cried for and bemoaned him,  
Bathing her face in tears.  
1560      Therefore she maintains  
The pain is more grievous that comes to her  
On her lover's account than the grief that grips me.  
Sire, I maintain (and must)  
    Just the contrary.  
1565 I love faithfully from the heart without desisting  
    The most beautiful woman, and with the sweetest face  
Nature has ever been able to create,  
    Who once gave  
And abandoned her heart completely to me.  
1570 She called me her heart, her love, her lover,  
And said she loved me above all others.  
    But now,  
Sire, she no longer cares for me:  
Instead she has thrown me over and taken a new lover.  
1575 And, by my soul, I have in no way deserved this.  
    Moreover

- Mon guerredon ailleurs donne et depart,  
Ne je n'en puis avoir ne part ne hart.  
C'est ce, sire, pour quoy li cuers me part.
- 1580      Si m'est avis,  
Consideré mes raisons, que j'ay pis  
Que la dame, comment que ses amis  
Soit trespassés, Diex l'ait en paradis!  
Sire, et cils clers
- 1585      Qui me samble gais, jolis, et apers,  
Fu atapis ou jardin et couvers  
En plus espés dou brueil qui est tous vers.  
Si sailli hors,  
Quant li ot bien oÿ tous nos descors
- 1590      Si nous loa que li drois et li tors  
Fust mis seur vous, et ce fu nos acors.  
Car longuement  
Avoit duré de nous le parlement,  
Et si aviens fait meint arguement,
- 1595      Si comme il est escript plus pleinnement  
Yci dessus.  
Or sommes ci par devers vous venus  
Par quoy li drois soit jugiés et sceüs,  
Et que vos dis soit de nous .ij. tenus.
- 1600      Si que ce plait  
Povez tantost terminer s'il vous plait;  
Car nous avons de vous no juge fait.  
Sire, or avez oÿ tout nostre fait  
Entierement;
- 1605      Si en vueilliez faire le jugement,  
Car nous l'avons désiré longuement,  
Et ceste dame et moy devotement  
Vous en prions."
- 1610      Quant cils li ot moustrees leurs raisons,  
Qui bien le sot faire com sages homs,  
Li gentils rois qui moult estoit preudons  
Li respondi:  
"Se Diex me gart, vous avez pris en my
- 1615      Juge ignorant et de scens desgarni,  
Ne onques mais je n'oÿ, ne ne vi  
Tel jugement.  
S'en saroie jugier petitement.  
Mais nompourquant le conseil de ma gent  
En vueil avoir; car je l'ay bel et gent."
- fol. 19v      Lors appella
- 1621      En sousriant Loiauté qui fu la,  
Amour, Juenesse, et Raison, qui parla

- She bestows and shares out what was my reward,  
Nor of this have I either share or portion.  
For this reason, sire, my heart is breaking.
- 1580      And so I think,  
Considering my reasons, to have it worse  
Than the lady, since, although her lover  
Has died, he may be with God in paradise!
- 1585      And, sire, this clerk,  
Who seems friendly and merry and knowledgeable,  
Was hidden in the garden and covered up  
In the thickest brush, which is all green.
- 1590      He emerged  
After clearly hearing all our discussion  
1590      And advised us to put the right and wrong of it  
Before you, which was our agreement.  
    For our talk  
Had lasted a long time,  
And we made many arguments,
- 1595      Just as it is written more fully  
    Here above.  
Now we have come before you  
For the right to be judged and known  
And your sentence kept by us both.
- 1600      Therefore you can end  
This debate at once if it pleases you;  
For we have made you our judge.  
Sire, now you have heard all our dispute  
    In full;
- 1605      So please render a judgment  
Because we have desired one a long time,  
And this lady and I earnestly  
    Beg you for it."
- 1610      After putting their cases to him,  
This man who knew well how to do so quite wisely,  
The noble king, a very worthy man,  
    Answered him:  
"So God keep me, you have chosen in me  
A judge who is ignorant and lacks discernment;
- 1615      And never before have I heard or seen  
    Such a case.  
And I know little about judging it.  
Nonetheless I wish to hear the counsel  
Of my court; for mine is both noble and good."
- 1620      Then, smiling,  
He summoned Loyalty, who was present,  
As well as Love, Youth, and Reason, who was the first

- Premierement, et puis leur demanda  
 Li gentils roys:
- 1625 "Que diriés vous qui savez tous les drois?  
 Cils chevaliers qui gens est et adrois  
 Et ceste dame aussi a ces crins blois  
 Sont venu ci  
 Par devers moy, dont je les remercy,  
 1630 Et jugement vuelent oïr de my,  
 Li quels a plus de mal et de sousci.  
 La dame avoit  
 Ami loial qui l'amoit et servoit,  
 Et elle lui, tant comme elle pooit.  
 1635 Or est einsi que Mors, qui tout reçoit,  
 Li a tollu.  
 S'en a le cuer dolent et irascu,  
 Car a son temps ot il si grant vertu  
 Que nul milleur, ne nul plus bel ne fu.
- 1640 Le chevalier  
 Sans repentir aimme de cuer entier  
 La plus bele qui vive, a son cuidier,  
 Et elle foy sans muer, ne changier  
 Li a promis,  
 1645 Et retenus fu de li comme amis  
 Et bien amez; il en estoit tous fis.  
 Or a la dame en autre son cuer mis,  
 Et li guerpi  
 Dou tout en tout, et n'a cure de li.
- 1650 Et a ses yex voit la belle et celi  
 Qui les dous biens a qu'il ha desservi.  
 Or vous ay dit  
 Pour quoy il sont venu oïr mon dit.  
 Et sans doute, cuers qui ainsi languit
- 1655 Se destruit moult, et a grant doleur vit.  
 Si m'en devez  
 Donner conseil au mieus que vous poez;  
 Car chascuns est mes drus et mes privez,  
 Et moult me fi en vous, bien le savez.
- 1660 Dites, Raison.  
 Premiers oïr vueil vostre entention;  
 Car vous m'avez maint conseil donné bon."  
 Raisons, qui fu bele et de bon renom,  
 Einsi respont:
- 1665 "Sire, je di que cil .ij. amant sont  
 Moult engoisseus quant einsi perdu ont  
 Ce qu'il aimment, et que li cuers leur font  
 Si com la cire

- To speak, and the noble king  
Then asked them:
- 1625 "What say you who know all the laws?  
This knight who is noble and well-mannered  
And also this lady with the blond hair  
Have come here  
Before me, for which I thank them,  
1630 And they wish to hear a judgment from me  
As to which suffers greater pain and worry.  
The lady had  
A faithful lover who loved and served her,  
And she him, as much as she was able.  
1635 Now Death, who receives everyone,  
Has taken him from her.  
So her heart is sorrowful and troubled,  
For in his time he had such great virtue  
There was none better, no man more handsome.
- 1640 The knight,  
Not repenting, loves with his whole heart  
The most beautiful woman alive in his opinion,  
And she pledged him her faith not to alter,  
Not to change,  
1645 And she accepted him as her lover,  
Loved him well — of this he was quite certain.  
Now the lady has given another man her heart  
And thrown him over  
Completely in every regard, showing him no concern.  
1650 And with his very eyes he sees this beauty and the man  
Who possesses the sweet goods he himself has deserved.  
Now I have told you  
Why they have come to hear my sentence.  
And, doubtless, a heart languishing this way  
1655 Quite destroys itself and lives in much pain.  
So you are to offer  
Me advice in this matter, the best you can;  
For each of you is my intimate and friend,  
And I place much trust in you, as well you know.
- 1660 Speak, Reason.  
I want to hear your opinion first,  
For you have given me much good advice."  
Reason, who was beautiful and of good repute,  
Answered thus:
- 1665 "Sire, I say that these two lovers are  
Greatly anguished because they have lost  
Those they love and so their hearts melt  
Just as, before the flame,

- Devant le feu se degaste et empire.  
 1670 Mais qu'il soient tuit pareil de martyre  
 Et de meschief, ce ne vueil je pas dire.  
 Ce qui me muet  
 Vous vueil dire puisque faire l'estuet.  
 Ceste dame jamais veoir ne puet  
 1675 Son ami vray einsi comme elle suet.  
 Si avenra  
 Einsi que puisque plus ne le verra,  
 Je ferai tant qu'elle l'oubliera,  
 Car le cuers ja tant chose n'amera  
 1680 Qu'il ne l'oublie  
 Par eslongier. Certes, je ne di mie  
 Qu'une piece n'en ait peinne et hachie,  
 Mais Juenesse, qui tant est gaie et lie,  
 Ne soufferroit  
 1685 Pour nulle riens qu'entroubliez ne soit.  
 Car Juenesse, sire, comment qu'il voit,  
 Met en oubli moult tost ce que ne voit.  
 Après je di  
 Qu'Amours n'a pas tant de pooir en li  
 1690 Que soustenir se peüst sans amy  
 L'eure du jour, ne sans amie aussy.  
 Et se l'un faut  
 Des .ijj., li .ij. autres aront deffaut;  
 Qu'Amour, ami, et amie estre faut  
 1695 Tout ensamble, ou l'amour riens ne vaut.  
 Et puisqu'amie  
 Et Amours ont perdu la compaingnie  
 D'amy, certes, je ne donroie mie  
 De leur amour une pomme porrie.  
 1700 C'est assavoir,  
 Quant a l'amour qui est mondeinne, avoir.  
 fol. 20r Car c'est tres bon de faire son devoir  
 Si que l'ame s'en puist apercevoir.  
 Mais il n'est ame,  
 1705 N'homme vivant, qui aimme si sans blame  
 S'il est tapez de l'amoureuse flame,  
 Qu'il n'aimme miex assez le corps que l'ame.  
 Pour quel raison?  
 Amour vient de charnel affection,  
 1710 Et si desir et sa condition  
 Sont tuit enclin a delectation.  
 Si ne se puet  
 Nuls, ne nulle garder qui amer vuet  
 Qu'il n'i ait vice ou pechié; il l'estuet,  
 1715 Et c'est contraire a l'ame, qui s'en duet.

- The wax wastes away, grows smaller.  
1670 But that they are just the same in suffering  
And misfortune — this I do not intend to say.  
    What sways me  
I will state since it is necessary.  
This lady can never see  
1675 Her lover true as she once did.  
    And so it will happen  
Because she sees him no longer,  
I will work to make her forget him,  
For the heart will never love anything so much  
1680      Not to forget it  
As time goes by. Of course, I do not say at all  
She will not feel pain and torment for a time,  
But Youth, who is so very gay and happy,  
    Will not allow  
1685 For any reason him not to be forgotten.  
For Youth, sire, no matter what,  
Makes one forget quickly what one does not see.  
    I state further  
That Love does not have the power  
1690 To sustain itself without the lover  
Or the beloved for a single hour of a day.  
    And if one of these three  
Is missing, the other two will fail;  
For Love, lover, and beloved must remain  
1695 Together or the affair is worth nothing.  
    And since the beloved and Love  
Have lost the company of the lover,  
I certainly would not give  
A rotten apple for their love affair,  
1700      And here is the reason:  
This love is a worldly thing.  
For love is quite good at doing its job  
So the soul can feel it.  
    But there is no soul,  
1705 No man alive, who loves this way without sin  
When struck by the amorous flame,  
Loving the body much more than the soul.  
    And why?  
Love arises from fleshly attraction,  
1710 And its desire and nature  
Are inclined completely toward satisfaction.  
    So no man  
Or woman who intends to love can prevent  
Vice or sin from being part of it; it must be so,  
1715 And this opposes the soul, which sorrows over it.

- Et d'autre part,  
 Tout aussi tost com l'ame se depart  
 Dou corps, l'amour s'en eslonge et espart.  
 Einsi le voy partout, se Diex me gart.
- 1720                    Si que l'amour  
 De ceste dame, ou tant a de valour,  
 Apetise toudis de jour en jour,  
 Et aussi fait a ce fuer la dolour.
- Mais cils amis,  
 1725                    Qui folement s'est d'amer entremis  
 Sans mon conseil et se s'i est si mis,  
 Li dolereus, qu'il en est tous remis,  
 Les maus d'amer
- Sont en son cuer qui li sont trop amer  
 1730                    Qu'Amours le fait nuit et jour enflamer,  
 Ne il ne vorroit, ne porroit oublier  
 Son annemie.  
 Savez pourquoi? Pour ce que Compaingnie,  
 Amour, Biauté, et Juenesse la lie,
- 1735                    Et Loiauté, qu'oublier ne vueil mie,  
 En grant folie,  
 En rage, en dueil, et en forsenerie  
 Le font languir, et en grant jalousie,  
 Et en peril de l'ame et de la vie.
- 1740                    Car main et tart  
 Son dolent cuer de sa dame ne part,  
 Eins la compaingne en tous lieus sans depart;  
 Et cils qui est plus pres dou feu, plus s'art.
- Et Loiauté
- 1745                    Si li deffent a faire fausseté.  
 Mais s'il heüst par mon conseil ouvré  
 Quant sa dame ot nuef ami recouvré,  
 Il n'eüst pas  
 Continué l'amour; car, en tel cas,
- 1750                    Se la dame chante en haut ou en bas,  
 On doit aler ou le trot ou le pas.  
 Aprés li dist  
 Biauté qu'il fait miex assez, s'il languist,  
 Pour li amer, que se d'autre joïst.
- 1755                    Si fait Amour. Juenesse le norrist  
 Avec folour  
 En ce meschief, en celle fole error,  
 Car il en pert le sens et la vigour.  
 Einsi languist li dolens en dolour;
- 1760                    Car quant il voit  
 Que de s'amour, present li, autres joit,  
 Qui son amy appeller le soloit,

- Furthermore,  
As soon as the soul departs  
The body, love leaves and distances itself.  
I see exactly this everywhere, may God preserve me.
- 1720                   And so this lady's  
Love, which has so much strength,  
Diminishes day by day,  
As her suffering does proportionately,  
    But this lover,
- 1725                   Who has rashly undertaken to love  
Against my advice and embarked upon this course,  
This unfortunate man, all weakened thereby,  
    Finds  
The pains of love in his heart too bitter
- 1730                   Because Love makes him burn night and day,  
And he would not or could not forget  
    His enemy.  
Do you know why? Because Companionship,  
Love, Beauty, and joyous Youth,
- 1735                   Loyalty too (whom I will not neglect)  
    Make him languish  
In great madness, in rage,  
In obliviousness, and in great jealousy,  
And in the peril of his soul and life.
- 1740                   For early and late  
His sorrowing heart never leaves his lady,  
But without departing is everywhere her companion;  
And the man closer to the fire gets more burned.
- 1745                   And Loyalty  
Prevents him from proving false.  
But had he acted on my advice  
When his lady took a new lover,  
    He should not
- 1750                   Have continued the affair; for, in such a case,  
If the lady sings high or low,  
The man must trot or walk.
- 1755                   Afterward Beauty  
Told him he would do much better languishing  
In love for her than in finding joy elsewhere.  
Love did the same. Youth fed him
- 1760                   On madness  
In this misery, in this foolish error  
So he lost strength and wit.  
Thus the grieving man languished in pain;  
    But seeing that other man,  
With him present, rejoice in his beloved,  
In this lady who used to call him her lover,

- Il a le cuer si jalous, si destroit,  
 Que c'est merveille
- 1765 Qu'il ne s'occist, ou qu'il ne s'apareille  
 D'occirre ce qui ainsi le traveille.  
 Et ce li met Jalousie en l'oreille.  
 Et s'il avoit  
 L'amour de li, einsi comme il soloit,
- 1770 Qu'en feroit il? Certes, riens n'en feroit.  
 Car jamais jour il ne s'i fieroit.  
 Et pour ce espoir  
 N'a de jamais autre solas avoir,  
 Puisque mettre ne puet en nonchaloir
- 1775 Ceste dame qui tant le fait doloir.  
 Si que je di  
 Qu'il ha plus mal que ceste dame cy,  
 Et que son cuer est en plus grant souisci  
 Par les raisons que vous avez oy.
- 1780 Et, a mon gré,  
 Cils chevaliers en a moult bien parlé,  
 Car en escript l'ay ci dessus trouvé,  
 Et par raison s'entention prouvé.
- fol. 20v                    Ce m'est avis."
- 1785 Quant Raisons ot moustré tout son avis,  
 Amours parla, qui fu biaus a devis,  
 Et gracieus de maniere et de vis,  
 Et dist: "Raison,  
 Moult bien avez moustree vo raison.
- 1790 Si m'i ottroy, fors tant que mesprison  
 Feroit d'oster son cuer de la prison  
 A la tres bele  
 Pour qui il sent l'amoureuse estincelle.  
 Si vueil qu'il l'aint et serve comme celle
- 1795 Dont heü a mainte lie nouvelle,  
 Car s'il pooit  
 Vivre mil ans, et toudis la servoit,  
 Ja par servir il ne desserviroit  
 Les grans douceurs que faire li soloit.
- 1800 Et se Plaisence,  
 Qui faire fait mainte estrange muance,  
 Li fait estre de sa dame en doubtance,  
 Doit il estre pour ce en desperence?  
 Certes, nanil!
- 1805 Qu'en mon service en a encor cent mil  
 Qui aimment tuit pres aussi fort comme il,  
 Et si n'en ont la monte d'un fusil.  
 Et s'ay povoir

- His heart is so jealous, so distraught,  
It's a wonder
- 1765 The man does not kill himself or set out  
To kill the one who torments him so.  
And Jealousy puts this in his ear.  
And if he possessed  
Her love as was his wont,
- 1770 What would he do with it? Surely, nothing.  
For never a single day would he trust it.  
Therefore he has  
No hope of ever having other comfort  
Because he cannot cool in his affection
- 1775 For this lady who hurts him so.  
And thus I maintain  
He feels more pain than this lady here,  
And his heart experiences more anguish  
For the reasons you have heard.
- 1780 And, to my satisfaction,  
This knight has spoken quite well to them,  
As I found all in writing here above,  
And with reason he has proved his contention.  
Such is my view."
- 1785 After Reason had stated all her opinion,  
Love spoke up, who was very good looking,  
Gracious in manner and appearance,  
And said: "Reason,  
You have quite ably made known your reasoning.
- 1790 And I agree, save it would be a grievous misdeed  
To rescue the lover's heart from its prison  
Within the beautiful lady,  
For whom he feels love's spark.  
So it is my wish he love and serve her as one
- 1795 In whom he has found much happy news,  
For if he could  
Live a thousand years and serve her every day,  
Never by service would he merit  
The great sweetness she was wont to show him.
- 1800 And if Pleasure,  
Who has brought on many a strange alteration,  
Makes him doubt his lady,  
Must he then despair?  
Surely not at all!
- 1805 For in my service are a hundred thousand more  
Who love almost as strongly as does he  
And have for it not the price of a whetstone.  
And I have the power

- De li garir et de li desdoloir,  
 1810 Mais il n'a mais fiance, ne espoir,  
     En moy; c'est ce qui plus le fait doloir.”  
     “Comment, Amours?”  
     Ce dist Raisons, “Est ce dont de vos tours  
     Qu'il amera sans avoir nul secours  
 1815 Celle qui ha donné son cuer aillours?  
     Et qui vous sert,  
     Il n'a mie le luyer qu'il dessert?  
     Certes, fols est qui a servir s'ahert  
     Si fait maistre quant son guerredon pert.”
- 1820      Aprés ce fait  
     Devers Amours, Loiauté se retrait,  
     Et dist einsi, que riens n'eüst meffait,  
     Se d'autel pain li eüst soupe fait.  
     “N'il n'est raisons
- 1825 Pour ce, s'il est vrais, loiaus, et preudons,  
     Qu'il soit de ceuls qui batent les buissons  
     Dont li autre prennent les oisillons.  
     Car se la dame,  
     Q'je repren moult durement et blame
- 1830 (Et c'est bien drois, car elle acuet grant blame  
     De muance faire en la haute game)  
     Premierement  
     N'eüst osté son cuer de cest amant,  
     Qui tous estoit en son commandement,  
 1835 Amours, Amours, je parlasse autrement.  
     Mais sans doubtance,  
     Quant il l'aimme de toute sa puissance,  
     Et sans cause le met en oubliance,  
     Il doit dancier einsi comme elle dance;
- 1840      Nom pas qu'il face  
     Chose de quoi il puist perdre ma grace;  
     Car s'il la laist, et ailleurs se pourchace,  
     Je ne tien pas qu'envers moy se mefface.  
     Et si m'acort
- 1845 Dou tout en tout de Raison a l'acort  
     (Car elle fait bon et loial rapport):  
     Que cils a droit, et ceste dame a tort.”  
     Et quant Juenesse,  
     Qui moult fu gaie et pleinne de leesse,  
 1850 Et qui n'aconte a don, ne a promesse,  
     Fors seulement que ses voloirs adresse,  
     Ot escouté  
     Ce que Raisons ot dit et raconté  
     Et Loiauté, pou y a aconté,  
 1855 Car moult pleinne fu de sa volenté.

- To cure him or worsen his pain,  
1810 But he no longer has trust or hope  
In me, and that is what makes him suffer most."  
    "How so, Love?"  
Said Reason, "Is it then by your design  
That the man will love without experiencing any relief  
1815 The lady who has granted her heart elsewhere?  
    And he who serves you  
Receives in no way the reward he deserves?  
Surely, he's a fool to persist in serving  
Such a master when he loses his wages."  
1820 After this,  
Loyalty drew herself up in front of Love  
And said no wrong would have been done  
Had he made a sop from such bread.  
    "And it's not right  
1825 If he is true, loyal, and worthy  
That he should be one who beats the bushes  
From which others take the birds.  
    For if the lady,  
Whom I blame and condemn quite harshly  
1830 (And quite rightly since she deserves  
Much blame for proving fickle in this serious game),  
    Had not  
First taken back her heart from this lover,  
Who was completely under her control,  
1835 Love, Love, I would have spoken differently.  
    But there is no doubt,  
Since he loves her with all his might  
And she for no cause ignores him,  
He ought to dance the same dance she does;  
1840      This wouldn't be  
Something that merits the loss of my favor,  
But if he abandoned her and looked elsewhere,  
I would not consider he had sinned against me.  
    So I concur  
1845 Completely with all of Reason's conclusions  
(For she has offered a good and true accounting):  
The man is right, and this lady is wrong."  
    And when Youth,  
Who is very gay and full of happiness  
1850 And pays no mind to gifts or promises,  
Only to what appeals to her,  
    Heard  
What Reason had said and declared,  
And Loyalty as well — she thought little of it  
1855 Because she was quite full of her own willfulness.

- |          |  |   |
|----------|--|---|
|          |  | Et dist en haut:<br>"Certes, Raison, vostre science faut,<br>Et Loiauté, sachiés, riens ne vous vaut.<br>Car cils amis, pour mal, ne pour assaut<br>Qu'Amours li face,<br>N'iert ja partis de la belle toupasse<br>Qui de beauté et de doulceur tout passe,<br>Et de fine colour; ja Dieu ne place<br>Qu'il li avieigne<br>Que ja d'amer la belle se refraigne!<br>Car s'a present ne veult, ne n'adaigne,<br>Au moins l'aimme il, et son cuer la compaingn<br>Dont n'est ce assez?<br>Doit il estre de li amer lassez?<br>Certes, nennil! Car on n'est pas amez,<br>Ne conjoinz toudis, n'amis clamez:<br>Non est, sans doubté.<br>Raison, fols est amans qui vous escoute,<br>Ne qui ensuit vos dis, ne vostre route.<br>Et qui le fait, je di qu'il ne voit goute.<br>Et par ma foy,<br>Nous ferons tant, Amours, ma dame et moy,<br>Que son cuer yert si pris, et en tel ploy,<br>Que nuit, ne jour ne partira de soy.<br>Ne vos effors,<br>Ne doubtez pas, ne sera ja si fors<br>Que li fin cuer de cest amant soit hors<br>De la tres belle ou po treuve confors.<br>Qu'Amour, ma dame,<br>Qui son cuer art, teint, bruit, et enflame,<br>Et moy qui sui encor a tout ma flame,<br>En ceste amour le tenrons; car, par m'ame,<br>Il le couvient.<br>Et se des maus dolereus plus li vient<br>Qu'a la dame qui dalés lui se tient,<br>Fors est assez; bien les porte et soustient."<br>Lors s'avisa<br>Li gentils rois, et bonnement ris a<br>De Juenesse, qui einsi devisa;<br>Mais onques meins pour ce ne l'en prisa,<br>Qu'elle faisoit<br>Tout son devoir de ce qu'elle disoit,<br>Et de son vueil plus chier denree avoit<br>Que .x. livres de son profit n'amoit.<br>Si dist: "Juenesse,<br>Bele dame, vous estes grant maistresse,<br>Oui cest amant tenés en grant destresse, |
| 1860     |  |   |
| 1865     |  |   |
| 1870     |  |   |
| 1875     |  |   |
| 1880     |  |   |
| 1885     |  |   |
| 1890     |  |   |
| 1895     |  |   |
| fol. 21r |  |   |
| 1900     |  |   |

- And she said loudly:  
“Surely, Reason, your wisdom fails you,  
And Loyalty, know that nothing is of any use,  
For this lover, despite any pain, any assault
- 1860      Love may inflict upon him,  
Will never be parted from that lovely topaz  
Who in beauty and sweetness surpasses all others,  
In pure color as well; may it never please God
- It comes to pass  
1865      He holds back from loving such beauty!  
For if at present she does not want, will not bend to him,  
At least he loves her and his heart is her companion.
- And isn’t that enough?  
Must he tire of loving her?
- 1870      Surely not! For no one is loved,  
Or treated kindly, or called lover every day;  
That’s true beyond a doubt.  
Reason, the lover is a fool who listens to you  
Or follows your dictates or path.
- 1875      And whoever does, I say he can see nothing.  
And by my faith,  
We will do much, Love, my lady, and I,  
To so imprison his heart in such straits  
That night or day it will not leave of its own accord;
- 1880      Nor will your efforts —  
Don’t doubt this — ever be strong enough  
To make this lover’s pure heart abandon  
The quite beautiful lady in whom it finds so little comfort.
- Thus Love, my lady,  
1885      Who burns, pales, scorches, and inflames his heart,  
As well as I who am still in my prime  
Will hold him fast in this love affair; for by my soul,  
So must it be.
- And should more painful ills fall to his lot  
1890      Than to the lady standing beside him,  
His strength is sufficient; he bears and suffers them well.”
- Then the noble king  
Took stock and laughed heartily at  
Youth, who had said these things;
- 1895      Even so he prized her none the less  
Since she only did  
Her duty by saying what she had,  
And he valued her wishes much more dearly  
Than he loved ten pounds of his own profit.
- 1900      So he said: “Youth,  
Beautiful lady, you are the great mistress,  
Who holds this lover fast in such terrible distress,

- En povreté, en misere, en tristesse,  
 Vous et Amours.
- 1905 Vez que li las a perdu tout secours,  
 Ne ses cuers n'a refuge, ne recours,  
 Fors a la mort, qui a li vient le cours.  
 Car travillier  
 Le volez trop, et dou tout essillier.
- 1910 Or a trouvé, s'il vous plaist, consillier  
 Bon et loial; laissiez le consillier;  
 Si ferez bien.  
 Car il est pris en si estroit lien  
 Qu'il n'i scet tour d'eschaper, në engien."
- 1915 "Certes, sire, de ce ne faire rien.  
 Eins amera  
 La tres bele pour qui tant d'amer a.  
 Et, s'il y muert, chascuns le clamera  
 Martir d'amours, et honneur li sera  
 S'il muert pour li."
- Quant Juenesse ot son parler assevi,  
 Li rois parla a euls et dist einsi:  
 "Nous ne sommes pas assemble yci  
 Pour despunter
- 1925 S'il doit amer sa dame ou non amer,  
 Mais pour savoir li quels a plus d'amer,  
 Et qui plus sent crueus les maus d'amer,  
 Si com moy samble.  
 Or estes vous en acort tout ensamble
- 1930 Que plus de mal en cest amant s'assamble  
 Qu'en la dame; ne pas ne me dessamble  
 De cest acort,  
 Einsois m'i tieng dou tout et m'i acort,  
 Que cils amans est plus long de confort
- 1935 Que la dame ne soit, que Diex confort.  
 Si en feray  
 Le jugement einsi com je saray,  
 Car tel chose pas acoustumé n'ay,
- Et uns autres vraiment, bien le say,  
 Miex le feroit.  
 Je di einsi: consideré a droit  
 L'entention de Raison ci endroit,  
 Et les raisons de vous qui volez droit.  
 Et Loiauté,
- 1945 Qui en a dit la pure verité,  
 Ne n'i chasse barat ne fausseté,  
 D'Amours aussi qui en a bien parlé,

- In poverty, misery, sadness,  
    You along with Love.
- 1905 You witness how the weary man has lost all help,  
Nor does his heart find refuge or recourse,  
Save in death, which quickly comes upon him.  
    But you would  
Torment him too much, estrange him from everything.
- 1910 Now he has found, if you please, a counselor  
Good and true; let that person advise him.  
    In this way you will do well,  
For he is caught in so tight a place  
He knows no trick or scheme to escape."
- 1915 "Surely, sire, I will do nothing of the kind.  
    Instead he will love  
The great beauty on whose account he feels such bitterness.  
And should he die, everyone will call him  
A martyr to Love, and it will do him honor  
1920     If he does die for her."
- When Youth brought her speech to an end,  
The king spoke to them, saying:  
"We have not assembled here  
    To dispute
- 1925 Whether he should love his lady or not,  
But rather to learn who feels greater unhappiness  
And suffers more the cruel pangs of love —  
    Or so it seems to me.
- 1930 Now you all agree completely  
This lover feels much more pain  
Than the lady; and in no way do I differ  
    From this conclusion,  
But support it firmly in every way and concur  
That this lover is further from consolation
- 1935 Than this lady, may God console her.  
    So I will judge  
This case according to my understanding,  
For in these matters I have no experience.
- 1940 And truly another man, well I know it,  
    Would do better.  
I say this: in proper consideration  
Of the opinion of Reason, here present,  
And the arguments of you who are eager for justice,  
    And of Loyalty,
- 1945 Who has spoken the pure truth in this matter  
And does not resort to ruses or deception,  
And also of Love, who has here argued skillfully,

- Et de Juenesse —
- Que cils amans sueffre plus de tristesse,  
 1950 Et que li maus d'amours plus fort le blesse  
 Que la dame, ou moult a de noblesse,  
 Et que plus long  
 Est de confort, dont il ont bon besoing.  
 Et pour ce di mon jugement et doing  
 1955 Qu'il a plus mal qu'elle n'a, plus de soing,  
 Et de grevance."
- Quant li bons rois ot rendu sa sentence,  
 Dont par Raison fu faite l'ordenance,  
 Li chevaliers iluec, en sa presence,  
 1960 L'en mercia,  
 Et, en pensant, la dame s'oublia  
 Si durement que nul mot dit n'i a.  
 Mais nompourquant en la fin ottria  
 Qu'elle tenoit
- 1965 Le jugement que li rois fait avoit,  
 Car si sages et si loiaus estoit  
 Qu'envers nelui fors raison ne feroit.  
 Adont li rois
- 1970 En sousriant les a pris par les dois  
 Et les assist seur le tapis norois,  
 Long des autres, si qu'il n'i ot qu'euls trois.  
 Si leur enorte
- 1975 Et deprie chascun qu'il se conforte,  
 Car se le cuer longuement tel mal porte,  
 Il en porroit mors estre, et elle morte  
 (Que ja n'aveingne!);
- fol. 21v Mais chascuns d'eaus bon corage reprengne,  
 Car li cuers trop se destruit et mehaingne  
 Qui en tel plour et tel dolour se baingne;
- 1980 Et recorder  
 Voit on souvent qu'on doit tout oublier  
 Ce qu'on voit bien qu'on ne puet amender,  
 Ne recouvrer par pleindre ne plourer.  
 S'einsi le font,
- 1985 Vers Loiauté, ce dit, pas ne meffont;  
 Mais s'en ce plour pour amer se meffont,  
 Homicides de leur ames se font  
 Et de leur vie.
- Aprés li rois appella sa maisnie;  
 1990 Si vint Franchise, Honneur, et Courtoisie,  
 Biauté, Desir, Leesse l'envoisie,  
 Et Hardiesse,  
 Prouesse, Amour, Loiauté, et Largesse,

- And of Youth —  
That this lover suffers more sadness  
1950 And love's pains wound him more grievously  
Than they do the lady, in whom there is great nobility;  
And he is much further  
From the consolation he truly needs.  
And so I announce and render my judgment  
1955 That he feels more hurt than she, more worry  
And distress."
- After the good king offered his decision,  
Whose logic had been proposed by Reason,  
The knight thanked him there,  
1960 In his presence,  
And, lost in thought, the lady so forgot herself  
She uttered nary a word.  
Nonetheless in the end she granted  
She would accept
- 1965 The judgment the king rendered  
Because he was so wise and loyal  
He would do only right by everyone.  
Then the king,  
Smiling, took them by the hand  
1970 And seated them on the Norwegian rug  
Far from the others, just the three of them.  
And he urged  
And begged them both to take comfort,  
For should the heart long bear such pain,  
1975 He might die, and so could she,  
(May it never happen!);  
Instead they should regain their senses,  
For the heart destroys and harms itself greatly  
Wallowing in such weeping and pain;
- 1980 And often repeated  
Is the view that a man should forget  
Whatever he cannot better  
Or change by tears and lamentation.  
And, so doing,
- 1985 They should not sin against Loyalty, he said;  
But crying so for love they did wrong,  
Becoming the murderers of their own souls  
And lives.
- Afterward the king summoned his court.  
1990 So Liberality, Honor, and Courtesy,  
Beauty, Desire, mirthful Happiness,  
And Hardihood,  
Prowess, Love, Loyalty, and Generosity,

- 1995      Voloir, Penser, Richesse, avec Juenesse,  
             Et puis Raison, qui de tous fu maistresse.  
             Si leur commande  
             Que chascuns d'eaus a honnourer entende  
             Ces .ij. amans, et qu'Amour leur deffende  
             Merencolie; aprés que la viande
- 2000      Soit aprestee,  
             Car il estoit ja pres de la vespree;  
             Et il ont fait son vueil sans demouree,  
             Com bonne gent et bien endoctrinee.  
             Lors se sont trait
- 2005      Vers les amans, sans faire plus de plait,  
             Et chascuns d'eaus a son pooir a fait  
             Ce qu'il pense qui leur agree et plait,  
             Qu'entalenté  
             En estoient de bonne volenté.
- 2010      Et li amant ont congé demandé,  
             Mais on leur a baudemant refusé,  
             Car Courtoisie,  
             Franchise, Honneur, et Largesse s'amie,  
             Li gentils rois, qui pas ne s'i oublie,
- 2015      Et chascuns d'eaus moult durement les prie  
             De demourer.  
             Et il estoit pres heure de souper,  
             Et a ce mot on prist l'iaue a corner  
             Par le chastel, et forment a tromper;
- 2020      Si se leverent,  
             Et .ij. et .ij. en la sale en alerent;  
             Aprés leurs mains courtoisement laverent  
             Puis s'assirent, si burent et mengierent,  
             Selonc raison,
- 2025      Car il y ot planté et a foison  
             De quanqu'on puet dire n'avoir de bon.  
             Aprés mengier, les prist par le giron  
             Li gentils rois  
             Et si leur dist: "Vous n'en irez des mois,
- 2030      Car je vous vueil oster a ceste fois  
             Les pensees qui vous font moult d'anois."  
             Le chevalier  
             Moult humblement l'en prist a mercier,  
             Et aussi fist la dame qui targier
- 2035      Ne pooit plus, ce dit, de repairier.  
             Et finalment  
             Li rois les tint .vij. jours moult liement  
             Et au partir leur donna largement  
             Chevaus, harnois, joiaus, or, et argent.
- 2040      Si se partirent

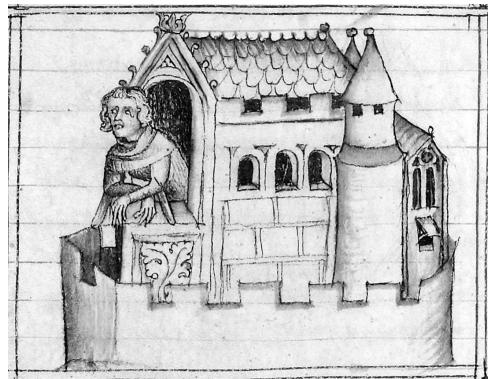
- Will, Thought, Wealth, along with Youth  
1995 And then Reason, mistress over all, came forward.  
The king asked  
That each strive to honor these two lovers  
And Love should drive away melancholy  
From them; and, afterward, a meal
- 2000 Be prepared,  
For it was quite close to vespers.  
And without delay they carried out his wishes  
Like a retinue good and well instructed.  
They approached
- 2005 The lovers, offering no more debate,  
And to the best of his ability each did  
What he thought would please and suit them,  
For with good will  
They were eager to do so.
- 2010 And the lovers asked for leave to go  
But were adamantly refused,  
For Courtesy,  
Liberality, Honor, and Generosity his friend,  
The noble king, who did not forget himself at all,
- 2015 And everyone else quite fervently begged them  
To remain  
Because it was nearly the dinner hour.  
And as they talked, the call to wash sounded with horns  
Throughout the castle accompanied by loud trumpeting;
- 2020 So the company  
Rose and entered the hall two by two;  
There they politely washed their hands  
And sat down to eat and drink  
In moderation,
- 2025 For there was a great abundance  
Of whatever one could request or have that is good.  
After the meal, the noble king took them  
By the robe  
And said to them: "You will not leave us for some time,
- 2030 Because my intention now is to free you  
From those thoughts that so trouble you."
- The knight  
Began to thank him quite humbly,  
And likewise did the lady, who could delay  
2035 No longer, she said, before returning.  
Yet in the end  
The king lodged them eight days quite happily  
And at their departure bestowed generously upon them  
Horses, harness, jewels, gold, and silver.
- 2040 At the end of the eight days,

- Au chief de .vij. jours et dou roy congé prirent,  
 Ou tant orent trouvé d'onner qu'il dirent  
 Qu'eins si bon roy ne si gentil ne virent.  
 Mais compaingnie
- 2045 Leur fist Honneur; aussi fist Courtoisie,  
 Jueneſſe, Amour, Richesse l'aaisie,  
 Et meint autre que nommer ne say mie.  
 Car il monterent
- Sus les chevaus et tant les convoierent
- 2050 Que chascun d'eaus en son hostel menerent,  
 Et puis au roy a Durbui retournerent.  
 Ci fineray
- Ma matiere, ne plus n'en rimeray,  
 Car autre part assez a rimer ay.
- 2055 Mais en la fin de ce livret feray  
 Que qui savoir  
 Vorra mon nom et mon seurnom de voir,  
 Il le porra clerement percevoir
- fol. 22r En darrein ver dou livret et veoir,  
 2060 Mais qu'il dessamble  
 Les premieres .vij. sillabes d'ensamble  
 Et les lettres d'autre guise rassamble,  
 Si que nulle n'en oublie ne emble.  
 Einsi porra
- 2065 Mon nom savoir qui savoir le vorra,  
 Mais ja pour ce miex ne m'en prisera.  
 Et nompourquant ja pour ce ne sera  
 Que je ne soie
- Loiaus amis, jolis, et pleins de joie,
- 2070 Car se riens plus en ce monde n'avoie  
 Fors ce que j'aim ma dame simplet et quoie  
 Contre son gré,  
 Si ay j'assez, qu'Amours m'a honnouré  
 Et richement mon mal guerredonné,  
 2075 Quant a ma dame einsi mon cuer donné  
 Ay a tous jours.  
 Et ce mon cuer conforte en ses dolours  
 Que, quant premiers senti les maus d'amours,  
 A gentil mal cuide humble secours.

Explicit *le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne.*

- They parted, taking leave of the king,  
In whom they found so much honor, so they said,  
They had never seen a ruler this good or noble.  
    And Honor
- 2045   Accompanied them, as did Courtesy,  
Youth, Love, contented Wealth,  
And many another I cannot name.  
    For they mounted  
Their horses and escorted them far enough  
2050   To lead both back to their residences,  
Afterward returning to the king at Durbuy.  
    Here I intend to end  
My account; I will rhyme no more,  
For I have enough other matters to put in verse.  
2055   But at the end of this book, I will see to it  
    That anyone  
Eager to learn my name and surname  
Will be able to recognize them clearly  
In the book's last verse, see them there.
- 2060   Let him simply remove  
The first seven letters from the whole  
And reassemble them in another fashion,  
Neglecting or omitting none.  
    In this way, whoever  
2065   Wants to learn my name can do so,  
Though he will not esteem me more.  
Nevertheless, it will never happen  
    I will not be  
A lover loyal, pleasant, and full of mirth,  
2070   For if in this world I possessed nothing  
But loved my lady, humble and demure,  
    Against her will,  
Then I have enough, for Love has honored me  
And richly rewarded my pain ever since  
2075   I bestowed my heart upon my lady  
    For all time.  
What comforts my heart in its suffering  
Is that when first I felt the pangs of love,  
I expected a humble relief for a noble ill.

Here ends *The Judgment of the King of Bohemia*.



**Figure 5.** A12 (fol. 22v); *Ci après commence le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre contre le Jugement dou Roy de Behaigne* [Here begins the Judgment of the King of Navarre in response to the Judgment of the King of Bohemia]. Guillaume leans out the window of a castle. (Photo: BnF)



## LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE NAVARRE

fol. 22v Au departir dou bel esté  
 Qui a gais et jolis esté,  
 De fleurs, de fueilles faillolez,  
 Et d'arbrissiaus emmaillolez,  
 5 Arrousez de douce rousee,  
 Sechiez par chaleur ordenee  
 Que le soleil li amenistre,  
 Et qu'oisillons ont leur chapitre  
 Tenu de sons et de hoqués,  
 10 Par plains, par aunois, par bosqués,  
 Pour li servir et honnouer  
 Que tout ce couvient demourer  
 Pour le temps qui, de sa nature,  
 Mue sa chaleur en froidure  
 15 Un po après le temps d'autonne,  
 Que chascuns vandange et antonne  
 Qui a vingnes a vandangier,  
 Et qu'on a a petit dangier  
 Pesches, moust, poires, et roisins,  
 20 Dont on present a ses voisins,  
 Que li blez en la terre germe  
 Et que la fueille chiet dou cherme,  
 Par nature, ou dou vent qui vente,  
 L'an mil .ccc. nuef et quarente,  
 25 Le .ix<sup>e</sup>. jour de novembre,  
 M'en aloie par mi ma chambre.  
 Et se li airs fust clers et purs,  
 Je fusse ailleurs; mais si obscurs  
 Estoit que montaingnes et pleins  
 30 Estoient de bruines pleins.



## THE JUDGEMENT OF THE KING OF NAVARRE

---

At the passing of a beautiful summer  
That had been pleasant and joyful,  
Ornamented with flowers and leaves,  
Adorned with shrubbery,  
5 Drenched by sweet dew,  
Dried by the seasonable heat  
That the sun provided it,  
A summer when the birds  
Held their assemblies with song and hockets  
10 Through meadows, arbors, and glades  
In the season's service and honor  
So all should linger  
Despite the weather that, by its nature,  
Changes summer's warmth into cold  
15 A little after autumn comes,  
When everyone who has vines to pick  
Does his harvest and puts it into casks,  
When, with little trouble, there is to be had  
Drink made from peaches, must, pears, and grapes,  
20 Which is shared with neighbors,  
When the wheat sprouts in the ground  
And the leaf falls from the oak  
Because of nature or a gusting wind,  
In the year thirteen hundred forty-nine,  
25 On the ninth day of November,  
I was walking about my room.  
And had the air been clear and pure,  
I'd have been elsewhere; but it was  
So dark that the mountains and plains  
30 Were full of haze.

Pour ce me tenoie a couvert  
 Quar ce qu'estre soloit tout vert  
 Estoit mué en autre teint,  
 Car bise l'avoit tout desteint,  
 35 Qui mainte fleur a decopee  
 Par la froidure de s'espee.  
  
 Si que la merencolioie  
 Tous seuls en ma chambre et pensoie  
 Comment par conseil de taverne  
 40 Li mondes par tout se gouverne;  
 Comment justice et verité  
 Sont mortes par l'iniquité  
 D'Advarice, qui en maint regne  
 Com dame souvereinne regne,  
 45 Com maistresse, comme roÿne  
 (Qu'Advarice engenre haïne,  
 Et largesse donne et rent gloire,  
 Vraiemment, c'est parole voire,  
 Qu'on le scet et voit clerement  
 50 Par vray et juste experiment);  
 Comment nuls ne fait son devoir;  
 Comment chascuns quiert decevoir  
 Son proisme; car je ne voy pere,  
 Fil, ne fille, ne suer, ne frere,  
 55 Mere, marrastre, ne cousine,  
 Tante, oncle, voisin, ne voisine,  
 Mari, mouillier, amy, n'amie  
 Que li uns l'autre ne cunchie;  
 Et s'un en y a qui s'en garde,  
 60 Chascuns de travers le regarde  
 Et dist on qu'il est ypocrites,  
 Et fust sains Jehans li Ermites;  
 Come li signeur leur subgés pillent,  
 Roubent, raembent, et essilent,  
 65 Et mettent a destruction  
 Sans pitié ne compation,  
 Si que grans meschiés, ce me samble,  
 Est de vice et pooir ensamble.  
 Et on le voit assez de fait,  
 70 Ne riens tant cuer felon ne fait  
 Com grant pooir qui mal en use.  
 fol. 23r Or voy que chascuns en abuse,  
 Car je ne voy homme puissant  
 Qui n'ait puis .x., puis .xx., puis .c.  
 75 Tours, manieres, engiens, ou ars

And so I sheltered indoors.  
For all that ordinarily was all green  
Had been changed into another hue  
Because the north wind had robbed everything of color,  
35      Cutting down many a flower  
With the coldness of its sword.

So there I suffered sadness  
All alone in my room and thought  
How the world in every way  
40      Was ruled by barstool wisdom:  
How justice and truth  
Have been murdered by the iniquity  
Of Greed, which in many realms  
Rules as sovereign lady,  
45      As mistress, as queen  
(For Greed spawns hatred,  
While Generosity gives, bestows glory;  
Truly that's an irrefutable notion,  
Which one can prove and clearly see  
50      Through just and accurate experience);  
How no one does his duty;  
How everyone seeks to deceive  
His neighbor, for I see no father  
Or son, no daughter, sister, or brother,  
55      No mother, stepmother, or cousin,  
No aunt, uncle, or neighbor, man or woman,  
No husband, wife, lover, or beloved  
Such that one does not deceive the other,  
And if anyone refrains from this,  
60      Every man regards him suspiciously  
And says he's a hypocrite,  
Were he even St. John the Hermit;  
How the lords pillage their subjects,  
Rob, despoil, and mistreat them,  
65      Put them all to death  
Without pity or compassion  
So that great misfortune, I think,  
Comes from joining vice and power.  
And one indeed often sees just this,  
70      And nothing makes a heart so criminal  
As great power when used for evil.  
Now I witness everyone abusing it  
Because I see no powerful man  
Without ten, now twenty, now a hundred  
75      Towers, troops, catapults, or arbalests

Pour pillier hardis et couars.  
 Car couvoitise les atrape,  
 Si que nuls de leurs mains n'eschape  
 S'il n'est dont tels qu'il n'ait que perdre.  
 80 A tels ne s'ont cure d'aerdre,  
 Car qui riens n'a, riens ne li chiet.  
 De tels gens riens ne leur eschiet,  
 Mais couvoiteus ont tel defaut  
 Que quant plus ont, plus leur deffaut,  
 85 Et quant plus sont puissant et riche,  
 Tant sont li plus aver et chiche  
 Qu'avarice ardant qui d'euils vist,  
 Com plus vivent, plus rajonnist.  
 Et de ce la vient la tempeste  
 90 Qui destruit le monde et tempeste,  
 Les merveilles et les fortunes  
 Qui au jour d'ui sont si communes  
 Qu'on n'oit de nulle part nouvelle  
 Qui soit aggreadable ne belle;  
 95 Car il a plus grant difference  
 Dou temps que je vi en m'enfance  
 A cestui qui trop est divers  
 Qu'il n'ait des estés aus yvers.  
 Mais la chose qui plus me grieve  
 100 A souffrir, et qui plus m'est grieve,  
 C'est rendre a Dieu po reverence  
 Et ce qu'en riens n'a ordenance,  
 Et qu'au jour d'ui chascuns se pere  
 De ce qu'on claimme vitupere.  
 105 Pour ce en moy, plus que dire n'ose,  
 Estoit merencolie enclose.  
 Car qui le sceüst a demi  
 Assés meins en tenist de mi.  
  
 Et pour ce que merencolie  
 110 Esteint toute pensee lie,  
 Et aussi que je bien veoie  
 Que mettre conseil n'i povoie,  
 Et que, s'on sceüst mon muser,  
 On ne s'en feïst que ruser,  
 115 Laissay le merencolier  
 Et pris ailleurs a colier,  
 En pensant que se a Dieu plaisoit  
 Qui pour le milleur le faisoit.  
 Si cheï en autre pensee,  
 120 Pour ce que folie esprouvee  
 Est en tout homme qui se duet

To despoil brave men and cowards.  
For avarice captures them  
So no one escapes their grasp  
Unless he's one of those with nothing to lose.  
80 They have no desire to rob men like these,  
For the man with nothing does not interest them.  
Such men are never troubled,  
But the greedy have a failing, which is that  
The more they have, the more they want,  
85 And the more powerfully rich they are,  
They are that much more greedy and miserly,  
For the burning avarice feeding on them  
Grows younger the longer they live.  
And from this comes the tempest  
90 That destroys the world and rages on,  
The strange events and misfortune  
That today are so commonplace  
No one hears news from anywhere  
That might be agreeable or pleasant;  
95 For there's a greater difference  
Between the conditions I witnessed in my youth  
And those that now are so unpleasant  
Than there is between winter and summer.  
But what grieves me more  
100 To endure, and troubles me more too,  
Is that God is accorded little reverence  
And that there is no order to anything;  
And today everyone ruins himself  
With what is called vituperation.  
105 Therefore, more than I dare say,  
Melancholy had taken hold of me,  
But whoever knew the half of it  
Would think much less of me.

And because melancholy  
110 Extinguishes every happy thought,  
And also because I saw well  
I could do nothing about this,  
And because if anyone had discovered  
My state of mind he'd only have mocked it,  
115 I abandoned my sad meditations  
And tried to concern myself with other matters,  
Thinking that he pleases God  
Who makes the best of things.  
And then another thought occurred  
120 To me because it is proven folly  
For any man to be saddened

De chose qu'amender ne puet;  
 Et me pensai que se li temps  
 Estoit encore pires .x. temps,  
 125    Voire cent fois, voire cent mil,  
 N'i a il conseil si soutil  
 Comme de tout laissier ester,  
 Puis qu'on ne le puet contrester,  
 Et de faire selonc le sage  
 130    Qui dit et demoustre en sa page  
 Que, quant il a tout conceü,  
 Tout yimaginé, tout veü,  
 Esprouvé, serchié, viseté  
 Le monde, c'est tout vanité,  
 135    Et qu'il n'i a autre salaire  
 Fors d'estre liez et de bien faire.  
 Et tout einsi com je cuidoie  
 Laissier le penser ou j'estoie,  
 Il me sourvint une pensee  
 140    Plus diverse, plus effree,  
 Plus enuieuse la moitié  
 Et de plus grant merencolie.

Ce fu des orribles merveilles  
 Seur toutes autres despareilles  
 145    Dont homme puet avoir memoire,  
 Car je ne truis pas en histoire  
 Lisan nulles si mervilleuses,  
 Si dures, ne si perilleuses  
 De .iiij. pars, non de .x. temps  
 150    Comme elles ont esté de mon temps.  
 Car ce fu chose assez commune  
 Qu'on vit le soleil et la lune,  
 fol. 23v    Les estoiles, le ciel, la terre,  
 En signefiance de guerre,  
 155    De doleurs, et de pestilences,  
 Faire signes et demoustrances.  
 Car chascuns pot veoir a l'ueil  
 De lune esclipce et de soleil  
 Plus grant et plus obscur assez  
 160    Qu'esté n'avoit mains ans passez,  
 Et perdre en signe de doleur  
 Longuement clarté et couleur.  
 Aussi fu l'estoile coumee  
 En samblance de feu couee  
 165    Qui de feu et d'occision  
 Faisoit prenostication.  
 Li ciel, qui de leur haut veoient

By something he cannot better;  
And I determined that if the weather  
Were even ten times worse,  
125 Even a hundred times, or truly a hundred thousand,  
There would be no counsel wiser  
Than to let all this be  
Since it cannot be changed,  
And instead to act like the wise man  
130 Who says and demonstrates in his writing  
That, when he has considered everything,  
Imagined everything, seen all there is,  
Tested, examined, observed  
The world, it is all vanity,  
135 And there is no other course  
But to be happy and do good.  
And just as I was at the point of  
Abandoning the reverie I was in,  
A thought occurred to me  
140 Even more bizarre and frightening,  
More troubling by half  
And much more filled with sadness.

This was of those horrible, uncanny events  
Unlike the others  
145 That anyone might remember,  
Since in reading history I have not  
Discovered any so unusual,  
So hard to bear, or so threatening  
By a fourth or even a tenth part  
150 As these of my own time have been.  
For it has been a rather common occurrence  
That the sun and the moon, the stars,  
The sky and earth have been seen  
Displaying the signs of war,  
155 Misery, and pestilence,  
Offering tokens and manifestations,  
For everyone could see with his own eyes  
Eclipses of the moon and sun  
Much fuller and darker  
160 Than others had been for many years past,  
And as a sign of misfortune these two bodies lost  
For a long time their color and light.  
Furthermore, there was a star with tresses  
That seemed to be fire with a tail,  
165 And it prognosticated  
Murder and conflagration.  
The heavens, which saw from their heights

Les meschiés qu'a venir estoient  
Au monde, en pluseurs lieus plourerent  
170 De pitié sanc et degouterent,  
Si que de leur mervilleus plour  
La terre trambla de paour  
(Ce dient pluseurs qui ce virent)  
Dont villes et citez fondirent  
175 En Alemaingne, en Quaranteinne,  
Assez plus d'une quaranteinne,  
Dont je n'en say mie la somme.  
Mais on le scet moult bien a Romme,  
Car il y a une abeÿe  
180 De Saint Pol qui en fu perie.  
Mais li Sires qui tout a fait  
Par experïence de fait,  
Com sires souvereins et dignes  
Seur tous de ces mervilleus signes  
185 Nous moustra la signefiance,  
Et nous en mist hors de doubtance  
Si a point et si proprement  
Que chascuns le vit clerement.  
Car les batailles et les guerres  
190 Furent si grans par toutes terres  
Qu'on ne savoit en tout le monde,  
Tant comme il tient a la reonde,  
Païs, regne, ne region,  
Qu'il n'i heüst discentration;  
195 Dont .v. mil hommes et femmes  
Perdirent les corps et les ames  
Se cils qui a tous biens s'acorde  
Ne les prent a misericorde,  
Et maint païs destruit en furent,  
200 Dont encor les traces en durent.  
Et des prises et des outrages  
Et des occasions sauvages  
De barons et de chevaliers,  
De clers, de bourgois, d'escuiers,  
205 Et de la povre gent menue  
Qui morte y fu et confondue,  
De rois, de duz, de bers, de contes  
Seroit lons a faire li contes.  
Car tant en y ot des perdus  
210 Qu'on en estoit tous esperdus,  
L'un par feu, l'autre par bataille.  
Aprés ce, vint une merdaille  
Fausse, traïtre, et renoïe:  
Ce fu Judee la honnie,

The evil fortune to come  
Into the world, wept in many places  
170 And cried tears of blood from pity,  
And because of the strange rain issuing from them,  
The earth trembled with fear  
(So said several who saw this),  
Because of which villages and cities were destroyed  
175 In Germany and Carinthia,  
Somewhat more than forty altogether,  
Although I cannot tell their exact number.  
But the event is well known in Rome  
Because an abbey there  
180 Of St. Paul's was brought to ruin by it.  
But the Lord who made everything  
Through His direct intervention,  
Like a sovereign gracious ruler  
Over all things, showed us the meaning  
185 Of these marvelous tokens  
And dispelled our doubts  
So directly and properly  
That every man saw it clearly.  
For the battles and the wars  
190 Were so great throughout every land  
That no one knew in all the world,  
As much as it encompasses,  
Any country, kingdom, or region  
Where there was no strife;  
195 For this reason five hundred thousand men and women  
Would have lost their bodies and souls  
If He who is in harmony with all good  
Had not taken pity on them,  
And many countries were destroyed by it,  
200 And the results endure still.  
The story would be long to tell  
About captures and outrages,  
The savage killings as well  
Of noblemen and knights,  
205 Of clerks, townspeople, squires,  
And of poor people of little note  
Who died as a result or were brought to ruin,  
Of the kings, dukes, lords, and counts,  
For so many of them perished in this way,  
210 Some by fire, others in war,  
That everyone was completely confounded by it.  
After this appeared a group of scoundrels  
Who were false, traitorous, and heretical:  
This was shameful Judea,

215 La mauvaise, la desloyal,  
 Qui het bien et aimme tout mal,  
 Qui tant donna d'or et d'argent  
 Et promist a crestienne gent  
 Que puis, rivieres, et fonteennes  
 220 Qui estoient cleres et seinnes  
 En pluseurs lieus empoisonnerent,  
 Dont pluseurs leurs vies finerent  
 Car trestuit cil qui en usoient  
 Asses soudeinnement mouroient  
 225 Dont, certes, par .x. fois cent mille  
 En morurent, qu'a champ, qu'a ville  
 Einsois que fust aperceüe  
 Ceste mortel descouvenue.

230 Mais cils qui haut siet et long voit,  
 Qui tout gouverne et tout pourvoit,  
 Ceste traïson plus celer  
 Ne volt, eins la fist reveler  
 fol. 24r Et si generaument savoir  
 Qu'il perdirent corps et avoir.  
 235 Car tuit Juïf furent destruit,  
 Li uns pendu, li autres cuit,  
 L'autre noié, l'autre ot copee  
 La teste de hache ou d'espee.  
 Et meint crestien ensement  
 240 En morurent honteusement.

245 En ce temps vint une maisnie  
 De par leur dame Ypocrisie  
 Qui de courgies se batoient  
 Et adens se crucefioient  
 En chantant de la lopinelle  
 Ne say quelle chanson nouvelle,  
 Et valoient miex par leurs dis  
 Que sains qui soit en paradis.  
 Mais l'Eglise les entendi  
 250 Qui le batre leur deffendi,  
 Et si condempna leur chanson  
 Que chantoient li enfançon,  
 Et tous les escommenia  
 Dou poor que Diex donné li a,  
 255 Pour itant que leur baterie  
 Et leurs chans estoit herisie.

Et quant Nature vit ce fait  
 Que son oeuvre einsi se desfait,

215 The evil, the disloyal,  
Who hate good and love evil of all kinds,  
Who gave and promised so much  
Gold and silver to the Christian people  
That they in many places  
220 Poisoned the wells, streams, and fountains  
That had been clear and healthy,  
And so many lost their lives  
Because all who used them  
Died quite suddenly, and in this way  
225 Ten times a hundred thousand certainly  
Perished in the countryside and towns as well  
Before this deadly affliction  
Was taken notice of.

230 But He who sits on high and sees far,  
Who governs everyone and provides all things,  
Did not wish for this treason  
To be hidden any longer; instead He revealed  
And made it known so widely  
They lost their lives and goods.  
235 For all the Jews were put to death,  
Some hanged, others burned alive,  
One drowned, another beheaded  
By the axe's blade or sword,  
And likewise many Christians  
240 Died a shameful death because of this.

At this time a company came together  
At the urging of Hypocrisy, their lady,  
And these people beat themselves with whips  
And crucified themselves flat on the ground  
245 While singing to a catchy tune  
Some new song or other;  
And according to them they were worthier  
Than any saint in Paradise.  
But the Church dealt with them  
250 By forbidding them to whip themselves  
And condemning their song,  
Which little children were singing,  
And by excommunicating all of them  
Through the power granted it by God  
255 Because their self-abuse  
And song were heresy.

And when Nature saw what was happening,  
That her work was in these ways destroying itself

Et que li homme se tuoient  
 260 Et les yaues empoisonnoient  
 Pour destruire humeinne lignie  
 Par couvoitise et par envie,  
 Moult en desplut la belle et gente,  
 Moult se coursa, moult fu dolente.  
 265 Lors s'en ala sans atargier  
 A Jupiter et fist forgier  
 Foudres, tonnoirres, et tempestes  
 Par jours ouvrables et par festes.  
 Car ceste ouevre tant li tardoit  
 270 Que jour ne feste n'i gardoit.

Aprés Nature commanda  
 Aus .iiij. vens qu'elle manda  
 Que chascuns fust aparilliés  
 Pour tost courir, et abilliés,  
 275 Et qu'il issent de leurs cavernes  
 Et facent leurs mervilleus cernes,  
 Si qu'il n'i ait resne tenue,  
 En ciel, en terre, er mer, n'en nue,  
 Qu'il ne soient a l'air contraire;  
 280 Et facent pis qu'il porront faire.  
 Car quant ses ouevres voit derompre,  
 Elle vuet aussi l'air corrumpre.  
 Et quant li vent orent congié,  
 Et Jupiter ot tout forgié,  
 285 Foudres, tempestes, et espars,  
 Qui lors veïst de toutes pars  
 Espartir mervilleusement  
 Et tonner tres horriblement,  
 Vanter, gresler, et fort plouvoir,  
 290 Les nues, la mer esmouvoir,  
 Bois trambler, rivieres courir,  
 Et, pour doubtance de morir,  
 Tout ce qui a vie seur terre  
 Recept pour li garentir querre.  
 295 C'estoit chose trop mervilleuse,  
 Trop doubtable et trop perilleuse.  
 Car les pierres dou ciel cheoient  
 Pour tuer quanqu'elles ataingnoient,  
 Les hommes, les bestes, les fames;  
 300 Et en pluseurs lieus a grans flames  
 Cheirent li temps et la foudre  
 Qui mainte ville mist en poudre;  
 N'au monde n'avoit si hardi  
 Qui n'eüst cuer acouardi;

- And men were killing each other  
260 And poisoning the waters  
In order to annihilate the human race  
Because of greed and envy,  
She, beautiful and noble, was much displeased,  
Quite vexed, greatly pained.
- 265 So she made her way without delay  
To Jupiter and had forged  
Lightning, thunder, and storms  
On working days and feasts.  
Because she was so eager for the task,  
270 She paid no mind to either weekday or holiday.
- Afterward Nature ordered  
The four winds over which she had command:  
That each should make ready  
And prepare to race off  
275 And issue from their caverns  
To give rise to raging cyclones  
So that there should be no king's realm,  
Nowhere in heaven, the earth, sea, or clouds  
Where the air would not be troubled;
- 280 And they should do the worst they could.  
For when she saw her works destroyed,  
She wished the air corrupted as well.  
And when the winds had taken their leave  
And Jupiter had forged everything,  
285 Lightning, storms, and turbulence,  
Then one might have seen them  
Marvelously disperse in all directions  
And thunder quite horribly,  
Blow in gusts, let fall hail and rain in torrents,  
290 Disturb the clouds, the sea,  
Shake the woods, make the rivers flood,  
And force all things that live  
On the earth to seek shelter  
To save themselves because they feared death.
- 295 This turn of events was quite remarkable,  
Terrifying, and filled with peril!  
For stones fell from the sky,  
Killing whatever they touched,  
Men, beasts, women;
- 300 And in many places lightning and tempests  
Descended with great flames  
And turned a multitude of villages into dust;  
Nor was there anyone in the world so brave  
Who didn't then have a coward's heart;

305    Car il sambloit que decliner  
 Vosist li mondés et finer.  
 Mais nuls endurer ne peüst,  
 S'auques durer cils temps deüst.  
 Si que ces tempestes cesserent,  
 310    Mais tels bruïnes engendrerent,  
 Tels ordures et tels fumees  
 Qui ne furent gaires amees;  
 fol. 24v    Car l'air qui estoit nés et purs  
 Fu ors et vils, noirs, et obscuris,  
 315    Lais et puans, troubles et pus,  
 Si qu'il devint tous corrompus;  
 Si que de sa corruption  
 Eürent les gens opinion  
 Que corrumpu en devenoient  
 320    Et que leur couleur en perdoient.  
 Car tuit estoient mal traitié,  
 Descoulouré, et deshaitié:  
 Boces avoient et grans clos  
 Dont on moroit, et a briés mos,  
 325    Po osoient a l'air aler  
 Ne de pres ensamble parler,  
 Car leurs corrumpues alainnes  
 Corrompoient les autres sainnes.  
 Et s'aucuns malades estoit,  
 330    S'uns siens amis le visetoit,  
 Il estoit en pareil peril  
 Dont il en morut .v.<sup>c</sup> mil  
 Si que li fils failloit au pere,  
 La fille failloit a la mere,  
 335    La mere au fil et a la fille  
 Pour doubtance de la morille.  
 N'il n estoit nuls si vrais amis,  
 Qui ne fust adont arrier mis  
 Et qui n'eüst petit d'aïe,  
 340    S'il fust cheüs en maladie.  
 Ne fusicien n'estoit, ne mire  
 Qui bien sceüst la cause dire  
 Dont ce venoit, ne que c'estoit  
 (Ne nuls remede n'i metoit)  
 345    Fors tant que c'estoit maladie  
 Qu'on appelloit epydimie.

Quant Dieus vit de sa mansion  
 Dou monde la corruption  
 Qui tout partout estoit si grans  
 350    N'est merveilles s'il fu engrans

305 For it seemed that the world  
Was about to fall into ruin and end.  
But no one could have survived  
Had this weather lasted long,  
And so these storms came to an end,  
310 But they gave rise to such haze,  
Such filth, and such vapors  
As were hardly loved;  
For the air that had been clear and pure  
Was now vile, black, and cloudy,  
315 Horrible and fetid, putrefied and infected;  
And so it became completely corrupted;  
And about this corruption  
Men held the view  
It was corrupting them in turn  
320 And they were thus losing their health.  
For everyone was badly afflicted,  
Discolored, and made ill;  
People had buboes and large swellings  
From which they died, and, to be brief,  
325 Few dared to venture into the open air  
Or talk at close quarters with one another  
Because their infected breath  
Corrupted others who were healthy.  
And if anyone fell ill,  
330 And some friend visited him,  
That man faced the same peril  
From which five hundred thousand died  
So that father failed son,  
Mother failed daughter,  
335 Son and daughter failed mother  
From fear of this plague;  
And no one was so true a friend  
He was not thereupon ignored,  
The recipient of little help  
340 If he fell ill with the disease.  
And there was no physician or healer  
Who knew enough to name the cause  
Of its appearance, or even what it was  
(And none of them applied any remedy),  
345 Beyond that this was a disease  
One called an epidemic.

When from His house God saw  
That the corruption in the world  
Was this great everywhere,  
350 It is no wonder He was eager

De penre crueuse vengeance  
 De ceste grant desordenance;  
 Si que tantost, sans plus attendre,  
 Pour justice et vengeance prendre,  
 355 Fist la mort issir de sa cage,  
 Pleinne de forsen et de rage,  
 Sans frein, sans bride, sans loien,  
 Sans foy, sans amour, sans moien,  
 Si tres fiere et si orguilleuse,  
 360 Si gloute et si familleuse  
 Que ne se pooit saouler  
 Pour riens que peüst engouler.  
 Et par tout le monde couroit,  
 Tout tuoit and tout acouroit  
 365 Quanqu'il li venoit a l'encontre,  
 N'on ne pooit resister contre.  
 Et briefment tant en acoura,  
 Tant en occist et devoura,  
 Q'tous les jours a grans monceaus  
 370 Trouvoit on dames, jouvenceaus,  
 Juenes, viels, et de toutes guises  
 Gisans mors parmi les eglises;  
 Et les gettoit on en grans fosses  
 Tous ensamble, et tous mors de boces,  
 375 Car on trouvoit les cimatières  
 Si pleinnes de corps et de bieres  
 Qu'il couvint faire des nouvelles.  
 Ci a mervilleuses nouvelles.  
 Et si ot meinte bonne ville  
 380 Qu'on n'i veoit, ne fil, ne fille,  
 Femme, në homme venir n'aler,  
 N'on n'i trouvoit a qui parler,  
 Pour ce qu'il estoient tuit mort  
 De celle mervilleuse mort.  
 385 Et ne gisoient que .iij. jours  
 Ou meins; c'estoit petis sejours.  
 Et maint en y ot vraiment  
 Qui mouroient soudeinnement;  
 Car ceuls meïsmes qui les portoient  
 390 Au moustier pas ne revenoient  
 (Souvent la vit on avenir),  
 Eins les couvenoit la morir.  
 fol. 25r Et qui se vorroit entremettre  
 De savoir ou d'en escript mettre  
 395 Le nombre de ceuls qui moururent,  
 Tous ceuls qui sunt et ceuls qui furent  
 Et tous ceuls qui sont a venir

To take a cruel revenge  
For the great disorder;  
And so at once, waiting no longer,  
In order to have His justice and vengeance,  
355 From his cage He released Death,  
Full of rage and anger  
And lacked any check, bridle, or rein,  
Any faith, love, or moderation,  
So very proud and arrogant he was,  
360 So gluttonous and famished  
He could not be satisfied  
By anything he could consume.  
And he hastened throughout the world,  
Killing and running down one and all,  
365 Whomever he chanced upon,  
Nor could he be resisted.  
And, in short, he undid so many,  
Struck down and devoured so great a multitude  
That every day could be found  
370 Huge heaps of women, youths,  
Boys, old people, those of all degrees,  
Lying dead inside the churches;  
And they were thrown together  
In great trenches, all dead from the buboes.  
375 Because the cemeteries were found to be  
So full of corpses and biers  
It was necessary to lay out new ones.  
These were strange new tidings.  
And so there was many a fine town  
380 Where no boy or girl, no man or woman  
Was seen to come and go,  
Nor was anyone found there to talk to  
Because all of them had died  
This unbelievable death.  
385 And they lay ill no more than three days,  
Sometimes less; the time was short.  
And there were certainly many  
Who died of it suddenly;  
For those same men who bore them  
390 To the church did not return  
(This was often witnessed),  
But instead were to die right there.  
And whoever wished to undertake  
Discovering or putting down in writing  
395 The number of those who died,  
Those who are still here and once were,  
And all those to come,

400      Jamais n'i porroient venir,  
            Tant s'en sceüssent encombrer;  
    Car nuls ne les porroit nombrer,  
    Ymaginer, penser, ne dire,  
    Figurer, moustrer, ne escrire.  
    Car pluseurs fois certeinnement  
    Oÿ dire et communement  
405      Que, mil .ccc. .xlii.,  
    De cent n'en demorroit que nuef,  
    Dont on vit par deffaut de gent  
    Que maint bel heritage et gent  
    Demouroient a labourer.  
410      Nuls ne faisoit les chans arer,  
    Les blez soier, ne vingnes faire.  
    Qui en donnast triple salaire,  
    Non, certes, pour .i. denier vint  
    Tant estoient mort; et s'avint  
415      Que par les champs les bestes mues  
    Gisoient toutes esperdues,  
    Es blez et es vingnes paissoient,  
    Tout partout ou elles voloient,  
    N'avoient signeur, ne pastour,  
420      Ne homme qui leur alast entour,  
    N'estoit nuls qui les reclamast,  
    Ne qui pour siennes les clamast.  
    Heritages y ot pluseurs  
    Q'demouroient sans signeurs;  
425      Ne li vif n'osoient manoir  
    Nullement dedens le manoir  
    Ou li mort avoient esté.  
    Fust en yver, fust en esté;  
    Et s'aucuns fust qui le feïst,  
430      En peril de mort se meïst.  
    Et quant je vi ces aventures  
    Si diverses et si obscures,  
    Je ne fui mie si hardis  
    Que moult ne fusse acouardis.  
435      Car tuit li plus hardi trambloient  
    De paour de mort qu'il avoient.  
    Si que tres bien me confessai  
    De tous les pechiez que fais ay  
    Et me mis en estat de grace  
440      Pour recevoir mort en la place,  
    S'il pleüst a Nostre Signeur.  
    Si qu'en doubtance et en cremeur  
    Dedens ma maison m'enfermay  
    Et en ma pensee fermay

- Never would he be able to compass it,  
However hard he might labor.
- 400 For no one could count them,  
Imagine, conceive, or tell of them,  
Compute, make known, or record them.  
And, to be sure, many times  
I have heard it said and openly
- 405 That in thirteen hundred and forty-nine,  
Only nine survived of every hundred,  
And so one saw that, because people were lacking,  
Many a fine, noble estate  
Lay idle without those to work it.
- 410 No man had his fields plowed,  
His grain sowed, or his vines tended  
Though he'd have paid out triple wages,  
No surely, not even for twenty times the rate,  
Because so many had died; and thus it happened
- 415 The cattle lay about  
The fields completely abandoned,  
Grazing in the corn and among the grapes,  
Anywhere at all they liked,  
And they had no master, no cowherd,
- 420 No man at all to round them up;  
And there wasn't anyone who might call them back,  
No one to claim them as his own.  
There were many estates  
That remained without owners;
- 425 Nor did the living dare to stay  
Any time at all inside the houses  
Where the dead had been  
Either in winter or summer.  
And if anyone did so,
- 430 He himself then risked dying.  
And when I witnessed these events  
That were so strange and ominous,  
I was not at all so brave  
I did not become quite cowardly.
- 435 For all the most courageous trembled  
From the fear of death that overcame them,  
And so I quite thoroughly confessed myself  
Of all the sins I had committed,  
Putting myself into a state of grace
- 440 In order to accept death where I was  
If it should please Our Lord.  
Therefore with uncertainty and fear,  
I closed myself up inside the house  
And determined resolutely

- 445 Fermement que n'en partiroie  
 Jusques a tant que je saroie  
 A quel fin ce porroit venir;  
 Si lairoie Dieu couvenir.  
 Si que lonc temps, se Diex me voie,  
 450 Fui einsi que petit savoie  
 De ce qu'on faisoit en la ville,  
 Et s'en morut plus de .xx. mille,  
 Cependant que je ne sceüs mie,  
 Dont j'eüs meins de merencolie.  
 455 Car riens n'en voloie savoir,  
 Pour meins de pensees avoir,  
 Comment qu'assés de mes amis  
 Fussent mors et en terre mis.
- 460 Si qu'einsi fui lonc temps en mue,  
 Si comme un esprevier qu'on mue,  
 Et tant qu'une fois entroÿ  
 (Dont moult forment me resjoÿ)  
 Cornemuses, trompes, naquaires,  
 Et d'instrumens plus de .vij. paires.  
 465 Lors me mis a une fenestre  
 Et enquis que ce pooit estre;  
 Si que tantost me respondi  
 Uns miens amis qui m'entendi  
 Que ceuls qui demouré estoient  
 470 Einsi com tuit se marioient  
 Et faisoient festes et noces.  
 Car la mortalité des boces  
 fol. 25v Qu'on appelloit epydimie  
 Estoit de tous poins estanchie;  
 475 Et que les gens plus ne moroient.  
 Et quant je vi qu'il festioient  
 A bonne chiere et liement  
 Et tout aussi joliement  
 Com s'il n'eüssent riens perdu,  
 480 Je n'os mie cuer esperdu,  
 Eins repris tantost ma maniere  
 Et ouvri mes yex et ma chiere  
 Devers l'air qui si dous estoit  
 Et si clers qu'il m'amonnestoit  
 485 Que lors ississe de prison  
 Ou j'avoie esté la saison.  
 Lors fui hors d'esmay et d'effroy,  
 Se montai seur mon palefroy  
 Grisart, qui portoit l'ambleüre  
 490 Moult souëf et de sa nature

- 445 In my mind I'd not leave  
Until the time when I should learn  
What conclusion this might come to;  
And I would leave it for God to decide.  
And so for a long time, may God help me,
- 450 There I remained, knowing little  
Of what was happening in the city,  
And there more than twenty thousand died,  
Though of this I knew nothing  
And so felt less sadness;
- 455 For I did not wish to know anything  
So that my sorrows would be fewer,  
Even though many of my friends  
Had died and been put in the ground.
- 460 And so I remained long in hiding,  
Just like a hawk in moulting,  
Until at last one time I heard  
(Which made me greatly rejoice)  
Bagpipes, trumpets, kettledrums,  
And more than seven pairs of instruments.
- 465 Then I went to a window  
And asked what this might be,  
And at once one of my friends  
Who had heard me answered  
That those who remained were acting
- 470 Just as if all of them were getting married,  
Feasting, and celebrating weddings.  
For the deadly plague of the buboes  
That was called an epidemic  
Had completely ceased everywhere;
- 475 And people were no longer dying.  
And when I saw them celebrating  
Joyfully and with good cheer,  
And all just as merrily  
As if they had lost nothing,
- 480 I wasn't troubled in the least,  
But regained at once my composure,  
Turning my eyes and face  
To the air that was so sweet  
And clear it encouraged me
- 485 Then to leave the prison  
Where I had passed the season.  
At that moment, I was beyond grief and worry,  
And I mounted on my palfrey,  
Grisart, who moved at a pace
- 490 Quite calm, as was his nature.

S'alay aus champs isnellement  
Chevauchier par esbatement,  
Pour moy jouer et soulacier  
Et la douceur a moy lacier  
495 Qui vient de pais et de deduit  
Ou cuers volentiers se deduit  
Qui n'a cure de cusenson  
Qui touche a noise, n'a tenson,  
Mais bien vorroit cusensonner  
500 Ad ce qui puet honneur donner.  
En celle cuseñon estoie  
Pour honneur a quoi je tendoie.  
Cuseñon avoie et desir  
Que je peüssse, a mon loisir,  
505 Aucuns lievres a point sousprendre,  
Par quoy je les peüssse prendre.  
Or porroit aucuns enquester  
Se c'est honneur de levreter.  
A ce point ci responderoie  
510 Que c'est honneur, solas, et joie;  
C'est uns fais que noblesse prise,  
Qui est de gracieuze emprise,  
Et tres honneste a commencier,  
Dont il s'en fait bel avencier;  
515 S'est en faisant plaisans a faire,  
Et li honneurs gist ou parfaire,  
Dont en celle perfection  
Avoie si m'entention  
Qu'a autre chose ne pensoie.  
520 Et li bon levrier que j'avoie  
Renforçoient si mon solas  
Que je n'en peüssse estre las  
Quant le les os mis en conroy,  
Et je les vi de tel arroy  
525 De courir a point sus les chans,  
Et puis des oisillons les chans  
Qui estoient melodieus,  
Et li airs dou temps gracieuze  
Qui tout le corps m'adoucissoit.  
530 On puet bien croire qu'einsi soit  
Q'se pluseurs gens chevauchassent,  
A fin que point ne m'araissassent,  
Et aucuns bien en congneüsse,  
Que ja ne m'en aperceüsse,  
535 Tant y avoie mis ma cure.  
Se m'en avint une aventure  
Qui me fu un petit doubteuse,

And I went quickly to the fields  
In order to ride for pleasure,  
To entertain and solace myself,  
And to claim as my own the sweetness  
495 That comes from the peace and from the enjoyment  
In which the heart willingly delights  
That feels no concern for the pain  
Arising from either trouble or strife,  
But would instead pursue  
500 Whatever might bestow honor.  
I was very excited about  
The honorable thing I was bent on.  
I had the desire and the urge  
(If, in my good time, I could manage it)  
505 To catch some hares by surprise  
And then be able to hunt them down.  
Now, someone might ask  
If hare hunting is honorable.  
My answer to this question would be  
510 That it's an honor, diversion, and delight;  
It's a sport that the nobility value,  
Something of a gracious enterprise  
And quite advantageous to undertake  
Because it improves one nicely;  
515 Certainly, the activity itself is pleasant enough,  
And honor comes with accomplishing it,  
So at this time I had so directed  
My attention toward that end  
And was thinking of nothing else.  
520 And the good hare hounds I had  
So multiplied my enjoyment  
I could not have felt weary  
After releasing them  
And watching them run off  
525 Just so in a pack across the fields,  
And then there were the songs  
Of birds, lovely to hear,  
As well as the air of the mild weather  
Soothing my whole body.  
530 One could easily believe that if  
Some people were to ride up  
So that they might speak to me,  
Even if I should benefit thereby,  
I should indeed not notice,  
535 So much had I to this sport devoted my attention.  
It was then that an adventure befell me  
Which frightened me somewhat,

540 Mais briefment me fu gracieuse,  
Si comme tantost le diray  
Ci apres; point n'en mentiray.

545 Tandis que la m'esbanioie  
Que en moy oublié avoie  
Toutes autres merencoliés,  
Tant les dolentes, com les liés,  
Une dame de grant noblesse,  
Bien acesmee de richesse,  
Venoit a belle compaingnie.  
Mais je ne les veoie mie,  
Car dou chemin estoie arriere,  
550 Et, d'autre part, pour la maniere  
De ce que j'estoie entendus  
Et tous mes engins estendus  
fol. 26r A ma queste tout seulement.  
Mais la dame premierement  
555 Me vit eins que nuls me veïst,  
Ne que nuls samblant en feïst,  
C'est assavoir d'ycelle gent  
Qui conduisoient son corps gent.  
Lors .i. escuier appella  
560 Et li dist: "Vois tu celui la  
Qui bel se deduit et deporte?  
Va a lui et si me raporte  
Qui il est, et revien en l'eure  
Sans la faire point de demeure."  
565 Li escuiers n'en failli pas,  
Eins vint a moy plus que le pas  
Et hautement me salua.  
Mes propos de riens n'en mua.  
Si li dis: "Bien veingniés, biau sire."  
570 S'il s'en retourna, sans plus dire,  
Au plus tost qu'il pot a la dame:  
"Dame," dist cils, "Foi que doi m'ame,  
C'est la Guillaumes de Machaut.  
Et sachiez bien qu'il ne li chaut  
575 De riens fors que de ce qu'il chace,  
Tant est entendus a sa chace.  
Bien croy qu'il n'entent a nelui  
Fors qu'a ses levriers et a lui."  
580 Quant la dame ces mos oy,  
Samblant fist de cuer esjoÿ,  
Nom pas samblant tant seulement,  
Mais de fait enterinement,

- 540      Yet quickly became pleasant enough,  
            Just as I will relate immediately  
            Hereafter; I'll not lie about it at all.
- 545      While I was disporting myself there —  
            I who had forgotten all  
            Those other melancholic thoughts,  
            As much the sad as the pleasant ones —  
            A lady of great nobility,  
            Nicely decked out with rich clothes,  
            Appeared with a beautiful company.  
            Yet I didn't see them at all  
            Because I was back from the road
- 550      550      And, moreover, because of how  
            I was attending to  
            And had concentrated all my attention on  
            My hunting alone;  
            But the lady was the first to take notice
- 555      555      Of me before anyone else spied me there  
            Or before anyone made a sign of doing so,  
            That is, from among the company  
            Escorting her noble person.  
            Then she summoned a squire
- 560      560      And said to him: "Do you see that man there  
            Pleasantly disporting and enjoying himself?  
            Go to him and then report to me  
            Who he is, and return quickly  
            Without delaying there at all."
- 565      565      At this the squire did not fail,  
            But came to me in some haste  
            And loudly said hello.  
            I didn't stop what I was doing,  
            And I said to him: "You're welcome, fair sir."
- 570      570      He returned, without saying any more,  
            As fast as he could to the lady:  
            "Lady," he said, "By the faith I owe my soul,  
            That's Guillaume de Machaut over there.  
            Know well that nothing interests him
- 575      575      Save what he is pursuing.  
            He is so involved with his hunting  
            I believe firmly he has no time for anything but  
            His hounds and himself."
- 580      When the lady heard these words,  
            She seemed to rejoice at heart,  
            And this was no simple outward show,  
            But the absolute truth,

De cuer joiant, a chiere lie,  
 Comme dame gaie et jolie.  
 585 Nom pourquant, ce ne di je point;  
 Eins y avoit .i. autre point,  
 Pour aucune cause certeinne  
 Dont sa volenté estoit pleinne.  
 Si le me voloit pronuncier  
 590 Pour li deduire et soulacier  
 Et moy mettre en merencolie.  
 A ce point ne failli je mie,  
 Car je fui de li galies,  
 Ramposnes, et contraliez,  
 595 Aussi com se j'eüssse fait  
 Encontre li un grant meffait.

Quant li escuiers ot compté  
 De moy toute sa volenté,  
 La dame dist tout hautement:  
 600 "Or veons .i. petit, comment  
 Guillaumes est faitis et cointes.  
 Il m'est avis qu'il soit acointes  
 De trestoute jolieté  
 Apartenant a honnesté.  
 605 De nuit, en estudiant, veille,  
 Et puis de jours son corps traveille  
 En travail ou li bons s'atire  
 Qui a honneur traveille et tire.  
 Einsi va son corps deduisant  
 610 Toutes heures en bien faisant.  
 Si fais estas donne couleur  
 De maintenir homme en valeur.  
 Mais je li osterai briefment  
 Grant part de son esbatement,  
 615 Car je li donrai a ruser,  
 Pour li bonne piece muser.  
 Long temps a que je le desir:  
 S'en accomplirai mon desir.

Or t'en reva a li tantost,  
 620 Car je me merveil qui li tost  
 A ci venir. Si li diras  
 Par plus briés mos que tu porras  
 Qu'il veingne ci apertement.  
 Et se li di hardiement  
 625 Que ce soit sans querir essoingnes,  
 Non contestant toutes besongnes,  
 Et que c'est a mon mandement."

Because her heart was joyful, her manner happy,  
Like a woman gay and merry,  
585 Not for my sake, I don't mean that at all,  
But rather for another reason entirely,  
Because of a particular matter  
In which she took much interest.  
And she was eager to bring to my attention  
590 In order to delight and entertain herself  
And, in turn, to sink me into melancholy.  
This I did not fail to do,  
For I was mocked by her,  
Reproached and contradicted  
595 Just as if I had sinned  
Quite grievously against the woman.

After the squire related  
All he wished about me,  
The lady said in a loud voice:  
600 "Now let's see just how  
Agreeable and sharp Guillaume is.  
As far as I know, he is knowledgeable  
About all kinds of merriment  
According with morality.  
605 By night, he stays awake studying,  
And then by day he labors his body  
With the work the good man looks for,  
Who seeks what brings and confers honor;  
And so he goes around amusing himself  
610 At all times by doing what is proper.  
Such activities do cultivate the demeanor  
To maintain a man in worthiness.  
But shortly I will take from him  
A large part of his enjoyment  
615 Because I will have some fun at his expense  
That will puzzle the man a good while.  
I have been eager to do that for a long time;  
So in this fashion I will fulfill my wish.

Now return to him as fast as possible  
620 Because I am quite anxious  
He be brought over here. So tell the man  
In as few words as you can manage  
To proceed here directly.  
And say to him firmly  
625 It must be with no excuse  
And no matter what other business he has,  
And it is at my command."

630     “Dame, a vostre commandement,”  
 Dist li escuiers, “Sans nul ‘si,’  
 Je li vois dire tout einsi  
 Com vous dites, ou au plus pres  
 Que je porrai; j’en sui tous pres.”  
  
 fol. 26v Lors li escuiers chevaucha  
 Devers moy tant qu’il m’aprocha.  
 635     Et quant il me vint aprochant,  
 Il m’appella en chevauchant,  
 En galopant d’uns pas menuz  
 Tant qu’il fu pres de moy venuz.  
 Et si tost com j’oÿ sa vois,  
 640     Erraument devers lui m’en vois  
 Car de long temps le congoissoie.  
 Et il, en signe de grant joie,  
 Me salua de Dieu le pere  
 Et de sa douce chiere mere.  
 645     Et je li respondi briefment  
 En saluant courtoisement.  
 Puis li demanday quels nouvelles  
 Pour moy seront bonnes et belles,  
 Se ma dame est preus et haitie,  
 650     En pais, sans estre courrecie.  
 “Guillaume, de riens n’en doubtez,  
 Car ma dame est de tous costez  
 En pais, preus, et haitie, et seinne;  
 Et que ce soit chose certeinne,  
 655     Assez tost savoir le porrez,  
 Selonc ce que dire m’orrez.  
 Il est bien voirs qu’elle vous mande,  
 Nom pas qu’elle le vous commande,  
 Mais d’un mandement par tel guise  
 660     Qu’il vaut auques pres commandise;  
 Non prier et non commander.  
 Einsi li plaist il a mander,  
 Entre le vert et le meür.  
 Mais tenez ceci pour seür:  
 665     Que c’est bien de s’entention  
 Que, sans point d’excusation,  
 Venrez a li moult liement;  
 Elle le croit fiablement,  
 Dont, s’il vous plaist, vous y venrez,  
 670     Ou vo plaisir responderez.”

Après ces mos li respondi:  
 “Tres chiers amis, ytant vous di

“Lady, as you order,”  
Said the squire, “Without any ‘but,’  
630 I will go tell him just what  
You have said, or as close to it as  
I am able; I am quite ready to do this.”

Then the squire rode off  
In my direction until he approached me  
635 And as he drew near,  
He called out to me while still riding,  
Galloping at a quick pace  
Until he came fairly close.  
And as soon as I heard his voice,  
640 I quickly went toward him  
Because I had known the man a long time.  
And as a token of his great joy,  
He saluted me by God the Father  
And by His sweet dear mother.  
645 And I responded at once,  
Greeting him courteously.  
Then I inquired what news,  
Good and pleasing, there might be for me,  
If my lady were hale and happy,  
650 At peace, not annoyed by anything.  
“Guillaume, have no fear at all  
Because my lady is in every way  
At peace, in good health, happy, and well;  
And that this is certain  
655 You will be able to learn rather quickly  
From what you'll hear me say.  
For it's quite true she summons you,  
Not really commanding you to go to her  
But asking in such a fashion  
660 It counts the same as an order,  
Neither begging nor commanding.  
Instead it pleases her to request,  
Somewhere between ‘green’ and ‘ripe.’  
Yet mark this point for certain:  
665 It is her intention beyond any doubt  
For you to come to her willingly  
Making no excuses;  
She trusts you will do so,  
And thus, if you please, you'll go to her  
670 And there express your pleasure.”

After these words, I answered him:  
“My very dear friend, this much I will tell you,

Qu'a ma dame, ne quars, ne tiers  
 Ne sui, mais mes pooirs entiers  
 675 Est tous siens, sans riens retenir.  
 Se ne me porroie tenir  
 D'aler a li, ne ne vorroie,  
 Pour tant que de vray sentiroie  
 Que ma dame le penseroit.  
 680 Dont quant elle me manderoit,  
 Ce seroit bien folie a croire  
 Que point en vosisse recroire.  
 Mais un po vous vueil demander,  
 Afin qu'il n'i ait qu'amender:  
 685 Combien ma dame est loin de ci?”  
 “Guillaume, je respon einsi:  
 Qu'il n'i a pas bien trois journees.  
 Bel soient elles adjournees!”  
 Dis je: “Or alons sans sejour,  
 690 Si chevauchons et nuit et jour  
 Pour les bons ma dame acomplir.  
 Je ne me puis miex raemplir  
 De joie que son plaisir faire;  
 Se n'useray point dou contraire.”

695 “Guillaume, j'ay bien entendu  
 Ce que vous avez respondu.  
 Je vous vueil un po apaisier  
 D'autre chose que de baisier.  
 Resgardez en celle grant pleinne  
 700 Un po dela celle versainne:  
 C'est ma dame a grant chevauchie  
 Qui pour vous s'est la addressie.  
 La vous atent, soiez certeins.  
 Or ne soit point vostres cuers teins  
 705 De paour pour trop loing aler;  
 Car la porrez a li parler.”  
 A ces mos ma chiere dressay,  
 Et puis mon regart addressay  
 D'icelle part ou cils disoit.  
 710 Et quant je vi qu'einsi gisoit,  
 Que mes chemins yert acourciez,  
 Je n'en fui mie courreciez,  
 fol. 27r Eins en fui liez; s'en pris a rire,  
 Et puis a celui pris a dire:  
 715 “Biaus amis, par merencolie  
 M'avez tenté de moquerie,  
 De bourde, et de parole voire,  
 Quant vous me donnastes a croire

Regarding my lady, neither a fourth nor even a third  
Of what I am, but my entire being  
675 Is completely hers, with nothing held back.  
And I could not restrain myself  
From going to her, nor would wish to,  
Inasmuch as I would truly sense  
What my lady would think about it.  
680 And so when she sends for me,  
It would surely be madness to believe  
I would ever think twice about it.  
But I do want to ask you about a small point,  
Just so there will be nothing to remedy:  
685 How far is my lady from this spot?"  
"Guillaume, here is my answer:  
It is not quite three days' travel.  
And may those days dawn brightly!"  
I said: "Let us go on now without delay,  
690 And let us ride night and day  
To do what is good for my lady.  
I cannot better replenish myself  
With joy than by doing her pleasure;  
And so I will offer no resistance at all."

695 "Guillaume, I have listened attentively  
To what you've said in response.  
And I would like to appease you a little  
With something other than a kiss.  
Look toward the broad clearing  
700 A bit below that fallow field:  
That's my lady with a great troop,  
And she has drawn herself up there for your sake.  
At that spot she attends you; be certain of it.  
Now let your heart be not at all troubled  
705 By any fear of having to travel too far  
Because you can speak to her over there."  
At these words, my face brightened,  
And I turned my eyes toward  
The place he had indicated.  
710 And when I saw her waiting there,  
That my journey was shortened,  
I was scarcely annoyed,  
But pleased instead; and I began to laugh  
And started to say to him:  
715 "Good friend, you have nearly made me  
Melancholy with your jokes,  
Your trickery, and your true words  
When you gave me to believe

Ma dame long par bel mentir.  
 720 Y me plut moult bien a sentir  
 Le vray de ce que vous mentites  
 En ce qu'aprés le voir deïtes,  
 Que ma dame estoit assez pres.  
 Je m'en vois; or venez après,  
 725 Ou vous demourrez, s'il vous plaist."  
 "Guillaume, bien heure de plait  
 Est encor; ne vous hastez point.  
 Vous y venrez assez a point  
 Se ma dame y puet adrecier.  
 730 Se vous saviés un po tencier,  
 Bon seroit et pour certain cas  
 Ou vous devenez advocas;  
 Car on vous porra bien sousprendre  
 Se vous ne vous savez deffendre."  
 735 De si fais mos nous debatiens,  
 Par gieu si nous en esbatiens;  
 Dont tout en parlant chevauchames  
 Que la gent la dame aprochames.  
 Lors m'avansai, et quant je vi  
 740 Son gentil corps amanevi  
 D'onneur, de grace, et de science,  
 En signe de grant reverence  
 Vos jus de mon cheval descendre;  
 Mais tantost le me va deffendre.  
 745 En disant debonnairement:  
 "Hola, Guillaume, nullement,  
 Pour certain, n'i descenderez.  
 A cheval a moy parlerez."  
 Quant je l'oÿ, je m'en souffri,  
 750 Et si bel salu li offri  
 Comme je pooie et savoie,  
 Et comme faire le devoie,  
 Einsi comme j'avoie apris  
 A honnourer gens de tel pris.  
 755 Et elle aussi, sans contrefaire,  
 Sceut moult bien le seurplus parfaire,  
 En respondant par amisté,  
 Gardant honneur et honesté.  
 Puis me dist moult rassisement:

### LA DAME

760 "Guillaume, mervilleusement  
 Estes estranges devenus.  
 Vous ne fussiez pas ça venus,  
 Se ce ne fust par mes messages,

Through a clever lie that my lady was far away;  
720 It has pleased me much to realize  
The truth of what you lied about  
Because you afterward spoke the truth,  
Namely that my lady was rather close by.  
I'm on my way; come along now,  
725 Or stay here as you please."  
"Guillaume, there is still time  
For a discussion; no need to hurry.  
You will get there soon enough  
If my lady can arrange it.  
730 And if you have some skill in debating,  
It will be good in this situation  
Where you will play the lawyer's role;  
For you could be taken by surprise  
If you prove unable to defend yourself."  
735 We bandied about these words  
And with such game amused ourselves;  
Thus absorbed in talk we rode on  
Until nearing the lady's entourage.  
Then I went on ahead, and seeing  
740 Her noble person replete  
With honor, grace, and learning,  
As a sign of great reverence  
I made to get off my horse.  
But at once she started to forbid it,  
745 Saying quite politely:  
"Oh no, Guillaume, this will surely not do.  
You must not dismount.  
Speak to me from your horse."  
And when I heard this, I obliged  
750 And gave her as fine a greeting  
As I could and knew how to,  
And in the manner I should have,  
Just as I had learned  
To honor people of such rank.  
755 And without dissembling, she in turn  
Knew how to take care of the rest,  
Responding in friendship,  
Guarding her honor and integrity.  
Then she spoke to me quite firmly:

**THE LADY**

760 "Guillaume, you have acted  
Too much the stranger.  
You would not have come here  
Had it not been for my messenger.

765 Je croy que vous estes trop sages  
 Devenuz, ou trop alentis,  
 Mausoingneus, et mautalentis,  
 De vos deduis apetisiez,  
 Ou trop po les dames prisiez.  
 Quant je fu la dessus montee  
 770 En celle plus haute montee  
 Mon chemin tenoie sus destre,  
 Et je regardai vers senestre,  
 Tout de plain vous vi chevauchier,  
 Vos levriers siffler et huchier.  
 775 Tels ouevres faire vous ooie  
 Tout aussi bien com je veoie  
 Vous et vostre contenement.  
 Dont je croy bien certainnement,  
 Guillaume, que vous nous veïtes.  
 780 Et pour quoy dont, quant vous oïtes  
 Nos chevaus passer et hennir,  
 Et se ne daigniés venir,  
 Jusqu'a tant que je vous manday  
 Einsi com je le commanday?  
 785 Dont je vous merci tellement  
 Com je doy, et non autrement.”

### GUILLAUME

Lors li dis je: “Pour Dieu merci,  
 Ma dame, ne dites ceci.  
 Je respon, sauve vostre honneur,  
 790 Car foy que doy Nostre Signour,  
 fol. 27v Je ne vi riens, ne riens n'oÿ,  
 Tant avoie cuer esjoÿ  
 De ma chace a quoy je pensoie,  
 Pour la fin a quoy je tendoie.  
 795 S'estoie einsi comme ravis.  
 Ma dame, je feroie envis  
 Riens encontre vostre voloir.  
 Et que me porroient valoir  
 A faire tels menuz despis?  
 800 Bien say que j'en vaurroie pis.  
 Si m'en devez bien escuser.”

### LA DAME

“Guillaume, plus n'en vueil ruser.  
 Puis qu'einsi va, mes cuers vous croit.  
 Mais d'une autre partie croit  
 805 Moult durement une autre chose  
 Encontre vous qui porte glose.

765 You have become, I think,  
 Too wise or too backward,  
 Inattentive and disagreeable,  
 Eager for your sport,  
 Or else you value ladies too little.  
 When I climbed the ground over there  
 770 On that highest rise,  
 I took the path on the right  
 And looked toward the left;  
 Quite clearly I saw you riding,  
 Whistling up and calling your hounds.  
 775 I heard you doing this  
 And likewise saw  
 You and your goings-on.  
 So I believe quite surely,  
 Guillaume, you must have seen us.  
 780 And why, then, when hearing  
 Our horses pass by and whinny  
 Did you not deign come forward  
 Until I gave you the order,  
 Just as if I made it a command?  
 785 So I thank you just as much for this  
 As I should and no more.”

### GUILLAUME

Then I said to her: “For God’s sake,  
 My lady, don’t say so.  
 I will reply to that, saving your honor,  
 790 For by the faith I owe our Lord  
 I saw nothing and heard nothing either,  
 So much was my heart enthralled  
 By the hunting I was intent on,  
 By the goal I wanted to attain.  
 795 And so I was spellbound.  
 My lady, only involuntarily would I do  
 Anything against your will.  
 And how would it profit me  
 To do something so petty and spiteful?  
 800 I know well I would be demeaned by this.  
 And so you should excuse me.”

### THE LADY

“Guillaume, I don’t want to fool with this further.  
 Because it is so, my heart believes you.  
 But on the other hand a different matter  
 805 Has arisen — and very seriously —  
 To your discredit, and it needs explaining.

Se vous donray assez a faire  
 Et se vous ferai maint contraire  
 Se pour confus ne vous rendez.  
 810 Guillaume, oëz et entendez:  
 Vers les dames estes forfais,  
 S'en avez en chargié tel fais  
 Que soustenir ne le porrez  
 Ne mettre jus quant vous vorrez."  
 815 Avec ces paroles diverses,  
 En leurs diversetez perverses,  
 Me moustra elle une maniere  
 Aspre, crueuse, male, et fiere,  
 En signe de grant mautalent  
 820 Pour moy faire le cuer dolent  
 Et mettre ma pensee toute  
 En effroy, en song, et en doublet.  
 De ce se mettoit en grant peinne  
 Qu'ele se tenoit pour certainne  
 825 Que de tant bien la priseroie  
 Q'son courrous moult doubteroie.  
 Et si fis je; je le doubtay,  
 Quant ces paroles escoutay,  
 Nom pas pour cause de meffait  
 830 Qu'endroit de moy heüssse fait;  
 Mais je doubtay pour mesdisans  
 Qui sont aucunes fois nuisans  
 Par fausseté et par envie  
 Aus bons qui mainnent bonne vie.  
 835 Si doubtay si faite aventure.  
 Mais seùrs fui qu'enforfaiture  
 N'avoie fait en ma vie onques  
 Envers nulles dames quelsquonques.  
 Se li respondi par avis.

### GUILLAUME

840 "Dame, fait avez .i. devis  
 Ou ma grant deshonneur moustrez,  
 Mais li procés n'est pas outrez  
 Ne mis en fourme justement.  
 Pour faire certain jugement,  
 845 Vous me deüssiez dire en quoy  
 J'ay forfait et tout le pourquoy  
 Amener a conclusion.  
 Or est en vostre entention  
 Secretement mis en enclos.  
 850 S'il ne m'est autrement desclos,  
 Je n'en saveroit respondre.

- And I will keep you very busy  
And offer much argument against you  
If you do not admit your error.  
810     Guillaume, listen and pay attention:  
You have sinned against women,  
And so you have taken on a burden  
You will not be able to hold up under  
Or put down when you would like.”  
815     With these strange words,  
Perverse in their severity,  
She showed me a manner  
Bitter, cruel, hurtful, and haughty  
As a sign of her great anger  
820     In order to make my heart heavy,  
And also to make fearful, hesitant,  
And full of uncertainty my every thought.  
She took pains in doing so  
Because she was convinced  
825     That, valuing her so highly,  
I should fear her anger greatly.  
And this I did; I started to fear her  
When I heard these words,  
Not because of any misdeed  
830     I myself had supposedly committed;  
Rather because I feared those gossip-mongers  
Who are at times harmful  
Because of their falseness and envy  
To good people who lead decent lives.  
835     And so I dreaded this turn of events.  
Yet I was certain I had done  
No harm in my whole life  
To any woman whomsoever,  
And with this in mind I answered her:

**GUILLAUME**

- 840     “Lady, you have brought up something  
That heaps great dishonor upon me,  
But the trial is not yet arranged  
Or begun in proper form.  
For a certain judgment to be rendered,  
845     You must tell me how  
I have erred and also explain in detail  
All the facts of the matter.  
At present your purpose here  
Remains secret and hidden  
850     If not divulged to me,  
I will not be able to respond.

Or vueilliez, s'il vous plaist, espondre  
 Le fait de quoy vous vous dolez;  
 Et s'einsi faire le volez  
 855    Vous ensieurez la droite voie  
 De droit, ou je ne saveroie  
 Le fait congnoistre ne niér.  
 Ce non, vous devez ottriér  
 Que je m'en voise frans et quittes  
 860    De ce forfait que vous me dites;  
 J'en atenderoie bien droit."

### LA DAME

“Guillaume, sachiés orendroit  
 N'en arez plus de ma partie.  
 Car la chose est einsi partie.  
 865    Se je le say, vous le savez,  
 Car le fait devers vous avez  
 En l'un de vos livres escript,  
 fol. 28r    Bien devisié et bien descript.  
 Si regardés dedens vos livres.  
 870    Bien say que vous n'estes pas yvres  
 Quant vos fais amoureus ditez.  
 Dont bien savez de vos dittez,  
 Quant vous les faites et parfaites,  
 Se vous faites bien ou forfaites  
 875    Dés qu'il sont fait de sanc assis  
 Autant a un mot comme a sis.  
 S'il vous plaist, vous y garderez  
 Qu'autre chose n'en porterez  
 De moy, quant a l'eure presente.  
 880    Soiez certains que c'est m'entente.”

### GUILLAUME

“Dame, qu'est ce que dit avez?  
 Selonc le bien que vous savez,  
 Trop mieus savez que vous ne dites:  
 J'ay bien de besongnes escriptes  
 885    Devers moy, de pluseurs manieres,  
 De moult de diverses matieres,  
 Dont l'une l'autre ne ressamble.  
 Consideré toutes ensamble,  
 Et chascune bien mise a point,  
 890    D'ordre en ordre et de point en point,  
 Dés le premier commencement  
 Jusques au darrein finement,  
 Se tout voloie regarder,  
 Dont je me vorray bien garder,

Now please, if you will, expound upon  
 That matter troubling you;  
 And if you agree to do so,  
 855 You will be following the proper path  
 Of the law, for otherwise I would not be able  
 To learn what the issue is and dispute it.  
 If not, you ought to grant  
 I should go free and clear  
 860 Of the allegation you have made against me.  
 I expect proper justice in this matter."

### THE LADY

"Guillaume, you already know  
 And will hear nothing more from me.  
 Instead this is how things stand.  
 865 If I know about it, you know too,  
 Because the case against you is something  
 You have written down in one of your books,  
 Something well laid out and described therein.  
 So look through your books.  
 870 I know well you are not drunk  
 When you compose your love poems.  
 And so you know well, with regard to your own tales,  
 When you compose and complete them,  
 If you did right or wrong there  
 875 Because into these works you put your heart  
 As much in a single word as in six.  
 If you please, go look there  
 Because you will get nothing more  
 From me for the present.  
 880 Be sure this is my intention."

### GUILLAUME

"Madam, what have you said?  
 As you are very well aware,  
 You know much more than you admit.  
 I have all sorts of written texts  
 885 In front of me, of various kinds,  
 Devoted to very different themes,  
 Each of which is quite unlike every other.  
 Examining all these at the same time,  
 And each one rather thoroughly,  
 890 Section by section and sentence by sentence,  
 From the beginning of the first  
 To the very end of the last  
 If I wished to look through all of them:  
 This I should indeed like to avoid,

895    Trop longuement y metteroie.  
 Et d'autre part, je ne porroie  
 Trouver ce que vous demandez  
 S'a vos paroles n'amendez.  
 Pour tel chose ne quier ja lire,  
 900    Dame, nom pas pour vous desdire,  
 Mais ce n'est pas chose sensible  
 Q'vostre pensee invisible  
 Pëust venir a ma congnoissance,  
 Fors que par la clef d'ordenance  
 905    Dont vostres cuers soit deffermiés,  
 Et que si en soie enfourmés  
 Que vostre bouche le me die.  
 Lorsqu'a respondre contredie,  
 Quant de bouche le m'arez dit,  
 910    J'en vueil moult bien, a vostre dit,  
 Estre blamez et corrigiez.  
 Dame, s'il vous plait, or jugiez  
 Selonc la vostre opinion,  
 Se j'ay tort a m'entention.”

#### LA DAME

915    “Guillaume, puis qu'il est einsi,  
 Je m'acort bien a ce point ci.  
 Orendroit me rens je vaincue;  
 Mais de vostre descouverue,  
 Qui est contre dames si grande,  
 920    Afferroit bien crueuse amende  
 S'il estoit qui la vosist prendre.  
 Or vueilles dés or mais entendre  
 Ad ce que je diray de bouche,  
 Car moult forment au cuer me touche.  
 925    Et quant dit le vous averay,  
 En tel lieu le reprocheray  
 Que vous en serez moult blasmez  
 Et vers les dames diffamez.

930    Une question fu jadis  
 Mise en termes par moult biaus dis,  
 Belle et courtoisement baillie,  
 Mais aprés fu trop mal taillie.  
 Premierement fu supposé,  
 Et en supposant proposé,  
 935    C'une dame de grant vaillance  
 Par tres amiable fiance  
 Ameroit .i. loial amant  
 Si que toudis, en bien amant,

895 All this would take too long.  
And in addition I might not  
Come across what you are taking issue with  
If you do not tell me more.  
For I would never seek to read such a thing,  
900 Madam, except to contradict you.  
Yet it is hardly to be expected  
That I would prove able to decipher  
A hidden thought of yours  
Except through the proper key  
905 That might unlock your heart;  
And so I might be informed about this,  
Let your mouth tell it to me.  
If I refuse to respond  
After you have told me yourself,  
910 Then I'd certainly agree to whatever  
Condemnation and reproof you utter.  
Madam, if you please, now decide  
If my view here is mistaken  
According to your own opinion."

**THE LADY**

915 "Guillaume, since this is how things stand,  
I agree completely with this point.  
At the moment I admit myself defeated;  
But this matter of your transgression,  
Which is so grave against women,  
920 Would call for a severe punishment  
Should someone wish to exact it.  
So from this point listen carefully  
To what I will say from my own mouth  
Because the issue touches me right to the heart.  
925 And after I have told you about it,  
I will reproach you in such a place  
Where you will be much blamed for this,  
Losing your reputation among ladies.

930 One time an issue was  
Advanced in a very pleasant poem,  
Prettily embellished and with refinement,  
But afterward quite unfortunately developed.  
At first it was supposed,  
And, in supposing, proposed  
935 That a lady of great worthiness  
Through a very loving bond  
Did love a faithful lover  
So that at all times, in loving well,

Seroit de cuer loial amie.  
940 Se il, en gardant courtoisie,  
Toudis de bon cuer l'ameroit  
Et son pooir estenderoit  
En li chierir et honnourer.  
fol. 28v Et pour li miex enamourer  
945 Il maintenroit toute noblesse:  
Honneur, courtoisie, et largesse.  
Biaus homs seroit, a grant devis,  
De membres, de corps, et de vis  
Renommez, de grace parfais,  
950 Et si bien esprouvez par fais  
D'armes, comme nuls homs puet estre  
Qui a mis sa vie et son estre  
En sieuir joustes et tournois,  
Et tous amoureus esbanois.  
955 Cependant qu'einsi s'ameront  
Et toudis bien se garderont  
Les courtois poins de loiauté  
En raison et en verité,  
Leur avenroint tele aventure,  
960 Par violence ou par nature,  
Que li amans devieroit.  
Et celle, quant le saveroit,  
Demouroit lasse et esgaree,  
Loyal amie non amee.  
965 Car ses cuers demorroit espris,  
Et li cuers de l'amant de pris  
Seroit selonc nature esteins,  
Dont li siens cuers seroit plus teins  
Pour cause de la departie.  
970 Plus n'en di de ceste partie.  
Eins vorrai d'une autre compter  
Pour a ceste ci adjouster,  
En faisant ma comparison.  
Guillaume, or entendez raison:  
975 Uns autres amans debonnaires,  
Aussi vaillans en ses affaires  
Comme cils de qui j'ay compté  
Tant en grace comme en bonté,  
Et de toutes autres parties  
980 En honneur a point departies,  
Amera aussi une dame  
Sans mal penser et sans diffame,  
Et se li fera a savoir.  
Et quant elle en sara le voir,

- She was at heart a loyal beloved.  
940 And he, obedient to courtesy,  
Always loved her with a good heart  
And expended his energy  
In cherishing and honoring her.  
And in order to deepen her love  
945 He upheld everything noble:  
Honor, courtesy, and generosity.  
He was a handsome man, strikingly so,  
Renowned for his limbs, body,  
And countenance, perfect in grace,  
950 And as well proven in deeds of arms  
As any man could be  
Who had spent his life and energy  
Devoted to tournaments and jousting,  
As well as all other pursuits pertaining to love.  
955 Though they loved each other in this fashion  
And always closely observed  
The courtly rules of faithfulness  
In both reason and truth,  
Such a chance befell them,  
960 Whether through nature or violence,  
That the lover did pass away.  
And the lady, when she learned this,  
Lived on sorrowful and abandoned,  
A true beloved no longer loved.  
965 Because her heart was still aflame  
And the heart of the worthy lover  
Had been undone by nature,  
Her heart was the more afflicted  
By the fact of his demise.  
970 I will say no more about the matter.  
Instead I would like to bring up another  
In order to set it beside this one,  
In order to make my comparison.  
Listen now, Guillaume, and learn.  
975 Another lover of high degree,  
As worthy as the one  
I have already mentioned in his deeds  
In grace as much as in virtue,  
And in all other respects  
980 Rightly and honorably endowed,  
Also loved a lady  
With no thought of evil or infamy,  
And this he made known to her,  
And when she had learned the truth,

- 985 Volentiers le recevera  
 Et s'amour li ottriera  
 Liement, sans faire dangier.  
 Pas ne vueil ce ci prolongier;  
 Car cils l'amerai loyaument
- 990 Et se la croira fermement  
 Sans erreur et sans nulle doubté  
 Car il cuidera s'amour toute  
 Avoir acquis toute sa vie  
 Sans jamais faire departie.
- 995 Mais il ira bien autrement.  
 Quant il sera plus liement  
 Conjoins a li et affermez  
 En la fiance d'estre amez,  
 Elle li jouera d'un tour
- 1000 Outrelement sans nul retour,  
 Ou il trouvera fausseté  
 Contre lui, et desloiauté,  
 Et se ne le porra nier.  
 Si doit bien celui anuier,
- 1005 Ce n'est mie moult grant merveille.  
 Mais ce n'est pas chose pareille  
 Au fait d'amours qui me remort,  
 Qui se defenist par la mort.  
 Guillaume, s'entendu m'avez,
- 1010 Assés legierement devez  
 Vostre meffaçon reconnoistre  
 Pour vostre deshonneur descroistre.  
 Vous avez dit et devisié  
 Et jugié de fait avisé
- 1015 Par diffinitif jugement  
 Que cils a trop plus malement,  
 Griété, tourment, mal, et souffraite  
 Qui trueve sa dame forfaite  
 Contre lui en fausse maniere,
- 1020 Que la tres douce dame chiere  
 Qui avera son dous amy  
 Conjoint a son cuer, sans demy,  
 Par amours, sans autre moiien.
- fol. 29r Puis le savera en loien  
 1025 De la mort ou il demourra  
 Si que jamais ne le verra.  
 Et comment l'osastes vous dire,  
 Ne dedens vos livres escrire?  
 Il est voirs qu'einsi l'avez fait,
- 1030 Dont vous avez griefment meffait.  
 Si vous lo que vous tant faciez

- 985    She received him willingly  
      And granted the man her love  
      Joyfully, offering no refusal.  
      I have no intention of drawing this out,  
      But he loved her faithfully
- 990    990    And trusted her very much,  
      Without any hesitation or doubt  
      Because he thought he had acquired  
      All her love for the rest of his life  
      And would never have to share it.
- 995    995    Yet his path was quite different.  
      When he was the most happily  
      Joined to her and confident  
      In the promise of being loved,  
      She did him wrong,
- 1000    1000    1000    Outrageously and with no excuse,  
      And in this he discovered her falseness  
      Toward him, her disloyalty as well,  
      And it could not be denied.  
      If this gave him much pain,
- 1005    1005    1005    That's hardly much of a surprise.  
      But it's not the same at all  
      As what causes me to sorrow, the love affair  
      That death brought to an end.  
      Guillaume, if you have listened to me,
- 1010    1010    1010    1010    You should very readily  
      Acknowledge your misdeed  
      In order to lessen your shame.  
      You have stated and recounted,  
      And also decided, advised of these facts,
- 1015    1015    1015    1015    In a conclusive judgment  
      That this man experiences much more misfortune,  
      Grief, torment, ill, and suffering,  
      — The one who found his lady false  
      To him through her double dealing —
- 1020    1020    1020    1020    Than does the gracious, dear lady  
      Whose sweet lover had been joined  
      Irrevocably to her heart  
      Through love and not otherwise.  
      Then she learned he was in the grasp
- 1025    1025    1025    1025    Of death and should there remain  
      So she will never see him again.  
      And how did you dare say this  
      Or write it down in your book?  
      It's true that you have done so,
- 1030    1030    1030    1030    And thus you have grievously erred.  
      Therefore I advise you to do what you can

Que ce jugement effaciés,  
 Et que briefment le rapellez.  
 Guillaume, se vous tant valez,  
 1035 Vous le pouez bien einsi faire  
 Par soustenir tout le contraire.  
 Car li contraires, c'est li drois  
 En tous bons amoureus endrois.”

### GUILLAUME

“Dame, foi que doi Sainte Eglise,  
 1040 En qui ma foy est toute assise,  
 Pour nulle rien ne le feroie;  
 Eins iray tout outre la voie  
 Dou fait puis que j'y suis entrez.  
 Dés que mes jugemens outrez  
 1045 Est de moy, je le soustenray,  
 Tant que soustenir le porray.  
 Mais qui vorroit avant venir  
 Pour le contraire soustenir  
 Moult volentiers oubéiroie  
 1050 A quanqu'oubéir deveroie.  
 Car je ne suis mie si fors,  
 Ne si grans n'est pas mes effors,  
 Ne de science mes escus,  
 Que je ne puisse estre vaincus.  
 1055 Mais se je puis, je veinqueray;  
 Se je ne puis, je soufferay.  
 Or voit einsi, qu'on puet aler;  
 Je n'en quier autrement parler.  
 Et nompourquant, ma dame douce,  
 1060 Q'vostres cuers ne se courrouce  
 A moy, nous ferons une chose  
 Ouvertement, nom pas enclose,  
 Ou vostre pais soit contenue  
 Et m'onner y soit soustenue.  
 1065 Car ce seroit a ma grant honte,  
 Selonc vostre meïsme conte,  
 S'endroit de moy contredisoie  
 Le fait que jugié averoie,  
 De mon bon droit, tel et si fait  
 1070 Que tout par moy avroie fait.  
 Nous penrons un juge puissant,  
 De renommee souffissant,  
 Q'soit sages homs et discrez.  
 Se li soit comptés li secrez  
 1075 Entierement de la besongne  
 Qui a vous et a moy besongne.

Or soit einsi fait par acort;

To void this judgment  
And overturn it at once.  
If you are truly a worthy man, Guillaume,  
1035 You could do so rather easily  
By affirming exactly the opposite.  
For the opposite view is the correct one  
Wherever people esteem proper loving."

**GUILLAUME**

"Madam, by the faith I owe Holy Church,  
1040 Where all my trust lies,  
I would do so for no reason;  
Instead, I will pursue the matter  
To the very end now that I am involved.  
Since my judgment was made public  
1045 By me, I have upheld and will uphold it,  
As long as I can.  
Yet whoever might come forward  
To defend the other side  
Quite willingly I will submit  
1050 To whatever I must submit.  
For I am hardly powerful enough,  
And my endurance is scarcely so great,  
Or my storehouse of knowledge, for that matter,  
That I could not be overcome.  
1055 But if I can, I will prevail.  
Should I prove unable, I will pay the price.  
Let's look now to how we should proceed.  
I don't want to banter more about the issue.  
But nevertheless, my sweet lady,  
1060 So your heart will not be cross with me,  
We will deal with this matter  
Openly, not in secret,  
In a way that will preserve your peace of mind  
And uphold my honor as well.  
1065 For it would be to my great shame,  
As you yourself have admitted,  
If on my own I should reverse myself  
About this case I judged,  
As was my right, having done so in such a way  
1070 That I accomplished it all alone.  
We will find ourselves a powerful judge,  
Someone of sufficient renown  
Who would be a wise and discreet man;  
And he shall be told from beginning to end  
1075 The private details of this affair  
Involving you and me.

Let it be done as we agree.

Mais vous en ferez le recort  
 Dou prendre tel que vous vorrez.  
 1080 Contredire ne le m'orrez,  
 Einsi y sui acordans dés ci  
 A vostre plaisir, sans nul 'si.'  
 Mes cuers y est ja tous entiers,  
 Car ce sera uns biaus mestiers  
 1085 De oïr les raisons repeter  
 Et les parties despunter  
 Soutilment, par biaus argumens  
 Q'vaurront auques jugemens."

### LA DAME

A ces moz prist la dame a rire  
 1090 Et en riant tantost a dire:  
 "Guillaume, bien suis acordans  
 Ad ce qu'estes ci recordans;  
 S'en parlerai, comment qu'il aille.  
 Et nompourquant, vaille que vaille,  
 1095 Je nomme et pren celui qui rois  
 Estappelez des Navarrois.  
 C'est uns princes qui aimme honnour  
 Et qui het toute deshonnour,  
 Sages, loiaus, et veritables,  
 1100 Et en tous ses fais raisonnable.  
 Il scet tant et vaut, qu'a droit dire,  
 Nul milleur ne porroie eslire.  
 Li fais li sera savoureus  
 fol. 29v Pour ce qu'il est moult amoureus,  
 1105 Sages, courtois, et bien apris.  
 Il aimme l'onnerur et le pris  
 Des armes, d'amours, et des dames.  
 C'est li roys par cui uns diffames  
 Ne seroit jamais soustenus.  
 1110 De toute villenie est nus  
 Et garnis de toute noblesse  
 Qui apartient a gentillesse.  
 Trop de biens dire n'en porroie,  
 S'ui mais tout adés en parloie."

1115 Einsi fumes nous acordé,  
 Comme devant est recordé.  
 Dont puis d'amors assés parlames,  
 Et en parlant tant chevauchames  
 Que nous entrames es drois las  
 1120 De pais, de joie, et de solas,  
 C'est a savoir en .i. dous estre

Yet you should assume the responsibility  
For selecting such a man as you'd prefer.  
1080 You will hear me voice no opposition,  
Rather I am in agreement on this point from now on  
With whatever pleases you and no 'buts' about it.  
Truly, my heart is already in this,  
Because it will be a pleasant task  
1085 To hear the arguments rehearsed  
And the parties dispute  
With subtlety, with impressive reasoning  
That will merit some kind of judgment."

### THE LADY

At these words the lady began to laugh  
1090 And at once, while laughing, to speak:  
"Guillaume, I very much agree  
With what you've just said;  
And I will speak to it, no matter what.  
And so, for whatever it's worth,  
1095 I nominate and choose the man named  
The king of Navarre.  
He is a prince who loves honor  
And hates dishonor of every kind,  
A man wise, loyal, and truthful,  
1100 Reasonable too in all his doings.  
He knows so much, is so worthy  
I could choose no one better, to speak the truth.  
The case will appeal to him  
Because he is quite romantically inclined,  
1105 Wise, courteous, and well taught.  
He loves the honor and the glory  
Of arms, love, and ladies.  
He is the king who would never  
Support any kind of infamy.  
1110 He is devoid of all uncouthness  
And graced with all the nobility  
Belonging to high rank.  
I couldn't say enough of his virtues  
If speaking of them all day long."  
1115 In this way we came to an agreement,  
Just as it is recorded above.  
Then we spoke much about love  
And, as we talked, rode on  
Until we fell into the righteous bonds  
1120 Of repose, joy, and solace,  
Which means into a sweet state

- Ou il faisoit si tres bel estre  
 Qu'on ne porroit miex, a mon gré:  
 C'estoit en souverein degré,  
 1125 A mon avis, de bon propos,  
 De deduit, et de bon repos,  
 Ou uns cuers se puet reposer  
 Qui a point se vuet disposer.  
 La avoit il un bel manoir  
 1130 Ou elle voloit remanoir.
- Assés fu qui la descendî  
 Et qui entour li entendi;  
 Et, sans atendre, fu menee  
 Dedens une chambre aournee  
 1135 Si bien, si bel, si cointement  
 Et de tout si tres richement,  
 Qu'onques mais, dont j'eüs grant merveille,  
 N'avoie veu la pareille.  
 Et briefment tuit, grant et meneur,  
 1140 Li faisoient feste et honneur.  
 Mais bien sambloït estre maistresse,  
 Car elle fu par grant noblesse  
 Entre coussins de soie assise.  
 Mais moult estoit sage et rassise,  
 1145 Et fu d'aage si seür  
 Qu'entre le vert et le meür  
 Estoit sa tres douce jouvente,  
 Plus qu'autre simple, aperte, et gente.  
 Moult bien estoit accompaingnié  
 1150 De belle et bonne compaingnie.  
 N'i fu Margot ne Agnesot,  
 Mais .xij. damoiselles ot  
 Qui jour et nuit la norrisoient,  
 Servoient, et endoctrinoient.
- 1155 La premiere estoit Congnoissance,  
 Qui li moustroït la difference  
 D'entre les vertus et les vices  
 Et des biens fais aus malefices,  
 Par Avis, qui la conduisoit,  
 1160 Jusqu'a .i. miroir qui luisoit,  
 Si qu'onques plus cler miroir  
 Ne pot on tenir ne veoir.
- Raisons le tenoit en sa destre,  
 Une balance en sa senestre,  
 1165 Si que la dame s'i miroit

Whose conditions were so pleasant  
They could be no better, to my taste;  
It was of the highest degree,  
1125 Full of good sense, so I think,  
Delight, and sweet leisure too,  
Where a heart that seeks to act accordingly  
Might discover peace.  
A handsome manor stood at the spot  
1130 Where she wished to halt.

Many there helped her dismount  
And attended to the lady;  
And, without delay, she was led  
Inside a room decorated  
1135 So well, so beautifully, so expertly,  
And in all things so richly  
That never before (which made me greatly marvel)  
Had I ever laid eyes on anything similar.  
And, quickly, everyone, high and low alike,  
1140 Made her welcome and honored her.  
And she very much seemed to be mistress there  
Because in great nobility she was  
Seated on cushions made of silk.  
Yet she was very wise and self-contained,  
1145 And of such a confident age  
She was quite pleasantly youthful,  
Being neither “green” nor “ripe.”  
More than any other, she was meek, friendly, and noble.  
Very well attended the lady was  
1150 By a virtuous and beautiful entourage.  
None was a country girl;  
Twelve damsels there were instead  
Who attended to her day and night,  
Served and instructed her as well.  
  
1155 The first was Understanding,  
Who showed her the difference  
Between virtues and vices,  
Between good deeds and evil ones as well,  
With the help of Discretion, who escorted her  
1160 To a mirror that gleamed so brightly  
No one could ever grasp  
Or gaze on a clearer reflecting glass.  
  
Reason held this in her right hand,  
A scale in her left,  
1165 Where the lady looked at herself

- Plus souvent qu'on ne vous diroit.  
 La veoit elle clerement,  
 Sans obscurté n'empecshement,  
 Quanque Diex et Nature donne  
 1170 A bonne eüreuse personne.  
 C'est le mal laissier et bien faire,  
 Et non voloir autrui contraire.  
 Car fols est qui autrui pourchace  
 Chose qu'il ne vuet qu'on li face.  
 1175 Et s'il heüst en son atour,  
 En son gentil corps, fait a tour,  
 Et en son cuer tache ne vice  
 Ou pensee d'aucun malice,  
 Ja ne fust si fort reponnue  
 1180 Qu'en miroir ne fust veue.  
 Et la veoit elle, sans doubté,  
 La guise et la maniere toute,  
 Comment Raison justement regle  
 fol. 30r Par bele et bonne et loial regle.  
 1185 Si que la prenoit exemplaire  
 De tout ce qu'elle devoit faire.  
 Et aussi la juste balance  
 Li demoustroit signefiance  
 Qu'elle devoit en tous cas vivre  
 1190 Aussi justement com la livre,  
 Ou on ne puet, par nulle voie,  
 Mettre n'oster qu'on ne le voie.
- La tierce avoit nom Attemprance,  
 Qui .i. chapelet de souffrance  
 1195 Avoit sus son chief par cointise;  
 Et avec ce, dont miex la prise,  
 Estoit de maniere seüre  
 Et, en parlant, sage, et meüre,  
 N'en fait, n'en port, n'en contenence  
 1200 N'ot vice, ne desordenance.
- La quarte, se bien m'en recorde,  
 Estoit Pais, qui tenoit Concorde  
 Par le doy amiablyement,  
 Et li disoit moult doucement,  
 De cuer riant, a chiere lie:  
 1205 "Ma douce suer, ma chiere amie,  
 Se nous volons vivre en leesse,  
 En pais, et repos, en richesse,  
 De tout ce qu'on puet faire et dire,  
 1210 N'en metons a nos cuers point d'ire,

More often than anyone could say.  
There she saw clearly,  
With no obscurity or impediment,  
What God and Nature might grant  
1170 A truly fortunate person.  
And that is to abandon evil and do good,  
And not to wish to cross anyone.  
For the man is a fool who does something  
To another he does not wish done to him.  
1175 And if there might be in her person  
Or noble body, of such beautiful shape,  
Or in her heart any fault or vice,  
Or malicious thought of any kind,  
It could never be so well hidden that  
1180 It could not be seen in the mirror.  
And there without doubt she gazed on  
The nature and manner of all things,  
How Reason justly rules  
Through fair, good, and loyal precept.  
1185 And so there she found an example  
Of everything she ought to do.  
Moreover the scales of justice  
Showed to her the truth  
That she should in every instance live  
1190 As correctly as the scales,  
To which one in no way can add  
Or take from and not have it noticed.

The third was named Temperance,  
Who wore a garland of endurance  
1195 On her head as an adornment;  
And with this, to increase her worthiness,  
She had a confident manner  
And was wise in her speech, mature too,  
Not in deed, or in her behavior, or her countenance  
1200 Was there any vice or impropriety.

The fourth, and well I remember her,  
Was Peace, who held Concord  
By the finger out of friendship  
And spoke to her quite sweetly,  
1205 With a laughing heart, a happy face:  
“My sweet sister, my dear friend,  
If we intend to live in joy,  
Peace, leisure, and wealth  
In regard to all we say and do,  
1210 Let us allow no anger into our hearts,

- Et ne nous chaille dou dangier  
 Qu'on appelle contrevangier,  
 Car tels cuide vangier sa honte  
 Qui l'accroist et qui plus s'ahonte.
- 1215 Tenons les bons en amitié,  
 Et des mauvais aions pitié  
 Car onques homs ne fu parfais  
 Qui volt vangier tous ses tors fais."
- La cincisme fu appellee  
 1220 Foy, qui richement endestree  
 Estoit de Constance la ferme,  
 Qui si l'affermoit et afferme  
 Que riens ne la bransle n'esloche;  
 Eins estoit com chastiaus sus roche,  
 1225 Fort et ferme et seürement,  
 Sans variable mouvement.
- La setisme fu Charité,  
 Qui avoit si tres grant pité  
 Des besongneus qu'elle savoit  
 1230 Que leur donnoit quanqu'elle avoit.  
 Mais ja tant donner ne sceüst  
 Qu'assez plus a donner n'eüst.
- Aprés Honnestez doucement  
 Se seoit moult honnestement,  
 1235 Qui paree par grant noblesse  
 Estoit d'un mantel de simplesse.  
 Mais nette estoit, sans nul reproche,  
 De cuer, de corps, de main, de bouche.
- La .ix.<sup>me</sup> estoit Prudence.  
 1240 En son cuer portoit Sapience,  
 Et si fermement la gardoit  
 Qu'aprés li d'amours toute adroit.  
 Bien savoit la cause des choses  
 Qui sont ou firmament encloses,  
 1245 Pourquoy li solaus en ardure  
 Se tient, et la lune en froidure;  
 Des estoiles et des planettes  
 Et des .xij. signes les mettes;  
 Pourquoy Diex par Nature assamble  
 1250 Humeur, sec, froit, et chaut ensamble;  
 Et pourquoy li .iiij. element  
 Furent ordené tellement  
 Qu'adés se tient en bas la terre,

- And let us have no truck with the arrogance  
Bearing the name of revenge,  
For whoever intends avenging the shame done him  
Makes it increase, further disgracing himself.
- 1215 Let us hold to good people in friendship,  
And let us take pity on evildoers  
Because no man ever attained perfection  
Who was eager to avenge the wrongs done him."
- The fifth among them was called  
1220 Faith, who was escorted in grand style  
By steadfast Constancy,  
Who so strengthened and strengthens her  
Nothing disturbs or worries the lady;  
Instead she was like a castle built on rock,  
1225 Strong and secure on its foundation,  
Free from unpredictable change.
- The seventh was Charity,  
Who felt such great pity  
For those she knew to be in need  
1230 She gave them whatever she possessed.  
But she could never give so much  
She did not have much more to share.
- Afterward Honesty seated  
Herself quietly and with much politeness,  
1235 And this lady was adorned in great nobility  
With the mantle of simplicity,  
For she was proper, beyond reproach  
In her heart, body, hand, and speech.
- The ninth was Prudence.
- 1240 In her heart she bore Wisdom,  
Whom she guarded so closely  
She burned with fierce love for her.  
She knew well the reason why heavenly bodies  
Are suspended within the firmament;
- 1245 Why the sun endures  
In conflagration and the moon in ice;  
All about the stars and the planets,  
As well as the limits of the twelve signs;  
Why God through Nature did assemble
- 1250 Wet, dry, cold, and hot together;  
And why the four elements  
Were ordered in such a fashion  
That earth always remains below

Et l'iaue pres de li se serre,  
 1255 Li feus se trait haut a toute heure,  
 Et li airs en moienn demeure.  
 Brief des oeuvres celestiennes  
 Et aussi des choses terriennes  
 Savoit tant qu'elle estoit experte,  
 1260 D'engin si vive et si aperte,  
 Q'nuls ne le porroit despondre.  
 Car a chascun savoit respondre  
 De quanqu'on voloit demander  
 Si qu'on n'i sceüst qu'amender.

fol. 30v Après Prudence se seoit  
 1266 Largesse, qui riens ne veoit  
 Einsois donnoit a toutes mains,  
 A l'un plus et a l'autre mains,  
 Or, argent, destriers, oisiaus, terre,  
 1270 Et quanqu'elle pooit acquerre,  
 Conteze, duchez, et baronnies,  
 A heritages et a vies.  
 De tout ce riens ne retenoit  
 Fors l'onneur. Ad ce se tenoit.  
 1275 Noblesse li avoit apris.  
 Et avec ce, dont miex la pris,  
 Elle reprenoit Advarice  
 Comme de tout le pieur vice.

L'autre, dont pas ne me vueil taire,  
 1280 Estoit Doubtance de Meffaire,  
 Qui tant se douboit de mesprendre  
 Qu'a peinne pooit elle entendre  
 A riens, fors estre sus sa garde.  
 En tous ses fais estoit couarde;  
 1285 Car Honte et Paour la gardoient,  
 Qui en tous lieus l'accompaingnoient.

La dousieme estoit Souffissance,  
 Qui de tres humble pacience  
 Estoit richement aournee  
 1290 Et abondanment saoulee  
 Et pleinne de tous biens terriens.  
 Elle n'avoit besong de riens,  
 Ne li failloit chose nesune.  
 Hors estoit des mains de Fortune  
 1295 Et de son perilleus dangier.  
 De po se paissot au mengier  
 Car plus refaite estoit d'un ouef

- And water clings quite closely to it;  
1255 Fire always rises to the heights,  
And air remains in the middle.  
In short, of celestial movements  
And also of earthly matters  
She knew so much she was a master,  
1260 Possessed of such a lively and able wit  
No one could explain it.  
For she could answer  
Any question a person might ask,  
And no one could improve on what she said.
- 1265 Right next to Prudence sat  
Generosity, who sees nothing  
But rather gives with both hands,  
More to one and less to another,  
Gold, silver, chargers, hunting birds, estates,  
1270 And whatever else she might acquire,  
Counties, duchies, and baronetcies  
In perpetuity and for life.  
She has kept nothing from any of these  
Save honor. This she has clung to.
- 1275 Nobility has so instructed her,  
And furthermore, which increases her worthiness,  
She condemned Avarice  
As the worst vice of all.
- The next, about whom I'll not be silent,  
1280 Was Wariness of Misdeed,  
Who was so afraid of error  
She could hardly attend  
To any matter save for being on her guard.  
In all her doings she was a coward,  
1285 But Shame and Fear protected her  
And were everywhere her companions.
- The twelfth was Sufficiency,  
Who in quite humble tranquillity  
Was richly turned out  
1290 And gorged to overflowing,  
Full too of all earthly goods.  
There was nothing she needed,  
Nor did she lack a thing.  
She was beyond the grasp of Fortune  
1295 And her most fearsome domination.  
She ate little at her meals  
Because she was more sated by an egg

- Que ne fust un autre d'un buef.  
 Tant par estoit bonne eüreuse  
 1300 Et parfaitement vertueuse.  
 Encor est et toudis sera,  
 Tant com li mondes durera,  
 Que c'est, a droit considerer,  
 Li biens qu'on doit plus desirer.
- 1305 Mais aussi com pluseurs rivieres  
 Arrousent, et pluseurs lumieres  
 Radient et leur clarté rendent  
 En tous lieus ou elles s'estendent,  
 Ces .xij. nobles damoiselles,  
 1310 Qui de tous biens furent ancelles,  
 Chascune selonc sa nature,  
 En meurs, en maintieng, en figure,  
 Embelissoient ceste dame  
 De cuer, de corps, d'onner, et d'ame.  
 1315 Car tant estoit d'elles paree,  
 Arrousee et enluminee,  
 Que chascune l'embelissoit  
 De quanque de li bel issoit,  
 Et chascune la repartoit  
 1320 De la vertu qu'elle portoit.  
 Et encor des biens de Nature  
 Avoit la noble creature:  
 Gente maniere, loiauté,  
 Faitis port, debonnaireté,  
 1325 Grace, douceur, et courtoisie,  
 Dont elle estoit moult embellie.  
 Mais sa souvereinne bonté  
 De trop long passoit sa biauté.
- Quant je la vi si hautement  
 1330 Assise et si tres noblement  
 De grans richesses acesmee,  
 Et si servie et honnouree  
 Chierement de tous et de toutes,  
 Dedens mon cuer venirent doubtes  
 1335 Qui y entrerent par folie  
 Et par droite merencolie.  
 Car j'estoie trop esbahis  
 Et aussi com tous estahis  
 Et d'erreur telement temptés,  
 1340 Que je cuiday estre enchantés.  
 Mais en si fait amusement  
 Ne demourai pas longuement;

- Than another might be by a cow.  
She was as happy as could be
- 1300 And perfect in her virtue.  
She still is and always will be  
As long as the world endures,  
For she is, to judge rightly,  
The blessing one should most desire.
- 1305 But just as many rivers  
Provide water and many lights  
Glow and give off their brightness  
To every place they reach,  
These twelve noble damsels,
- 1310 Who were the servants of all good things,  
Each one according to her nature,  
In customs, manner, and appearance,  
Embellished this lady's  
Heart, body, honor, and soul.
- 1315 So adorned by them was she,  
Nurtured and enlightened,  
That each improved the lady  
With whatever good flowed from her  
And shared with the lady
- 1320 The virtue she bore within.  
And the noble creature, in addition,  
Possessed endowments from Nature:  
A cultivated manner, loyalty,  
Noble bearing, good breeding,
- 1325 Grace, pleasantness, and courtesy,  
And these much improved her.  
But her sovereign goodness  
Surpassed by a great deal her beauty.
- When I saw her enthroned
- 1330 In such exalted fashion and so very nobly  
Adorned with great riches,  
And, too, served and honored  
With such affection by all the men and women,  
My heart filled with doubts
- 1335 That made their way there through folly  
And genuine melancholy.  
For I was taken much aback,  
And also struck completely dumb,  
At the same time so tempted by error
- 1340 I thought I had been enchanted.  
But in this state of bemusement  
I did not long remain

Car je usai dou conseil d'Avis,  
 Qui fist retourner mon avis  
 fol. 31r Justement par devers Raison,  
 1346 Qui est tout adés en saison  
 Des loiaus cuers remettre a point  
 Qui sont issu hors de leur point.  
 Adont Raison me resguarda  
 1350 Si que depuis en sa garde a  
 Mon cuer, mon sens, et mon penser,  
 Pour resister et pour tenser  
 Aus fausses cogitations  
 Et oster les temptations  
 1355 Qui cuidoient avoir victoire  
 A moy faire faussement croire.

Or fui hors de celle pensee.  
 Mais la dame bien apensee  
 Moult sagement m'araisonna,  
 1360 Et en parlant scens me donna  
 De respondre aprés son parler;  
 S'en sceüs miex et plus biau parler.

### LA DAME

Se me dist: "Guillaume, biau sire,  
 Au primes fust il temps de dire  
 1365 Ce que sus les champs avons dit.  
 S'en rafreschissons nostre dit,  
 Present ces .xij. damoiselles,  
 Qui sont sages, bonnes, et belles,  
 Et pluseurs gens qui y seront.  
 1370 Volentiers nous escouteront."

### GUILLAUME

Je ne fis pas longue demeure.  
 Einsois m'agenoillai en l'eure.  
 Et humblement li respondi:  
 "Ma chiere dame, tant vous di:  
 1375 Pleüst a Dieu de Paradis  
 Que cils qui doit oïr nos dis  
 Fust ci endroit presentement,  
 Li bons rois qui si sagement  
 Saveroit oïr et entendre,  
 1380 Taire a point, et puis raison rendre,  
 Quant il averoit escouté  
 Ce qu'on li averoit compté.  
 Bien saveroit examiner  
 Et encor miex determiner.

- Because I followed the advice of Discretion,  
 Who made my presence of mind return  
 1345 In the proper fashion through Reason,  
 Who is always ready at the right moment  
 To bring back to themselves the true hearts  
 Who have wandered too far off the mark.  
 Then Reason fixed me with a look  
 1350 And ever since has maintained in her keeping  
 My heart, senses, and thoughts,  
 So I could resist and struggle  
 Against misbegotten notions,  
 And, too, expel the temptations  
 1355 That intended to enjoy the victory  
 Of making me think incorrectly.

- By then, I had gotten beyond this thought,  
 And the lady, her ideas well considered,  
 Addressed me quite wisely  
 1360 And, as she talked, inspired me  
 To respond after she finished talking;  
 Thus I could speak better and with more flourish.

### THE LADY

- And she said to me: "Guillaume, fair sir,  
 What we said out in the fields  
 1365 Is what we should discuss first.  
 So let's repeat our argument  
 In the presence of these twelve damsels,  
 Who are wise, good, and beautiful,  
 And also of the many good people who will be present.  
 1370 They will listen to us willingly."

### GUILLAUME

- I did not hesitate long at all,  
 But fell to my knees straightaway  
 And answered her humbly:  
 "My dear lady, I have already said enough.  
 1375 Would that it please God in Paradise  
 The man who is to hear our pleadings  
 Were in this place right now,  
 That is, the good king who will know how  
 To listen and pay attention quite intelligently,  
 1380 To keep silent, and then judge  
 After he has heard  
 What will be told him.  
 He will know well how to deliberate  
 And then, even better, what to decide.

- 1385 Et si croy bien qu'il jugeroit  
 Selonc les parlers qu'il orroit.  
 Et non pour quant, puisqu'il vous plait,  
 Bien en poez dire hors plait,  
 En supposant sans prejudice.  
 1390 Et je qui point n'i pens malice  
 Volentiers vous escouteray,  
 Et, se bon m'est, j'en parleray."

### LA DAME

- "Guillaume, moult bel respondez.  
 Mais .i. bien petit m'entendés.  
 1395 Levez vous, car il plaist a nous  
 Que plus ne parlez a genous.  
 Et se plus ci aprés parlez,  
 Parlez einsi, com vous volez,  
 Ou en seant, ou en estant,  
 1400 Car il nous souffist bien a tant."

### GUILLAUME

- Lors me levay hastivement  
 Pour faire son commandement  
 Quant elle ot sa parole dite.  
 Et puis tout droit a l'opposite  
 1405 De li m'en alai asseoir,  
 Pour li en la face veoir.  
 Car qui voit personne en la face  
 Qui de parler doit avoir grace,  
 Le parler trop miex en entent  
 1410 A quel fin sa parole tent.  
 Lors prist la dame une maniere  
 Able, diligent, et maniere  
 De parler par si bel devis  
 Qu'il estoit a chascun avis  
 1415 Qu'elle veïst tout en escript  
 Ce qu'elle disoit et descript.  
 Dont miex diter nuls ne porroit  
 Nés que ses parlers atiroit.  
 Elle ordena son parlement  
 1420 Dés le premier commencement,  
 fol. 31v Qu'elle m'avoit envoié querre,  
 Et puis secondelement requerre,  
 Et comment j'alai devers li;  
 Et comment elle m'assailli  
 1425 De parole cusensonneuse.  
 Et comment elle fu crueuse  
 De moy rudement ramosner

- 1385 And I believe firmly he will judge  
According to the testimony he should hear.  
Yet nevertheless, since it pleases you,  
You can certainly speak before the debate,  
Making suppositions without any prejudice.
- 1390 And I, intending no malice,  
Will listen willingly to you,  
And if I think it good, I will respond."

**THE LADY**

- "Guillaume, you answer quite eloquently;  
However, listen to me just a little.
- 1395 Get up now, for it pleases us  
That you say no more while kneeling.  
And if you have something else to say,  
Speak whatever way you please,  
Either seated or standing,
- 1400 For this much is all we require."

**GUILLAUME**

- Then I quickly got up  
To carry out her command  
Once she had spoken her mind.  
And then right opposite her
- 1405 I proceeded to sit down  
In order to face her directly.  
For whoever looks a person in the face,  
Intending his speech to find favor,  
He will hear much better what is said
- 1410 And the point being made as well.  
Then the lady assumed a manner  
That was forceful, assured, a way of  
Speaking with such pretty eloquence  
Everyone thought
- 1415 She was looking at the written text  
Of what she said and recounted.  
For no one could speak better  
Even if planning his words in advance.  
She organized her discussion,
- 1420 Starting from the very beginning  
When she sent to have me searched out  
And then, the second time, fetched;  
Also how I'd made my way to her and how  
She had attacked me
- 1425 With angry words;  
And how she'd been cruel,  
Reproaching me roughly,

- Pour moy seulement agoner  
 Et en merencolie mettre,  
 1430 Dont bel se savoit entremettre.  
 Que vous iroie je comptant?  
 Elle y mist de biaus parlars tant  
 Qu'elle mena l'entention  
 Dou fait a declaration,  
 1435 De point en point, de tire a tire,  
 Si bien qu'il n'i ot que redire,  
 Par quoy les damoiselles toutes  
 Furent tantost, sans nulles doubtes,  
 Dou fait sages et avisees  
 1440 Et entierement enfourmees  
 De quanqu'on avoit recordé  
 Dessus les chams et accordé.
- Aprés ces paroles moustrees,  
 Bien dites et bien ordenees,  
 1445 Eüs tantost le cuer esjoÿ,  
 Car tant escoutay que je oy  
 Chevaus venir et gens debatre,  
 Dont en l'eure se vint embatre  
 Devers nous cils bons rois de pris  
 1450 Que nous aviens a juge pris.  
 Et la dame qui resgardoit  
 Devers l'uis et ne s'en gardoit,  
 Le vit et congnut a l'entree;  
 Se s'est tantost en piez levee,  
 1455 S'ala a l'encontre de lui  
 Et se n'i atendi nelui.  
 Quant il la vit, il s'avansa  
 Et .i. bien petit l'embrassa,  
 Et elle lui moult humblement,  
 1460 En saluant courtoisement,  
 Liement, et a bonne chiere.  
 Et il li dist: "Ma dame chiere,  
 Moult me poise quant sa venites.  
 Pour quel cause ne vous tenistes  
 1465 En vostre siege toute coie?"  
 "Tres chiers sires, se Diex me voie,  
 Jamais ne l'eusse einsi fait,  
 Car trop pensasse avoir meffait.  
 Car on dit — et c'est chose voire  
 1470 Qu'il est assez legier a croire —  
 Qu'entre les grans et les meneurs  
 A tous seigneurs toutes honneurs.  
 Mais laissons ces parlars ester.

Only to make me squirm  
And sink me into melancholy,  
1430 Which she knew quite handily how to do.  
Shall I go on telling you about it?  
She expended so much fine talk  
She brought out the facts  
Of the matter fully in a declaration,  
1435 Point by point, step by step,  
So ably that nothing needed correction.  
And in this way all the young ladies  
Were quickly, and beyond any doubt, rendered  
Knowledgeable and enlightened about this case,  
1440 Completely informed as well  
Of all that had been discussed  
And concluded below in the fields.

After these explanatory words,  
Which were ably spoken and well organized,  
1445 My heart suddenly felt joy  
Because, while listening, I heard  
Horses come up and people talking;  
For at that very hour the good and worthy king  
Had come, for pleasure, into our presence,  
1450 The man we had chosen for a judge.  
And the lady, who was looking  
At the door and was not slow to do so,  
Saw and recognized him as he entered;  
And she rose to her feet at once,  
1455 Proceeding to greet him  
And waiting for no one to do so.  
Seeing her, he stepped forward  
And embraced her lightly,  
As she did him with much humility,  
1460 Welcoming the man courteously,  
Joyfully, and with a pleasant look.  
And he said to her: "My dear lady,  
I am quite unhappy you came forward.  
Why did you not remain  
1465 With propriety on your throne?"  
"Dear sir, so God guide me,  
I should never have done what  
Would seem quite improper to me  
But it is said — something true enough  
1470 And rather easy to credit — that in the case of  
Those of exalted rank and lesser persons,  
All honor should be paid to every great lord.  
But let's drop the matter.

- Petit y devons arrester.  
 1475 S'alons en cest siege seoir.  
 La me vorrai je pourveoir  
 De vous compter une merveille  
 D'autres merveilles nom pareille.  
 Alez devant; je iray aprés,  
 1480 De vous me tenray assez pres."  
 "Par Dieu, ma dame, non fera.  
 Aussi tost com je y monterai,  
 Tout d'encoste moy monterez.  
 Ja a ce point ne me menrez  
 1485 Qu'embedeaus n'en alons ensamble.  
 Encor fais je trop, ce me samble."  
 De ce point si bien s'accorderent,  
 Si qu'ensamble tous .ij. monterent.  
 Et quant il furent haut monté,  
 1490 Encor, par grant humilité,  
 D'asseoir moult se debatirent.  
 Toutes voies il se seïrent.  
 Et quant il furent la assis,  
 La dame dist de sens rassis:  
 1495 "Sire, entendez un bien petit.  
 Et se prenez vostre apetit  
 A diligencement escouter  
 Ce que je vous vorray compter.  
 Vez la Guillaume de Machaut.  
 1500 C'est uns homs a cui il ne chaut  
 fol. 32r A tort ou a droit soustenir.  
 Tout aussi chier s'a il tenir  
 Vers le tort comme vers le droit,  
 Si com vous orrez orendroit.  
 1505 En un debat sommes entré  
 Dont nous devons de fait outré,  
 Sire, devant vous plaidier,  
 Mais qu'il ne vous doie anuier.  
 Moy bien meüe et il meüs,  
 1510 Pour juges estes esleüs;  
 Dont c'est pour nous belle avenue,  
 Biau sire, de vostre venue.  
 Et vous en estes eüreus,  
 Se de riens estes amoureus.  
 1515 Car de cause avons nostre plest  
 Fourme qui aus amoureus plest  
 C'est d'amors, d'amant, et d'amie,  
 Et de leur noble signourie.  
 Guillaumes dit, tient, et afferme  
 1520 Pour vray, et que c'est chose ferme,

- It should delay us but little.  
1475 Instead, let us take our seats on the throne.  
There I would like to see about  
Telling you an extraordinary thing  
Quite unlike other marvels.  
Go on ahead; I'll follow along,  
1480 Keeping quite close to you.”  
“By God, my lady, I shall not do so.  
At the very moment I ascend  
You will go up right by my side;  
Never will you make me agree  
1485 That we should not proceed together.  
I believe I have already been too forward.”  
On this point they easily concurred  
And then ascended together.  
And after going up,  
1490 Again, in their great humility,  
They argued about sitting down.  
But in the end they sat,  
And once they were seated,  
The lady spoke, her thoughts composed:  
1495 “Sire, listen to me a little while  
And take some pleasure  
In attending diligently to  
What I would like to tell you.  
You see there Guillaume de Machaut.  
1500 He's a man indifferent  
To whether he upholds wrong or right.  
In fact, he would just as soon defend  
The wrong as the right,  
As you will presently hear.  
1505 We have entered into a debate  
About an outrageous deed,  
And this argument, sire, we should put before you,  
But only if you would not be annoyed.  
By his wish and my own,  
1510 You were chosen to be the judge.  
And so for us it is a happy chance,  
Fair sir, that you have arrived here.  
And you'll find this a happy chance  
If you have any interest in love.  
1515 For the issue of our disagreement concerns  
Something that pleases the romantically inclined  
Since it's about love, the lover, and the beloved,  
And of their noble governance.  
Guillaume says, maintains, and affirms  
1520 As true and unassailable fact

Quant homs qui ha tout son cuer mis  
 En dame, tant qu'il est amis  
 Et celle s'amour li ottrie,  
 Si qu'il la tient pour vraie amie,  
 1525 Puis est de lui si esprouvee  
 Qu'il la trueve fausse prouvee,  
 Qu'il a de ce plus de grieted  
 C'une dame qui loyauté  
 En son vray ami trouvera;  
 1530 Et elle aussi tant l'amera  
 Comme dame puet homme amer,  
 Entierement, sans point d'amer.  
 Or avenra il que la mort,  
 Qui soutilment sus la gent mort,  
 1535 Torra a son ami la vie.  
 Et quant elle scet qu'il devie,  
 Ou qu'il est dou tout deviez,  
 Il est a la mort mariez,  
 Lors est finee leur querelle,  
 1540 Aroit cils aussi grief com celle?  
 Nennil! Il ne puet avenir;  
 Cils poins ne se puet soustenir,  
 Dont j'ay fait, et fais, et vueil faire  
 Protestation dou contraire.  
 1545 C'est auques nostres plaidiez.  
 Pour ce volons que vous soiez  
 Juges; si en ordonnerez  
 Selonc le plait que vous orrez.”

### LE JUGE

“Je vous respons, ma chiere dame,  
 1550 Par la foy que doy Dieu et m'ame,  
 Selonc la mienne entention,  
 Que d'estre en la perfection  
 De juge est moult noble chose,  
 Voire qui entrepenre l'ose  
 1555 Si hautement comme en Amours.  
 Mais pour les tres douces clamours  
 Qui y sont, j'entrepren l'office,  
 Sans mal penser et sans malice.  
 Se j'ay petit sens, j'apenray  
 1560 Parmi les parlers que je orray;  
 Et s'estre puis bien consilliez,  
 Je ne seroie pas si liez  
 D'avoir acquis .v.° mars d'or.  
 Et pour tant vous dis je desor,  
 1565 Chiere dame, que j'esliray

That when a man has given all his heart  
To a lady, thus becoming her lover,  
And she grants him her affection,  
And so he thinks the woman a true beloved,  
1525 But then he has the experience  
Of finding her proven false;  
This man, he says, feels more pain  
Than a lady who discovers  
Faithfulness in her true lover,  
1530 And she in turn loves him as much  
As any lady can love a man,  
Completely and without bitterness.  
But then it chances that death,  
Which with stealth stings mankind,  
1535 Takes the life from her lover.  
And when she learns he has passed away,  
Has been completely undone,  
Has been married to death,  
And their affair has thus ended,  
1540 Would that first man grieve like this woman?  
Not at all! It could not happen.  
This view is indefensible,  
And so I have made, do make, and wish to make  
A protest to the contrary.  
1545 That is the gist of our dispute.  
And we would like you to be its  
Judge; thus you would decide  
According to the disputation you'd hear."

### THE JUDGE

"I will answer you, my dear lady,  
1550 By the faith I owe God and my own soul,  
From my own perspective  
That to occupy the privileged position  
Of a judge is a very noble thing,  
Especially for someone who risks so much  
1555 As to judge questions of Love.  
But because the petitions offered here  
Have greatly pleased me, I will undertake the office  
Without improper thoughts or malice.  
If I have but a little sense, I will learn  
1560 From the speeches I hear;  
And if I can be well counseled,  
I would be much happier than if  
I received five hundred marks of gold.  
And yet I do inform you,  
1565 Dear lady, I will choose

Tel conseil comme je vorray  
 De vostre bele compaingnie,  
 Qui a vous est accompaingnie.  
 Car a .i. bon juge apartient  
 1570 Qui jugemens en sa part tient  
 Qu'il ait conseil en tous endrois.  
 Prenons, qu'il soit ou non soit drois.  
 Se vous requier je qu'on le face,  
 Soit par courtoisie ou par grace.  
 1575 Et d'autre part, quoy que nuls die,  
 Bons drois a bon mestier d'aïe  
 Par quoy grace ait adés son cours  
 Pour aidier droit en toutes cours.”

### LA DAME

fol. 32v “Biau sire, de vostre recort,  
 1580 Que ce soit drois, bien m'i acort.  
 Or prenez cui que vous volez,  
 Par quoy de riens ne vous dolez.”

### LE JUGE

“Ma dame, je pren Congnoissance,  
 Qui est de bon conseil sustance;  
 1585 Avecques li sera Avis,  
 Li quels n'i sera pas envis  
 Pour ce que c'est sa bonne amie;  
 Volentiers li tient compaingnie.  
 Et se me plaist, qu'aussy y soit  
 1590 Raison, qui nelui ne deçoit,  
 Eins est adés en sa partie  
 De bon conseil apareillie.  
 Si entendra les parlemens  
 Pour rapporter aus jugemens.  
 1595 La me sara bien consillier;  
 Pas ne m'en faurra resveillier.  
 Avec li sera Mesure;  
 Quar qui jugemens ne mesure,  
 Il ne puelent venir a point  
 1600 Afin qu'il soient en bon point  
 Pour les parties delivrer  
 Et chascune son droit livrer.”  
 La Dame bien s'i acorda  
 Et hautement li recorda:  
 1605 “Biau sire, bien avez ouvré  
 D'avoir bon conseil recouvré!”

Such advisers as I desire  
From among your splendid entourage,  
Which has accompanied you.  
Truly, it is fitting for a competent judge  
1570 Weighing a decision  
To take counsel from all sides.  
We'll take it, whether this is correct or not.  
So I ask you for this to be done,  
Either with courtesy or grace.  
1575 And yet, no matter what anyone says,  
Proper justice most certainly needs help  
So that it may at once proceed with grace  
To assist the rendering of judgment in every court.”

**THE LADY**

“Fair sir, concerning your request,  
1580 I certainly agree it is proper.  
Choose now whomever you wish,  
And you will have nothing to complain about.”

**THE JUDGE**

“My lady, I choose Understanding,  
Who is the very substance of good counsel.  
1585 Discretion will be at her side,  
And he will not protest at all  
Because she is his good friend;  
Willingly he will accompany her.  
And I should also be pleased for Reason  
1590 To be present, who deceives no one  
But instead is always for her part  
Ready with good advice.  
So she will listen to the testimony  
In order to make it part of the judgment.  
1595 She will know how to advise me well.  
I will never need to review anything.  
Moderation will stand by her;  
For whoever does not moderate his judgment  
Will not be able to proceed correctly  
1600 And come to the proper point  
Where he can release the parties  
And deliver justice to each.”  
The Lady heartily agreed  
And spoke to him enthusiastically:  
1605 “Fair sir, you have done well  
In obtaining such advisers!”

**LE JUGE**

- “C'est bon pour moy, ma dame gente;  
 Dont a mon cuer bien entalente  
 Que j'en soie einsi bien garnis.  
 1610 Qui n'est garnis, il est honnis.  
 Juges sui par commun acort  
 Especiaument d'un descort  
 Qui est ci entre .ij. parties,  
 Pour atendre droit de parties.  
 1615 Or est la court garnie et pleinne;  
 Se puet on bien par voie pleinne,  
 Ce m'est avis, aler avant.  
 Dame, vous parlerez devant,  
 Se fourmerez vostre demande,  
 1620 Nom pas pour ce que je demande  
 Que li fais me soit refourmez,  
 Car j'en suis assez enfourmez;  
 Mais d'aucuns membres dou procés  
 Me moustreroient les excés  
 1625 Qui vous en font doloir et pleindre;  
 Et aussi pour Guillaume ateindre  
 En son tort, se tort doit avoir;  
 Autrement ne le puis savoir.”

**LA DAME**

- “Sire, ceste raison me plait.  
 1630 Dés qu'entamé en avons plait,  
 Mon fait moustrerai par figure  
 Selonc les ouevres de Nature,  
 Tout pour Guillaume, qui se tort  
 De verité dont il ha tort.  
 1635 Vous savez que la turterelle,  
 Qui est faitice, gente, et belle,  
 Cointe, gaie, douce, et jolie  
 Tant com ses males est en vie,  
 Et s'il avient qu'elle le pert  
 1640 Par mort, on scet tout en appert  
 Que jamais joie n'averá,  
 Et par signes le moustrera.  
 Tant est li siens cuers pleins d'ardeur,  
 Jamais ne serra sus verdeur;  
 1645 Eins quiert tout adés obscurtez,  
 Divers lieus et pleins de durtez,  
 Aubres sés, verseinnes, et trieges.  
 En tel lieus est souvent ses sieges  
 Quant elle se vuet reposer.  
 1650 Autrement ne vuet disposer

**THE JUDGE**

- “It will benefit me, my noble lady,  
Because my heartfelt desire is  
That I be well attended.
- 1610 For the man not so attended is shamed.  
By their mutual agreement, I am now the judge  
In the particular case of the dispute  
Dividing these two parties  
That awaits a just decision.
- 1615 Now the court is assembled and ready;  
And the way is quite clear, I think,  
For us to be able to proceed.  
Lady, you will speak first  
And formulate your complaint,
- 1620 Not because I ask that the details  
Of the case be recounted to me,  
Since I am already adequately informed,  
But rather because the parties to this trial  
Should explain to me what is so untoward
- 1625 It makes you sorrow and complain;  
And also in order to charge Guillaume  
With his wrongdoing, if he is indeed wrong.  
Otherwise, I cannot know the situation.”

**THE LADY**

- “Sir, this point pleases me.
- 1630 Since we’ve begun the pleading,  
I will formulate my complaint in a rhetorical figure  
From the works of Nature,  
All for Guillaume, who has turned from  
The truth and has in this way erred.
- 1635 You know about the turtle dove,  
Which is pretty, noble, and attractive,  
Quiet, happy, sweet, and beautiful  
While her mate is alive,  
And if it happens she loses him
- 1640 Through death, it is readily apparent  
She will never find joy,  
For she demonstrates this through signs.  
Her heart is so filled with passionate burning  
She will never perch on greenery;
- 1645 Instead she always seeks out darkness,  
Strange places full of misery,  
Dead trees, fallow fields, and crossroads.  
Her perch is often found in such locations  
When she wishes to take her rest.
- 1650 She will permit her heart nothing

- Son cuer qu'en vie dolereuse,  
 Tant est de son male grieteuse.  
 Tout autel d'une dame di ge  
 Qui est rendue a Amours lige.
- 1655 Quant elle ha son amy perdu  
 fol. 33r Par mort, le cuer si esperdu  
 Ha que jamais n'avera joie,  
 Eins quiert lieu, temps, et gens, et voie,  
 Ou il ait tout adés tristece,
- 1660 Humble habit en lieu de richesse  
 Tenebres en lieu de clarté,  
 Et en lieu de joliveté  
 Pour porter chapelés de flours,  
 Ist de son chief larmes et plours.
- 1665 Et s'elle quiert aucun repos,  
 Il est pris en humble propos.  
 Einsi la dame se maintient  
 Que le dueil de son amy tient,  
 En cas qu'elle soit vraie amie.
- 1670 Or dirai de l'autre partie.
- Quant la secoingne se fourfait,  
 Et ses males en scet le fait,  
 Je croy bien que moult s'en aïre  
 Et qu'il en ait au cuer grant ire.
- 1675 Mais trouver en puet aligence  
 En ce qu'il en atent veingance.  
 Car il s'en va tantost en serche.  
 Par les nis des oisiaus reverche  
 A ceuls qui sont de sa samblance
- 1680 Tant qu'il en ha grant habondance;  
 Puis entour son nif les assamble,  
 Et quant il sont la tuit ensamble,  
 Il y tiennent .i. grant concire,  
 Puis mettent celui a martire
- 1685 De mort qui l'a, ce dit, forfaite.  
 La est devouree et deffaite.  
 Or ha cils ses maus alegiés  
 Qui en ce point en est vengiés.  
 Tout autel di je que li homs
- 1690 Doit estre fiers comme uns lions  
 Contre aucun tort, s'il li est fais.  
 Et cils puet trouver moult de fais  
 Aus quels il se puet encliner  
 Pour son mal faire terminer,
- 1695 Par pluseurs manieres de tours.  
 Mais la dame n'a nuls recours

- But a sorrowful life,  
So grief-stricken she is for her mate.  
I say it is just the same for a lady  
Who has sworn fealty to Love.
- 1655 When she has lost her lover  
Through death, her heart becomes  
So distressed she will never find joy;  
Instead she seeks places, times, people, and paths  
Where there is always total sadness;
- 1660 She chooses a simple habit instead of finery,  
Shadows instead of sunlight;  
And rather than the gaiety that comes  
From wearing chaplets of flowers,  
Weeping and tears flow from her face.
- 1665 And if she looks for any relief at all,  
She does so modestly.  
The lady who remains in mourning for her lover  
Conducts herself this way,  
That is, when she is a true beloved.
- 1670 Now I will speak to the other side.
- When the stork is unfaithful  
And her mate learns the facts of the matter,  
I am convinced he is greatly upset  
And feels much anger in his heart.
- 1675 But he can find relief  
Because he can avenge himself.  
And so he immediately begins to search.  
Through the bird nests he looks for  
Those of his own kind
- 1680 Until he finds a multitude of them.  
Then he assembles these around his own nest,  
And when he has them all together,  
They hold a great council  
And, afterward, make that one suffer
- 1685 Death who, so they say, has wronged him.  
There she is undone and devoured.  
The male has lightened the burden of his pain  
After taking revenge in this fashion.  
Similarly, I maintain that a man
- 1690 Must be fierce as a lion  
In the face of any wrong done him.  
And he can imagine many ways  
He might consider  
In order to end his trouble,
- 1695 Many different kinds of schemes.  
But the lady has no recourse at all,

Es quels elle se puist garir,  
 Qui son amy verra morir.  
 Dont elle sent pour .i. mal cent  
 1700 Que cils autres amans ne sent.  
 Guillaume, après moy respondés;  
 Se tort avez, si l'amendez.”

### GUILLAUME

Aprés ces raisons me dressay  
 Et mes paroles adressay  
 1705 Au juge, qui bien entendi  
 Ce qu'elle ot dit et que je di.  
 Et je li dis: “Sire, sans faille  
 Ma dame a bien, comment qu'il aille,  
 Son fait moustré, et sagement,  
 1710 Et de soutil entendement  
 Bien baillié par vives raisons,  
 Pour fourmer ses comparisons  
 Bien faites et bien divisees  
 Et si justement exposees  
 1715 Que qui amender y vorroit  
 Je croy moult bien qu'on ne porroit.  
 Et ce qu'elle en a devisé  
 Vous l'avez tres bien avisé,  
 Oÿ, senti, et entendu.  
 1720 Car de sa bouche est descendu  
 En vostre cuer par escouter;  
 Si ne le faut pas repeter.  
 Et si croy bien certainnement  
 Que c'est de droit vray sentement,  
 1725 Ce qu'elle en a yci compté,  
 Gardant sa grace et sa bonté,  
 Sans point de vaine entention.  
 Et j'ay une autre oppinion  
 Qu'elle n'a; s'en dirai m'entente,  
 1730 S'il li plaist et il vous talente,  
 Nom pas pour le sien fait punir,  
 Mais pour ma cause soustenir.  
 On puet bien sa cause prisier  
 Sans autrui fait apetisier.”

### LE JUGE

fol. 33v “Guillaume, ne vueil contredire.  
 1736 Dites ce qu'il vous plaist a dire,  
 Hastivement ou a loisir;  
 Ouvrez en a vostre plaisir.

Nothing to heal her pain  
Once she sees her lover die.  
And she suffers a hundred times more misery  
1700 Than that other lover ever feels.  
Guillaume, find an answer now for this.  
If you are wrong, then make amends."

### GUILLAUME

After these arguments, I drew myself up  
And addressed my words  
1705 To the judge, who attended closely to  
What she said and what I was saying.  
And I told him: "Sir, without doubt  
My lady, whatever the outcome,  
Has stated her case wisely and well,  
1710 And with a subtle understanding  
Well supplied with lively arguments  
So as to establish her comparisons,  
Which are nicely developed and ably disposed,  
So thoroughly expounded as well  
1715 That whoever wished to offer improvements  
Would find this impossible, I believe.  
And what she has recounted  
You have well remarked,  
Heard, sensed, and understood.  
1720 For from her mouth all this made its way  
Into your heart as you listened;  
And so there is no need to repeat it.  
Furthermore I believe without question  
That it comes from genuine feelings,  
1725 What she has brought up, that is,  
Maintaining her grace and goodness,  
And it lacks vain intention of any kind.  
And I hold an opinion that is different  
From her own; and I will state my reasons why,  
1730 If it pleases and interests you,  
Not in order to undermine her point of view,  
But rather to make my own case.  
A man can quite well value his own position  
Without belittling the contrary view."

### THE JUDGE

1735 "Guillaume, I won't contradict you.  
Say whatever it pleases you to say,  
Either quickly or taking your time.  
Work at this as you like.

1740 Je vueil bien oîr et entendre,  
Et s'ay assez loisir d'atendre."

### GUILLAUME

1745 "Grant merci, sire. Je diray,  
Et croy que point n'en mentiray.  
Je vous di que la forfaiture  
De dame est si aspre et si dure  
En cuer d'amant, et si perverse,  
Que, quant elle y est bien aherse,  
Jamais jour ne s'en partira.  
Or ne scet cils quel part ira  
Pour querir son aligement;  
1750 Se prendre en voloit vengement  
Par mort, et bien le peüst faire,  
Il troueroit tout son contraire  
En la fourme de grant folour,  
En l'attrait de toute dolour,  
1755 .I. feu pour toute ardeur ateindre,  
Une yaye pour douceur esteindre,  
Norrissemens de tous meschiés;  
Car dou faire seroit pechiés.  
Et pechiez qui en cuer remort  
1760 Est uns commencemens de mort,  
De mort qu'on claimme mortel vie.  
Car qui languist, il ne vit mie.  
En mon fait que ci vous present  
Maintenant, en vostre present,  
1765 Ha plus de griés et plus d'ardure  
Qu'en l'autre fait, et trop plus dure.  
Dont je vous requier orendroit  
Sus ce point ci que j'aie droit."

### ATTEMPRANCE

1770 Adont se leva Attemprance,  
Qui tenoit par la main Souffrance.  
Si parla attempreement  
En disant: "Guillaume, comment  
Droit pour vous demander osastes?  
Je me merveil que vous pensastes  
1775 Quant vous en fustes si hastis:  
Ou vostres scens est trop petis,  
Ou outrecuidiers vous demeinne.  
Ne savez vous pas bien qui mainne  
Le droit quant parties y tendent  
1780 Qui le desirent et attendent?  
Je vueil moult bien que vous sachiez

I would very much like to listen and hear,  
1740 And I have enough leisure to wait."

### GUILLAUME

"Many thanks, sire. I will speak,  
And I believe I'll say nothing false.  
I tell you that unfaithfulness on the part of a lady  
Is such a bitter and difficult thing  
1745 For a lover's heart, so unnatural as well,  
That, when the fact of it has taken firm hold,  
It will never depart for a single day.  
Now the man does not know where to go  
In order to seek relief;  
1750 If he thinks to avenge himself  
Through murder (and well might he do so),  
He should be firmly opposed  
By the prospect of great madness  
And a powerful, encompassing grief,  
1755 A fire to afflict every passion,  
A water to extinguish sweetness,  
Nourishment for every mischance;  
For to commit murder would be a sin.  
And a sin that tortures the heart  
1760 Is one way death can begin,  
The death of what is called mortal life.  
For whoever languishes thus is not alive at all.  
In my case, the one I am presenting to you  
Now in your presence,  
1765 There is more grief and burning torment  
Than in the other, and it is much harder to bear.  
And so I ask now if  
For this reason I might claim victory."

### TEMPERANCE

Immediately Temperance arose  
1770 Who was holding Endurance by the hand,  
And she spoke in a temperate fashion,  
Saying: "Guillaume, how  
Dare you ask for the decision on your behalf?  
I am amazed that you should consider this  
1775 After offering only a brief argument:  
Either your intelligence is quite limited  
Or you are ruled by overconfidence.  
Don't you know who determines  
What is the right when parties argue,  
1780 Desiring a decision and waiting for it?  
I would like very much for you to know

- Que Raisons en est li drois chiés  
 Et avec li sa compaingnie;  
 Chascune y a bonne partie  
 1785 D'entre nous damoiselles toutes.  
 De ce ne faites nulles doubtes,  
 Que drois ne se puet delivrer,  
 Se toutes ne sont au livrer,  
 Afin que fait soit bonnement,  
 1790 Se cils qui fist les drois ne ment.  
 Je meïsmes y ai office  
 Pour resister a tout malice  
 Qui maintes fois le droit destourne;  
 Et je d'office le retourne.  
 1795 Quant uns bons procés vient en fourme,  
 Et je perçoy qu'on l'en deffourme,  
 Je y puis bien tellement ouvrer  
 Qu'il puet sa fourme recouvrer.  
 Se trop y a, j'en puis oster,  
 1800 (Or vueilliez bien ce point noter),  
 Et se po y a, je y puis mettre  
 Quant je m'en vueil bien entremettre.  
 Et se la chose est en bon point,  
 Je la puis garder en ce point.  
 1805 C'est d'Atemprance li mestiers  
 Toutes fois qu'il en est mestiers.  
 Or vueil je dire d'autre chose  
 Qui contre vostre fait s'oppose.
- Vous avez .i. point soustenu  
 1810 Dont po d'onner vous est venu,  
 En ce que ma dame de pris  
 Avoit seur la segongne pris:  
 fol. 34r Comment elle est a la mort traite  
 Quant envers son male est forfaite.  
 1815 Cuidiés vous qu'elle vosist dire  
 Qu'on meïst la dame a martyre  
 De la mort, qui se mefferoit  
 Envers celui qui l'ameroit?  
 Nennil! Voir, ce seroit folie.  
 1820 Ne ma dame ne maintient mie  
 Qu'il la face tuer ne tue.  
 Mais elle tient qu'il s'esvertue  
 Encontre les temptations  
 Des fausses cogitations  
 1825 Qui porroient en lui venir.  
 Encor s'el pooit avenir,  
 Qu'elle fust de bonne mort morte,

- That Reason is in charge,  
And along with her, her entourage;  
Each of them holds a prominent position  
1785 Among us other damsels.  
Don't doubt this in the least.  
For no decision can be rendered  
If they all are not a part of its making  
So that things might be done properly  
1790 If the one who made the laws does not lie.  
I myself have the responsibility  
Of resisting any kind of malice,  
Which many times diverts the right;  
And by my efforts I put things back on track.  
1795 When a proper trial takes shape,  
And I see it going awry,  
I can very well do what is needed  
For it to be put right and returned to form.  
If there is too much, I can remove something,  
1800 And now please note this point well:  
If there is too little, I can add something  
Whenever I wish to make the proper effort.  
And if everything is just right,  
I can make certain it remains so.  
1805 That is the office of Temperance  
Anytime there is some need.  
Now I wish to speak of something else  
That contradicts your view.
- You have defended an opinion  
1810 That does you little honor,  
And it concerns what my worthy lady  
Maintained about the stork:  
How she is put to death  
After having proved unfaithful to her mate.  
1815 Do you believe my lady meant  
That the female who did wrong  
To the male who loves her  
Should be made to suffer death?  
Not at all! Truly that would be folly.  
1820 And my lady does not maintain in any way  
He should kill her or have her killed.  
Instead she advises he struggle  
Against the temptations  
Of those false ideas  
1825 That might come into his mind.  
Furthermore, although it might happen  
That she die naturally,

- Se vaurroit il miex (drois la porte)  
Qu'elle demourast toute vive.
- 1830 Car tant com la personne vive  
Qui se mefferoit par folour,  
On n'en a peinne, ne dolour,  
Grieté, souffrance, ne meschief,  
Dont on ne veingne bien a chief.
- 1835 Quant il sent aucune griété,  
Il doit penser par verité,  
Dés qu'il a loiaument servi,  
Qu'il ne l'a mie desservi.  
C'est une pensee valable,
- 1840 Pour lui conforter profitable.  
Que vous yroie je comptant?  
De remedes y a autant  
En amours, com de griés pointures,  
Soient aspres, pongnans, ou dures.
- 1845 Chascune son remede enseigne.  
Or en fait bon querir l'enseigne.  
Mais une dame qui verra  
Que se tres dous amis morra  
En cui en nul jour de sa vie
- 1850 N'ara trouvé que courtoisie,  
Estre porra si fort ferue,  
Si griefment, et si abatue,  
Que jamais n'en porra garir;  
Einsois la couvendra morir.
- 1855 En l'escritture est contenu  
Que pluseurs fois est avenu.  
S'en compteray .i. petit compte  
Qui vous fera avoir grant honte  
Et a ma dame grant honnour,
- 1860 Et grant clarté a mon signour,  
Dont il verra plus clerement  
Comment vous errez folement.
- Il n'a pas lonc temps qu'il avint  
Q'une grant dame a Paris vint,  
1865 S'amena une sienne fille  
Qui, sans penser barat ne guille,  
Amoit .i. chevalier gentil,  
Sage, courtois, gay, et soutil,  
Preu aus armes, fort, et puissant,
- 1870 De toutes graces souffisant.  
De lui nouveles li venirent  
Q'forment au cuer la pongnirent,  
Qu'il estoit a .i. tournoy mors.

- It would be better (justice upholds it)  
Had she remained alive.
- 1830 For as long as the person lives  
Who sins in mad error,  
One has no pain, no sorrow,  
No grief, suffering, or mischance  
That one cannot overcome.
- 1835 When feeling pain of some kind,  
He must truly think,  
Having served her faithfully,  
That he has not deserved this at all.  
This is a valid thought,
- 1840 Useful for comforting the man.  
What else should I tell you?  
There are as many remedies  
In love as painful wounds,  
However bitter, painful, or hard to bear.
- 1845 Each points to its proper remedy,  
Teaches the man what is good to seek.  
But a lady who witnesses  
The death of her very sweet lover  
In whom on no day of his life
- 1850 Was found anything but courtesy,  
She could be so terribly stricken  
And so grievously, beaten down so far as well  
She will never prove able to recover;  
Instead, she will not fail to die.
- 1855 Written tradition informs us  
This has happened many times.  
And so I will relate a short tale  
That will bring great shame upon you  
And great honor to my lady,
- 1860 As well as much clarity to my lord,  
For he will see more distinctly  
How foolishly you err.
- Not long ago it happened  
That a great lady came to Paris,
- 1865 And she brought along a daughter of hers  
Who, intending neither deception nor trouble,  
Fell in love with a noble knight,  
A man wise, courteous, happy, and sophisticated,  
Skilled at arms, strong and powerful,
- 1870 Possessing every grace.  
News of him came to her  
That greatly afflicted her heart,  
For he had been killed in a tournament.

- ‘Lasse!’ dist elle, ‘Quel remors  
 1875 Puis avoir de ceste nouvelle!’  
 A cest mot cheÿ la pucelle  
 A la terre, toute estendue.  
 Adont sa mere y est venue  
 Acourant moult dolentement;  
 1880 S’en prist a plourer tenrement  
 Et la fist porter en .i. lit.  
 La prist elle povre delit  
 Car au cuer estoit fort atainte,  
 Et eu viaire pale et tainte,  
 1885 Et si de son corps amatie,  
 Et de ses membres amortie,  
 Qu’einc puis ne s’en pot soustenir,  
 Ne des mains nulles riens tenir.  
 Et n’ot ainc puis tant de victoire  
 1890 Qu’elle peüst mengier ne boire.  
 Fusicien furent mandé,  
 Et la leur fu il demandé  
 fol. 34v S’elle averoit de la mort garde,  
 Et que chascuns y prenist garde  
 1895 S’on li porroit donner santé,  
 Et qu’il demandassent planté  
 Hardiemment de leur avoir,  
 Tant comme il en vorront avoir.  
 Et il en peinne s’en meïrent  
 1900 Et moult volentiers le feïrent  
 Pour trouver son aligement,  
 S’il peüssent, diligenment.  
 Premiers, s’orine resgarderent,  
 Et puis après si la tasterent;  
 1905 Li uns après l’autre tastoient  
 Partout ou taster la devoient,  
 Les piez, le pous, et puis les temples;  
 Et puis si moustroient exemples  
 Des cures qu’il avoient faites  
 1910 En pluseurs lieus et bien parfaites;  
 Et que plus d’exemples moustroient,  
 De tant plus esbahi estoient.  
 L’orine la jugoit haitie,  
 Et li tasters ne jugoit mie  
 1915 Cause froide, ne de chalour,  
 En quoy il prenissent coulour  
 D’ou ne de quoy cils maus venoit,  
 Ne quel remede il couvenoit,  
 Pour li un po assouagier  
 1920 Ou dou tout ses maus alegier,

- ‘Alas!’ she said, ‘What grief  
1875 This news brings me!’  
With this word, the young girl  
Fell to the earth in a heap.  
Quickly her mother went over,  
Running to her with great sorrow;  
1880 And she began to cry softly  
And had her carried to a bed.  
There she found little comfort  
Because her heart was so terribly afflicted,  
And her face so pale and discolored,  
1885 Her body so stricken,  
And her limbs so withered  
She could hardly stand  
Or hold anything in her hands.  
And she did not recover enough afterward  
1890 To be able to eat or drink.  
Physicians were sent for,  
And it was asked of them  
If she could be saved from death;  
And that each should see about  
1895 Bringing her back to health, if it could be done;  
And that they should boldly demand  
A great deal of what these people possessed,  
As much as they desired to have.  
And these men diligently applied themselves,  
1900 As they quite eagerly and with care  
Attempted to devise  
A cure for her if they could.  
First they examined her urine,  
And then they palpated her.  
1905 One after the other they touched her  
Wherever palpation should be done:  
The feet, the wrists, and then the temples.  
And after this they discussed examples  
Of the various cures they had brought about  
1910 And successfully accomplished in many places;  
But the more examples they discussed,  
The more bewildered they were.  
Her urine was judged healthy,  
And the examination did not reveal  
1915 Any symptoms of coldness or heat  
From which they would have gotten indications  
About where or what this illness came from,  
Or what remedy was called for  
In order to soothe her somewhat  
1920 Or alleviate her ills altogether,

Fors tant que li uns s'avisa  
 Et sagement le devisa:  
 'Signeurs, j'ay veü en s'orine  
 Aussi comme un po de racine,  
 1925 Qu'elle est en l'esperit troublee.  
 Or nous est la science emblee  
 De ce point s'on ne s'en avise.  
 Et nous savons une devise  
 Que li bons philosophes dist;  
 1930 Il afferme, et je croy son dist,  
 Que les maladies quelconques —  
 Et qu'autrement il n'avint onques —  
 Sont curees par leur contraire.  
 Or ne poons a ce point traire  
 1935 De ceste maladie cy  
 Tant seulement que par un sy.  
 Car si hastives maladies  
 Puelent venir de .ij. parties:  
 C'est assavoir, se Diex me voie,  
 1940 De grant dueil ou de trop grant joie.  
 Et cause de joie desire  
 Qu'on la courresse et qu'on l'aïre,  
 Et celle de dueil autrement:  
 Faire couvenra liement,  
 1945 Present li, ce qu'elle vorra  
 Et quanqu'elle comandera;  
 Et qu'on li ait admenistres,  
 Pour faire feste, menestres.  
 Or couvenra il qu'elle die  
 1950 Dou quel li vient la maladie  
 Pour li donner certain conseil.  
 Je le lo einsi et conseil.  
 Se voit li uns tout simplement  
 Parler a li secretement.'  
 1955 Seur ce point furent acordans;  
 Dont li uns li fu demandans  
 Ce que devant avez oÿ.  
 Point n'en ot le cuer esjoÿ,  
 Eins en respondi moult envis,  
 1960 Et toute voie vis a vis  
 Pure verité l'en conta,  
 Si bien que point n'i arresta.  
 Lors li fist cils une requeste  
 Au mieus qu'il pot par voie honneste:  
 1965 'Fille, respondés moy d'un point  
 Que je vous dirai bien a point:  
 Vorriés vous de ci en avant

- But in the end one of them took stock  
And spoke these words of wisdom:  
'Colleagues, I've seen in her urine  
A little something of what's causing this,  
1925 Namely that she is troubled in spirit.  
Now our science casts little light  
On this point unless one thinks it over.  
For we are aware of a saying  
The good philosopher affirmed:  
1930 He states, and I believe what he says,  
That illnesses of every kind —  
And there are never exceptions —  
Are cured by their contraries.  
And so we cannot infer at this point  
1935 That there is only one contrary  
Side in regard to this particular illness.  
For these sudden maladies  
Can arise for two reasons:  
That's to say, so God guide me,  
1940 Great sorrow or overwhelming joy.  
And as a cause joy requires  
Her to be made angry and irritated,  
And sorrow asks for just the opposite:  
One should make merry  
1945 In her presence, do what would please her  
And whatever she asks for;  
And minstrels too should be summoned  
To entertain her.  
Then it will be necessary for her to admit  
1950 The cause of the illness  
So she can be given certain advice.  
This is what I advise and counsel.  
So let one of us go very quietly  
In order to speak to her privately.'
- 1955 They were agreed on this point;  
And so one went to ask her  
What you have already heard.  
Her heart was hardly happy about this.  
Instead she answered quite unwillingly,  
1960 And yet still told him  
Face to face the whole truth  
So ably that she hesitated not at all.  
Then he asked her this,  
As ably as he could in all honesty:  
1965 'Young lady, answer me one question  
That I will now put to you;  
Would you want from this moment on

- Que vous le veïssiez vivant,  
 Mais que ce fust par tel maniere  
 1970 Q'jamais ne vous moustrast chiere,  
 Parole, ne samblant d'amy?'  
 Et elle respondi: 'Aymy!  
 fol. 35r Sire, se Diex me doint santé,  
 Que c'est bien de ma volenté  
 1975 Que volentiers le reverroie  
 Vivant, et fust par tele voie  
 Qu'il heüst fait une autre amie,  
 La quele fust de moy servie,  
 Mon vivant, jusqu'au deschaucier.  
 1980 Ne m'en vueilliez plus enchaucier;  
 Car tous li cuers de dueil me font  
 Si aigrement et si parfont  
 Toutes fois que j'en oy parole.  
 Si ne vueil plus qu'on m'en parole.'
- 1985 Après ce mot, cils s'en depart  
 Et s'en ala de celle part  
 Ou cil estient qui l'atendoient,  
 Qui desiroient et tendoient,  
 Savoir quel fin celle feroit.  
 1990 Et il leur dist qu'elle morroit:  
 'Je n'i puis veoir nul retour.  
 Ses cuers est fermez en la tour  
 D'Amour sous la clef de Tristesse,  
 Ou elle sueffre grant destresse,  
 1995 Si que morir la couvenra  
 Briefment; ja n'en eschapera.  
 Pour quoy nous nous departirons  
 De ci; plus n'i arresterons.'  
 En l'eure de la se partirent,  
 2000 Et puis a la mere deïrent:  
 'Ma dame, on n'i puet conseil mettre.  
 Mais vueilliez vous bien entremettre  
 De li garder et tenir pres.'  
 Euls departis, tantost après  
 2005 Elle cria a haute vois:  
 'Hé! Douce mere, je m'en vois.  
 A Dieu vous command, douce dame!'  
 Et droit a ce point rendi l'ame.  
 Elle fu de la gent crie,  
 2010 Et sa mere en fu tourmentee.  
 De ce ne tieng je pas mon compte,  
 Car a mon propos riens n'en monte.

- To see him alive,  
Even if this were in such a way
- 1970 That he would never show you the demeanor,  
The speech, the look of a lover?'  
And she answered: 'Alas!  
Sir, may God grant me health,  
Such is indeed my wish,
- 1975 And I would willingly see him alive  
Again even if it were  
That he has taken another beloved,  
Who would be served by me  
All my life, even to taking off her shoes.
- 1980 Please press me no more about this;  
For my heart breaks completely with sorrow,  
A sorrow so bitter and deep  
Every time anyone speaks of him to me.  
So I do not want to hear about it anymore.'
- 1985 After this word, he left  
And walked to the place  
Where the others were awaiting him,  
And they were eager and anxious  
To learn what end she might come to.
- 1990 And he told them she would die:  
'I see no recovery from this.  
Her heart has been locked within the tower  
Of Love by the key of Sadness,  
Where she suffers great distress,
- 1995 And thus she shall die  
Soon; she shall never escape.  
Because of this we will depart;  
We will remain here no longer.'
- 2000 Within the hour they left the place,  
Saying to the mother:  
'My lady, nothing can be done,  
But please do your best  
To watch over and stay close to her.'
- 2005 After they left, she cried out  
All at once in a loud voice:  
'Oh! Sweet mother, I'm dying.  
I commend you to God, sweet lady!'
- 2010 And just at that moment, she gave up the ghost.  
The girl was lamented by the household,  
And her mother suffered terribly.  
But of this I'll take no account  
Because it adds nothing to my theme.

Guillaume, ou porrés vous trouver  
 Comment vous peüssiez prouver  
 2015 Qu'uns homs seroit a mort menez  
 De ce point que vous soustenez,  
 Dou forfait de sa bien amee,  
 Et que ce fust chose prouree  
 Qu'elle heüst fait la villenie  
 2020 Et qu'adés demourast en vie?  
 De la pucelle est chose voire,  
 Mais ce seroit trop fort a croire  
 Que plus grans fust li siens meschiés  
 Que de celle. Bien le sachiez!"

### GUILLAUME

2025 "Attemprance, moult bel parlez  
 Toutes les fois que vous volez.  
 Ci endroit especiaument  
 Avez parlé moult sagement.  
 Et quanqu'avez ci dit, je croy,  
 2030 Ne dou croire point ne recroy.  
 Car c'est pour moy en aucun point  
 Qui vient a mon propos a point  
 Quant celle damoiselle gente  
 Ot mis en chevalier s'entente,  
 2035 Et il estoit ses vrais amis  
 Et puis se fu a la mort mis,  
 Dont Amours si fort l'atrapa  
 Que la mort tantost la hapa,  
 Amours en fist pour li assez  
 2040 Car cils cops fu tantost passez.  
 Aussi a morir avoit elle:  
 Nuls contre ce point ne rebelle  
 Cui la mort ne veingne haper;  
 Nuls ne li porroit eschaper.  
 2045 Quant uns hons est grieteusement  
 Tauxés a mort par jugement  
 D'un bon juge sans mesprison,  
 Et il le met en grief prison  
 D'enfermeté en lieux divers,  
 2050 Ou estre puet mengiez de vers  
 Et de planté d'autre vermine,  
 fol. 35v Et il y est un lonc termine,  
 Chargié col et les bras de fers  
 Et les jambes — c'est bien enfers.  
 2055 La est il de foy en destour  
 Pour renoier son creatour;  
 Volentiers le renieroit

- Guillaume, where will you discover  
The proof you need to establish  
2015 That a man would be compelled to die  
As a result of the experience you describe,  
Namely the betrayal of his dear beloved,  
When it is already well established  
That after she sinned so wickedly,  
2020 He did in fact remain alive?  
The case of the young girl is true,  
But it would certainly be too hard to believe  
That his misfortune was greater  
Than hers. Well you know it!"

**GUILLAUME**

- 2025 "Temperance, you speak very prettily  
Every time you wish to.  
On this occasion especially  
You have spoken quite wisely.  
And whatever you have said here I affirm  
2030 And do not shrink from believing.  
But this has nothing to do  
With my case in any way.  
When this noble maiden  
Granted her devotion to the knight  
2035 And he became her true lover  
And was afterward delivered so quickly to death,  
For which reason Love held her so violently  
That death presently struck her down without delay,  
Love showed her great favor in this,  
2040 For the blow passed quickly.  
In any case, she did have to die;  
No one contests this fact  
Whom death does not come to seize.  
No person might avoid it.  
2045 When a man is unhappily condemned  
To death by the sentence  
Of a good judge without impropriety  
And that judge puts him in a miserable prison  
Enclosed within some horrible place  
2050 Where he could be eaten by worms  
Or by a host of other vermin,  
And he serves a long sentence,  
His neck and arms hung with irons  
And his legs as well — that's hell for sure.  
2055 There he's turned away from faith  
In order to renounce his Creator;  
Willingly he'd renounce Him

Qui de la le delivreroit.  
 Mais en celle heure qu'il est pris,  
 2060 Jugiés a mort par juste pris,  
 Trop miex li vaut qu'on l'en delivre  
 Par la mort qu'en tel doleur vivre.  
 Einsi est il d'un vray amant  
 Qui est trahis en dame amant,  
 2065 A tel fin com devant est dit.  
 J'aferme et se di en mon dit  
 Que nuls meschiés ne s'apartient  
 Aus grietez que ses cuers soustient  
 Tant come il dure et elle dure.  
 2070 Et si say moult bien que Nature  
 Ha de son bon droit establi  
 Qu'on mette celui en oubli  
 Qui est mors et n'en puet ravoir  
 Pour grant peinne, ne pour avoir.  
 2075 Seur ce point droit atenderoie;  
 Miex estre jugiés ne vorroie."

### PAIX

Après ces mos s'est Pais levee  
 Et dist, comme bien avisee:  
 "Guillaume, assez souffissanment,  
 2080 Selonc le vostre entendement,  
 Avez vostre propos baillié;  
 Mais vous l'avez trop court taillié  
 Pour avoir droit pour vous si tost.  
 Car uns autres poins le vous tost.  
 2085 Vous avez de Nature trait  
 Pour prouver .i. assez biau trait,  
 Lequel on ha bien entendu.  
 Mais j'ai un autre las tendu  
 Contre celui, de plus grant pris,  
 2090 Par lequel vous serez surpris,  
 D'un exemple aucun de fait  
 Qui bien a ramentevoir fait.  
 Et pour ceci le vous propos,  
 Car il sert bien a mon propos.  
 2095 Dydo, roïne de Cartage,  
 Ot si grant dueil et si grant rage  
 Pour l'amour qu'elle ot a Enee,  
 Qui li avoit sa foy donnee  
 Qu'a mouillier l'aroit et a femme.  
 2100 Et li faus l'appelloit sa dame,  
 Son cuer, s'amour, et sa deesse,

- For whoever might deliver him from that place.  
But at the time he is arrested,  
2060 Condemned to death in a just decision,  
It avails him much more to be delivered  
By death than to live on in such suffering.  
So it is with the true lover  
Who has been betrayed in loving a lady,  
2065 With the same result as described above.  
I affirm and state in my poem  
That no misfortune compares to  
The suffering his heart endures  
As long as he and she live on.  
2070 Also I know quite well that Nature  
Has established by her proper right  
That a person will be forgotten  
Who dies and cannot be had back  
Either through great trouble or for treasure.  
2075 On this point I expect the decision for myself;  
I could not wish to be judged by one better."

**PEACE**

- After these words Peace rose up  
And said, like one well schooled:  
"Guillaume, you have buttressed  
2080 Your argument rather sufficiently  
According to your lights;  
But you have cut it much too short  
To gain the judgment for yourself so quickly.  
For there is another point that deprives you of it.  
2085 You have drawn on Nature  
To prove your case, a fair enough point  
That has been well understood.  
But I have laid another trap  
For this, a quite formidable one  
2090 In which you shall be caught,  
And it's contained in a true exemplum,  
One quite useful to recall.  
And so I offer it to you  
Because it serves my purpose well.
- 2095 Dido, queen of Carthage,  
Felt very great sorrow and anger  
Because of the love she bore Aeneas,  
Who had pledged her his faith  
To take her as his woman and wife.  
2100 And the traitor called her his lady,  
His heart, his love, and his goddess,

Et sa souvereinne maistresse.  
 Puis s'en ala par mer nagent  
 En larrecin, lui et sa gent,  
 2105 Qu'onques puis Dydo ne le vit.  
 Oiez comment elle se chevit:  
 Quant failly li ot dou couvent  
 Que heü li avoit en couvent,  
 Einsi com pluseurs amans font  
 2110 Qui l'amant loial contrefont,  
 La desesperee, la fole,  
 Qu'amours honnist, qu'amours afole,  
 L'espee de Eneas trouva  
 Et en son corps si l'esprouva  
 2115 Qu'onques ne se pot espargnier  
 Qu'en soy ne la feïst baingnier.  
 Dont elle morut a dolour  
 Pour amer, et par sa folour.  
 Mais elle ne morut pas seule,  
 2120 Einsois a .ij. copa la gueule,  
 Car de Eneas estoit enceinte,  
 Dont moult fu regretee et plainte.  
 Mais einsois qu'elle s'oceïst,  
 Elle commanda qu'on feïst  
 2125 Un ardant feu en sa presence.  
 Et quant en sa desesperence  
 S'ocist, si forment s'envaÿ  
 Qu'avec le cop en feu chaÿ  
 Dont tantost fu arse et bruïe.  
 2130 Einsi fina Dydo sa vie.  
 fol. 36r Bien croy que ce fu chose voire,  
 Car einsi le truis en l'istoire.

Si que, Guillaume, vraiment,  
 Il me samble tout autrement  
 2135 Veües et consideree  
 Mes raisons devant devisees.  
 Car on puet veoir clerement  
 Que grieté, peinne, ne tourment  
 Ne se porroient comparer  
 2140 Ad ce que celle comparer  
 Volt pour le grief de son amy.  
 Et fust uns homs trestout enmy  
 Grant planté de ses annemis,  
 Qui tuit li heüssent promis  
 2145 La mort et tuer le porroient  
 A leur plaisir quant il vorroient,  
 Lui vivant en celle paour,

His sovereign mistress as well.  
Then he sailed off across the ocean  
Like a thief, he and his companions,  
2105 So that Dido never saw him again.  
Hear now what she did:  
When he'd failed her by breaking the promise  
He had agreed to make in good faith,  
Just as many lovers do  
2110 Who pretend to be loyal lovers,  
That desperate and crazed woman,  
Whom love had shamed, whom love had driven mad,  
Found the sword of Aeneas  
And tried it out on her own body,  
2115 Not sparing herself  
Until she made it bathe in her blood.  
And so she died in pain  
Because she loved and went mad.  
Yet she did not die alone,  
2120 But cut instead the throats of two,  
For she was carrying the child of Aeneas,  
And afterward she was much mourned and lamented.  
But before she killed herself,  
She ordered a blazing fire  
2125 To be laid in her presence.  
And when in her desperation  
She killed herself, the woman struck so forcefully  
That with the blow she fell into the fire  
And was at once consumed and burned up.  
2130 In this way Dido ended her life.  
This is the truth, I firmly believe,  
For so I found it in written history.

To conclude, Guillaume, truly  
My view is just the opposite of yours  
2135 In the light of and in view of  
The reasons I've laid out above.  
For it can be clearly seen  
That misery, pain, and torment  
Cannot be compared  
2140 To what she was intent on paying in return  
For the grief brought by her lover.  
And if a man found himself among  
A great horde of his enemies,  
All of whom had promised him  
2145 Death and indeed could kill him  
As they wished whenever they liked,  
Though living in this fear

Non obstant griété ne freour,  
Se trouveroit il reconfort.  
2150 Encoy y a un point plus fort:  
Qui le menroйт aus fourches pendre  
En celle heure, sans plus attendre,  
Si seroit il reconfortez  
Et soustenus et deportez  
2155 En esperence d'eschaper;  
Lors ne le porroient taper  
Male errorur, ne desesperence,  
Tant comme il aroit Esperence;  
Qu'Esperence le conduiroit  
2160 Jusqu'a tant qu'il trespasseroit.

Aussi avez vous dit d'un point.  
Encontre Amour trop mal a point:  
C'est que Nature a commandise  
Seur la gent d'Amour a sa guise,  
2165 Et se Nature le commande,  
Nuls n'obeïst a sa commande.  
Elle comande qu'on oublie  
Et mort d'amant et mort d'amie  
Pour ce qu'on n'i puet recouvrer  
2170 Par grant avoir, ne par ouvrer.  
Commande; assez nous le volons.  
De ce point pas ne nous dolons,  
Que a moy riens n'en apartient.  
Car Bonne Amour en sa part tient  
2175 Un cuer d'amant tant seulement  
Sans naturel commandement.  
Qui ne vuet, nuls n'i est contrains;  
Mais on est d'Amours si estrains,  
Qu'obeir y couvient par force;  
2180 S'est fols qui contre li s'efforce.  
Guillaume, se vous loeroie  
A laissier ceste povre voie  
De dire que Nature ait grace  
Que propre commandement face  
2185 En amours, qui soit de valeur,  
Nature donne bien couleur  
A amy d'un plaisant cuidier  
Qui li fait folement cuidier  
Acomplir ce qu'Amours despise.  
2190 Et par si faite fole emprise  
Sont fait maint incouvenient  
Qui valent trop meins que nient.  
Plus desclairier ne m'en couvient

- Disregarding the pain and terror,  
Still he might find consolation.
- 2150 Yet there is an even stronger argument:  
Whoever might take him to hang on the gibbet  
At that very moment with no reprieve,  
He would yet be comforted  
And sustained and heartened
- 2155 By the hope of escaping:  
And neither evil error nor despair  
Might assault him  
As long as he holds on to Hope;  
For Hope will accompany him
- 2160 Right until the moment he dies.

- You have also made a point  
Against Love that's badly off the mark:  
It is that Nature has control  
Over the people of Love at her will,
- 2165 And thus if Nature commands,  
No one would disobey that command.  
She asks that one forget  
The death of both lover and beloved  
Because in this instance nothing can be restored
- 2170 By great treasure or by taking action.  
Let her command; indeed we welcome it.  
We do not have any worries on this score  
Because this doesn't concern me at all.  
For Good Love keeps for herself —
- 2175 And herself alone — a lover's heart  
Without any command from Nature.  
Whoever does not agree is not forced,  
And yet one is so constrained by Love,  
He must, feeling that power, obey.
- 2180 Anyone who resists is a fool.  
Guillaume, I advise you therefore  
To drop this unpersuasive argument  
That maintains Nature has the ability  
To enforce her own command,
- 2185 Whatever its value, in matters of love;  
Nature lends a good appearance  
To a lover's frivolous thought,  
And this makes him foolishly determine  
To do something Love hates.
- 2190 And because of such foolishness,  
Much misfortune results  
That is worth rather less than nothing.  
I need discuss it no further

- Pour ce que point d'onour n'en vient.  
 2195 Pais sui, qui volentiers feroie  
 Adés bien et si defferoie  
 Le mal; aussi feroit Concorde;  
 Car quanque je vueil, elle acorde,  
 Toutes heures, et soir et main.  
 2200 Pour ce la tien je par la main,  
 Et pour faire ce qu'il li plait.  
 Alés avant a vostre plait,  
 Guillaume, par voie dehüe,  
 Sans naturel descouvenüe.  
 2205 S'ensieuez d'Avis les usages,  
 Par mon los, si ferez que sages.”

### GUILLAUME

- “Pais, damoiselle, pour vous croire  
 Viennent tous biens, c'est chose voire.  
 Si me garderay de mesprendre.  
 fol. 36v Mais je vueil ma cause deffendre  
 2211 Tant avant, comme je porray.  
 Dont .i. exemple compteray  
 Qui s'ensieut, a mon fait prouver  
 Et a vostre tort reprover.  
 2215 A Orliens ot .i. cler jadis  
 Qui estoit renommez et dis  
 Nobles cler, vaillans homs et riches,  
 Et si n'estoit avers ne chiches,  
 Sires de lois, et de decretz  
 2220 Maistres, et uns homs bien discrez  
 De bien moustrer ce qu'il savoit  
 Et la vaillance qu'il avoit.  
 S'avoit esté nez en Prouvence,  
 Et bien enlignagiez en France  
 2225 Estoit de princes et de contes  
 Que veritables soit mes comptes.  
 De gentils gens estoit servis,  
 Preus et apers a grant devis,  
 Et avoit en sa compaingnie  
 2230 De moult noble chevalerie,  
 A qui riches robes donnoit.  
 Cils poins moult bien li avenoit,  
 Car pour sa grace desservir  
 Se penoient de lui servir.  
 2235 Or estoit moult d'amer espris  
 D'une damoiselle de pris  
 Qui demouroit vers Montpeslier,

- Because no point of honor is involved.  
2195 I am Peace, who would willingly  
Always do what's good and bring down  
Evil; Concord would do the same,  
For whatever I desire, so does she  
At all times, both morning and night.  
2200 Thus I hold her by the hand  
In order to do what might please her.  
Go on with your argument,  
Guillaume, in the way you must,  
Without being hindered by Nature.  
2205 If, by my advice, you follow the principles  
Of Discretion, you will do wisely."

**GUILLAUME**

- "Peace, young lady, faith in you  
Brings all good things, that is something true.  
So I will guard myself from wrongdoing.  
2210 But I wish to defend my opinion  
As forcefully as I can.  
In this regard I will relate an exemplum,  
Which here follows, in order to prove my view  
And refute your mistaken opinion.  
2215 In Orleans there formerly was a clerk  
Who was renowned and said to be  
A noble cleric, a valiant and powerful man,  
And so was neither miserly nor cheap,  
A lord of laws, and of decrees  
2220 The master, and a man quite discreet  
In the demonstration of what he knew  
And the valor that was his.  
He had been born in Provence,  
Though well connected by blood to princes  
2225 And counts in France,  
If indeed my story is true.  
He was attended by noble people,  
The competent and the learned in great number,  
And had among his company  
2230 Many well-born knights  
To whom he would give rich robes.  
This quality very well became him,  
Because in order to merit his good will  
They took pains to serve him.  
2235 Now he was very much taken in love  
With a worthy damsel  
Who lived near Montpellier,

Fille d'un vaillant chevalier,  
 Attrait de moult noble lignie.  
 2240 S'estoit la besongne lignie  
 D'entr'eus .ij. si entierement  
 Qu'on ne peüst mieus autrement.  
 Il s'estoient entrepromis,  
 Il comme ses loiaus amis,  
 2245 Et elle comme vraie amie;  
 A tousjours mais, toute leur vie  
 Maintenroient en verité  
 Les courtois poins de loiauté.  
 Mais si loing devins leur loiens,  
 2250 Qu'il s'en vint manoir a Orliens  
 Et elle en Prouvence manoit.  
 Mais si bien, comme il couvenoit,  
 Les secrez d'amours maintenoient  
 Des lettres qu'il s'entr'envolioient  
 2255 Par leurs especiaus messages,  
 Honnestes gens, secrez et sages.  
 Einsi le feïrent grant piece.  
 Mais Fortune, qui tost depiece  
 Maint honneur aval le païs,  
 2260 Fist tant que cils fu esbahis,  
 Plus que perdre .V.° mars d'or,  
 Si comme je diray dés or.

Il avint a une journee,  
 Male pour celui adjournee,  
 2265 Qu'a lui s'en vint uns messagiers  
 De Prouvence, preus et legiers,  
 Qui li aportoit lettres closes,  
 En .i. petit coffret encloses.  
 Il les prist, si les resgarda  
 2270 Et de haut lire se garda,  
 Car pluseurs secrez devisoient.  
 Et ou darrein point contenoient  
 Que s'amie estoit mariee  
 Au plus vaillant de la contree  
 2275 Et estoit ja grosse d'enfant.  
 'Haro!' dist il, 'Li cuers me fent.  
 Hé! Mors, que ne me viens tu prendre?  
 A po que je ne me vois pendre!  
 Lors prist ses cheveus a tirer,  
 2280 Et puis sa robe a dessirer.  
 Quant sa gent einsi le verrent,  
 Isnelement avant saillirent,  
 Dont chascuns forment l'agrapa.

The daughter of a valiant knight,  
Descended from a very aristocratic line.  
2240 And the relationship had been established  
So firmly between these two  
It could not have been better.  
Each of them had committed to the other,  
He as her loyal lover,  
2245 And she as a loyal beloved;  
And always, moreover, all their life  
They upheld truly  
The courtly rules of faithfulness.  
But the distance between them became quite great,  
2250 For he went to live in Orleans  
And she remained in Provence.  
Even so, quite ably, as it behooved them,  
They maintained the secrets of love  
With letters they sent to one another  
2255 By their special messengers,  
Honest men, discreet and wise.  
They carried on in this fashion for some time.  
But Fortune, who destroys quickly  
Much of honor throughout the land,  
2260 Saw to it that he had a terrible shock,  
Much worse than losing five hundred marks of gold,  
Just as I will now relate.

It happened one day,  
Which dawned evilly for him,  
2265 That a messenger arrived  
From Provence, a man noble and adroit  
Who was bringing him a sealed letter  
Enclosed within a little chest.  
This he took and looked over,  
2270 Refraining from reading out loud,  
For it contained many private things.  
And at the very end the letter  
Related how his beloved had been married  
To the worthiest man of that region  
2275 And was at that time big with child.  
'Oh no!' he said, 'My heart is breaking.  
Oh Death, why don't you take me now?  
I'm almost ready to hang myself'  
Then he started pulling out his hair  
2280 And, afterward, tearing his robe.  
When his people saw him in such a state,  
They moved quickly forward,  
And each one tried to restrain him.

- Mais par force leur eschapa.  
 2285 Aval la ville se fuï.  
     Il devint sours et amuÿ,  
     Car des lors qu'il parti de la,  
     Ainc puis de bouche ne parla  
     Parole qu'entendre peüst  
 fol. 37r Homs vivans, tant le congneüst;  
 2291 Ne dés lors que ce li avint,  
     Onques puis a li ne revint,  
     Et ne dormoit que sus fumiers,  
     Et de ce estoit coustumiers.  
 2295 Et quant si ami le prenoient  
     Qui en aucun lieu le lioient,  
     Jamais n'i beüst ne menjast.  
     Eins est certain qu'il enrajast,  
     Si qu'il le laissoient de plain  
 2300 A son voloir aler a plain.  
     Mais il ne faisoit a nelui  
     Nul mal, fors seulement a lui.  
     En ce point fu .xx. ans tous plains;  
     S'estoit moult regretez et plains  
 2305 De la gent qui le congoissoient,  
     Dont li pluseur forment plouroient.  
     Si fu bien mis de haut au bas.  
     Se nafferroit pas grans debas  
     A jugier verité certainne,  
 2310 Qu'il ot de grieté et de peinne  
     Plus que cent dames n'avoient  
     Qui leurs amis morir verroient.  
     Quant il vous plait, si resgardez,  
     Et de mesjugier vous gardez!"

**FOY**

- 2315 Adont s'est Foy en piez drecié  
     Comme sage et bien adrecié  
     De droit, de coustume, et d'usage;  
     S'a dit: "Guillaume, le musage  
     Avez bien paié ci endroit,  
 2320 Par dehors la voie de droit,  
     Au mains en aucune partie.  
     S'en vorray faire departie,  
     C'est assavoir, devision  
     Par voie de distinction  
 2325 Des choses qui ne font a croire  
     Et d'aucunes qui la victoire  
     Puelent avoir d'estre creüies  
     Ou pour possible soustenues,

- But he escaped them by force.  
2285 Down to the town he fled.  
He became deaf and dumb,  
And from the time he left that place  
He never spoke again with his mouth  
A word that any living man  
2290 Might understand, however well he knew him.  
Nor from the time this happened  
Did he ever return home;  
Instead he slept on rubbish heaps,  
Becoming accustomed to this.  
2295 And when his friends would restrain him  
And tie him up somewhere,  
He would refuse to eat or drink.  
Instead, and this is certain, he went mad.  
And so they let him go free and clear  
2300 To roam where he liked in the open.  
But he never did any harm  
To any man other than himself.  
Twenty years altogether he remained in this state;  
And he was grieved for and lamented  
2305 By the people who knew him,  
Many of whom wept bitterly.  
So from up high he was pulled down low.  
A long discussion is hardly needed  
To establish a certain truth,  
2310 Namely that he felt more misery and pain  
Than any hundred ladies ever experienced  
Who witnessed the deaths of their lovers.  
When it pleases you, take this into consideration  
And refrain from judging incorrectly.”

**FAITH**

- 2315 Faith immediately got to her feet  
Like someone wise and well schooled  
In law, custom, and practical matters;  
And she said: “Guillaume, you have certainly  
Spent your time here foolishly,  
2320 Straying from the path of justice,  
At least in some respects.  
And I intend to make a discrimination —  
That is to say, a division  
By way of a distinction —  
2325 Between things that do not enforce belief  
And those that are able to achieve  
Being believed  
Or considered possible,

- Dont les unes essausseray  
 2330 Et les autres confonderay,  
       Au los de m'amie Constance,  
       Qui a tous mes contraires tense  
       Et me soutient et fortefie  
       Vers chascun qui en moy se fie.
- 2335 Que cils clers fust de grant vaillance,  
       Gentils homs, et de grant puissance,  
       Renommez de haute noblesse,  
       Et de temporelle richesse  
       Tres habundamment assasez,
- 2340 Espris d'amours et embrasez,  
       Amis de cuer, amez d'amie,  
       Et en l'estat de courtoisie  
       Heüssent fait leur alliance  
       Par tres amiable fiance,
- 2345 Si que les secrez garderoient  
       D'amours, tant comme il viveroient;  
       Qu'a Orlïens fust amainnagiez,  
       En France bien enlinagiez  
       De gens si honnourablement
- 2350 Qu'on ne peüst plus hautement —  
       Ce sont toutes choses possibles.  
       Et dou mal qui fu si horribles,  
       Qui si soudennement li vint  
       Qu'en lisant lettres li avint
- 2355 Et si grandement li dura,  
       Que .xx. ans entiers l'endura —  
       Encor di je qu'il pot bien estre.  
       Car Diex en ce siecle terrestre  
       A mains jugemens si enclos
- 2360 Qu'estre ne porroient esclos  
       D'omme mortel par sa science.  
       Aussi de vostre conscience  
       Avez vous presentement dit  
       De ces lettres par vostre dit
- 2365 Que plus secrez contenoient.  
       Or ne scet on dont il venoient.  
       Dont j'ay en droit .i. point trouvé  
       Que vous n'avez mie prouvé,  
 fol. 37v Que de s'amie li venist.
- 2370 Ceste raison ci defenist  
       Qu'on n'en puet faire nullement  
       A vostre profit jugement.  
       Et se say bien des autres choses  
       Qui seront, se je puis, escloses,

- Of which I would prize the latter  
2330 And put little stock in the former  
At the urging of my friend Constançy,  
Who argues in all my disputes  
And supports my side, giving me strength  
To uphold everyone who trusts in me.
- 2335 That this clerk was of great valor,  
A noble man, and very powerful,  
Renowned for his great gentility,  
And, too, provided quite abundantly  
With worldly goods,
- 2340 Smitten and burning with love,  
A friend of the heart, loved by his beloved;  
And, further, that in all courtliness  
They had formed their liaison  
Through a most loving bond,
- 2345 Keeping the secrets  
Of love as long as they did live;  
Also that he was living in Orleans,  
Well connected by blood to people  
In France with such honor
- 2350 It could not be greater —  
All these things are possible.  
Also, in regard to the quite horrible illness  
That attacked him so suddenly that  
It came upon him as he read the letter
- 2355 And then lasted quite long,  
Enduring twenty years altogether —  
Once again I say this could well be.  
For God has ordained  
So many secret things in this earthly life
- 2360 That could not be explained  
Through the wisdom of mortal man.  
Furthermore, from your own knowledge  
You have just now said  
By your own admission that this letter
- 2365 Contained even more secret matters.  
Now no one knows whence they came,  
And so I have truly found a point  
You have not proved in the least:  
That this was sent to him by his beloved.
- 2370 This reason makes it impossible  
For anyone in any way to decide  
The matter in your favor.  
And I certainly know other things  
That will be discussed, if I can bring it about,

2375 Pour vous dou tout suppediter,  
S'il est qui le sache diter."

### GUILLAUME

“Damoiselle, vueilliez laissier,  
S'il vous plaist, vostre menassier;  
Car ce ne vous puet riens valoir,  
2380 Et il me fait le cuer doloir.”

### CHARITÉ

Charitez adont s'avisa,  
Si a dit: “Foy, entendés sa!  
Je vous vueil dire une merveille.”  
Lors li conseilla en l'oreille  
2385 Ce qu'elle volt, secretement.  
De quoy Foy debonnairement  
Prist un bien petit a sousrire,  
Et en sousriant prist a dire:  
“Charité, damoiselle chiere,  
2390 Liement, de bonne maniere,  
Ceste besongne conterez.  
Trop miex conter la saverez,  
Pour certain, que je ne feroie.  
Vous en estes ja en la voie;  
2395 Car en vous en sentez le fait,  
Se vous pri qu'il soit einsi fait.”

“Foy, ma tres douce chiere amie,  
De ce ne vous faurai je mie,  
Eins en diray ce qu'il m'en samble.  
2400 Car de .ij. personnes ensamble  
Les oppinions en sont bonnes,  
Quant loiaus sont les .ij. personnes.  
Si qu'a Guillaume en parleray  
Et tel chose li moustrareray  
2405 Qu'il se tenra pour recreans,  
S'il n'est trop fols ou mescreans.

Guillaume, or entendés, amis:  
La puissance qui m'a commis  
A estre Charité nommee  
2410 Fait que par ouevre sui prouvee,  
Dont on en voit les apparans  
En tous mes plus prochains parans.  
Ce sont li gentil cuer loial  
Qui entrent en la court roial  
2415 De Bonne Amour qui n'a nul per.

2375 In order to defeat you utterly,  
If someone here can address them."

### GUILLAUME

“Young lady, kindly stop  
Your threatening, if you please,  
For it will profit you nothing  
2380 And grieves my heart.”

### CHARITY

Charity then reflected  
And said: “Faith, listen to this!  
I should like to tell you something extraordinary.”  
And then she whispered in her ear  
2385 Secretly what she had in mind.  
When she heard this, Faith demurely began  
To laugh a little  
And, smiling, started to say:  
“Charity, my dear young lady,  
2390 This matter is something for you to bring up  
Cheerfully and in a pleasant fashion.  
You are better able to recount it,  
— And this is certain — than am I.  
Indeed, you have got a head start  
2395 Because it is something you feel,  
And thus I beg you to do so.”

“Faith, my very sweet and dear friend,  
I will not fail you at all in this,  
But will make known my view,  
2400 For the thoughts of  
Two people together are useful  
When the pair is trustworthy;  
And so I will speak to Guillaume about it,  
Demonstrating to him a particular point  
2405 That will make him acknowledge defeat  
If he is not too foolish or malevolent.

Now, friend Guillaume, listen to this:  
The power that has caused me  
To be called Charity  
2410 Ordains I be proven so through my works,  
And the signs of this are seen  
In all those closest to me.  
They are the noble, faithful hearts  
Who enter the royal court  
2415 Of Good Love, which has no peer.

Or entendez en quoy j'aper:  
 J'aper en souffissans promesses  
 Et en raisonnables largesses,  
 Especiaument par donner  
 2420 Et d'aucuns meffais pardonner;  
 Dont eüreus sont cil qui donnent,  
 Et aussi sont cil qui pardonnent.  
 Or regardons qu'Amours demande  
 Qu'on li doint, et plus ne commande:  
 2425 Elle demande expressement  
 Les cuers des bons entierement.  
 Se demande elle qu'on li doint,  
 Et se vuet aussi qu'on pardoint  
 Aucuns fais, selonc le propos  
 2430 Pourquoy ces raisons ci propos.  
 Se le moustreray par figure  
 Que Bonne Amour en moy figure,  
 Assés briefment, sans prolongier.  
 Uns riches homs ha .i. vergier  
 2435 Ou il a arbres grant planté.  
 Enseurquetout y a planté  
 Une moult tres gracieuze ente  
 Qui au riche homme miex talente  
 Et li est trop plus avenans  
 2440 Que ne soit tous li remenans;  
 Et est einsi de lui amee,  
 Tant comme elle est ente clamee.  
 Or avient que li temps trespassse  
 Tant que li petis jouvens passe;  
 2445 Se montent ses branches au vent  
 Pour entrer en secont jouvent  
 fol. 38r Qui est moiens temps appellés;  
 S'estent ses branches de tous lés,  
 En eslargissant sa biauté  
 2450 Et en acroissant sa bonté  
 Pour traire a la conclusion  
 Qui est dite perfection,  
 Pour li deduire et deporter,  
 Fleurs, fueilles, et bon fruit porter.  
 2455 Or di je einsi qu'il avenra  
 Que li sires demandera  
 Comment celle ente se maintient  
 Et que qualité elle tient.  
 Li jardiniers puet dire: 'Sire,  
 2460 Pour verité, vous en puis dire,  
 Ce m'est avis, bonne nouvelle;  
 Ne demandez plus que fait elle,

- Now note where I appear:  
I am manifest in fulfilled promises  
And reasonable generosity,  
Especially in the bestowing of gifts
- 2420 And the pardoning of any wrongdoing:  
For happy are those who give  
And also those who forgive.  
Let's examine what Love demands  
One give her, and more she does not command.
- 2425 She expressly asks for the hearts  
Of good people to be hers completely.  
She demands this be granted her  
And desires as well that some deeds  
Be pardoned, according to the rule
- 2430 Whose justifications I here propose.  
And I will demonstrate this through a figure  
That Good Love embodies in my own person,  
Doing so briefly and not drawing it out.  
A prominent man owns an orchard
- 2435 In which there are a great many trees.  
Most important, planted in that place  
Is a very graceful grafting  
That appeals more to the rich man  
And pleases him much more
- 2440 Than do all the rest;  
And he has loved her  
As long as she has been called 'grafting.'  
Now it happens that time passes  
Until the youth of the little one ends;
- 2445 Into the wind her limbs reach  
So that she enters into that second age  
That is called the middle years,  
As her branches extend on all sides  
While they enlarge her beauty
- 2450 And increase her goodness  
In order to draw toward the goal  
That is termed perfection  
So as to delight and amuse him  
By bearing flowers, leaves, and fine fruit.
- 2455 At this moment, it will happen, I suggest,  
That the lord will ask  
How the grafting is doing  
And what her condition is.  
The gardener might then say: 'Sire,
- 2460 I can truly tell you  
What seems to me good news about her;  
Ask no longer how she is doing,

Mais demandez me bien qu'il fait,  
Car vostre ente .i. arbre parfait,  
2465 Et en tel guise se deporte  
Que flours, fueilles, et bon fruit porte,  
Dont perdu a d'ente le nom,  
Et d'aubre a recouvré le nom,  
Sous qui on se puet ombroier  
2470 Plaisamment et esbanier.'

Or vueil je chanter et respondre  
Pour miex m'entention espondre,  
Dont je vueil faire une demande:  
Se de la chose qui amende  
2475 On doit avoir cuer esperdu,  
S'elle a .i. petit nom perdu  
Pour .i. plus grant nom recouvrer,  
Par nature ou par bien ouvrer?  
Je respon qu'einsi n'est il mie;  
2480 Car ce seroit grant derverie.

Mais ce qu'on aimme chierement  
Ou a acheté chierement,  
Qui le verroit dou tout perir,  
Si que ja ne peüst garir,  
2485 Venir en porroit tel meschief  
Qu'on y metteroit bien le chief  
Et tout le corps entierement.  
Je le say bien certainnement  
Que pluseurs einsi l'i ont mis,  
2490 Tant amie com vrais amis.

Or vueil dou propre fait parler  
Pour quoy j'ay meü mon parler.  
Celle damoiselle jolie  
Qui estoit a ce clerc amie.  
2495 C'estoit li ente faitissette  
Comme une douce pucelette  
En grant vergier d'Amours plantee.  
La pot estre si eslevee  
Et de branches si estendue  
2500 Et de fueilles si bien vestue,  
De fleurs si cointement paree,  
Comme estre aus milleurs comparee.  
Si me vueil .i. po aviser  
Pour les parties deviser:  
2505 Branches de bonne renommee,  
Fueilles d'estre bel emparlee,  
Fleurs d'avoir la condition  
D'onneste conversation,  
Tant d'abit comme de maintien.

- But rather how he does,  
For your grafting is a perfect tree
- 2465 And in such estate takes great delight  
In bearing flowers, leaves, and fine fruit,  
And thus has lost the name of "grafting"  
And gained that of "tree,"  
Under which one can find shade
- 2470 And relax quite pleasantly.'  
Now I will sing and respond as well  
In order to make my meaning clearer,  
And in this regard I will ask the following question:  
Should one grieve at heart
- 2475 For that which improves,  
If she has lost an insignificant name  
Either through nature or good works  
In order to gain a much greater title?  
I answer no, not at all,
- 2480 For this would be terrible foolishness.  
But whatever a man loves dearly  
Or has bought at a high price,  
Were he to see it completely perish,  
And it were not possible to save it,
- 2485 Grievous misfortune might be his lot,  
And he might lose his head,  
Indeed his whole self.  
I know this as a fact  
Because some have done so,
- 2490 True lovers as much as beloveds.  
Now I will say something about the issue  
That has moved me to speak.  
This beautiful maiden  
Who was the clerk's beloved,
- 2495 Was the graceful scion  
Planted like a sweet young girl  
Within the magnificent orchard of Love.  
There she could grow up so much,  
Her branches extended so far,
- 2500 So finely clad with leaves,  
So cunningly adorned with flowers  
That she compared to the very best.  
Now for a moment I wish to reflect  
In order to describe these parts:
- 2505 The branches of good reputation;  
The leaves of being well spoken of;  
The flowers of having the ability  
To conduct proper dealings with others,  
In her appearance as much as in her actions.

- 2510 En cest estat dist: 'Amis, tien;  
 Je te doing, pour toy deporter  
 Grace dou fruit d'onneur porter.'  
 Lors pluseurs pensees li viennent  
 Qui de neccessité couviennent:  
 2515 Pour li entrer en mariage  
 Par le conseil de son linage.  
 S'elle le fait, ce n'est pas fais  
 Dont cils doie enchargier tel fais  
 Comme de lui desesperer.  
 2520 Eins doit penser et esperer  
 Qu'elle y a profit et honneur  
 Quant en la grace dou signeur  
 Seroit de droit nommee dame.  
 Ceste raison bon cuer enflame  
 2525 D'amer miex assez que devant.  
 Pourquoy je di d'ore en avant  
 fol. 38v Que cils ne l'amoit pas pour bien.  
 Vraient, il y parut bien  
 Quant Bonne Amour li volt souffrir,  
 2530 Son corps a tel martire offrir.  
 Plus n'en di, Guillaume, biau sire.  
 Dites ce qu'il vous plaist a dire."

### GUILLAUME

- “Charité, se Diex me doint joie,  
 Bien avez par soutille voie  
 2535 Pluseurs propos par biaus mos dis.  
 Mais je ne voy pas en vos dis  
 Que vous m'aiez de riens puny.  
 J'ay mon procés aussi uny  
 Comme devant et aussi ferme  
 2540 En son estat; par quoy j'afferme  
 Que ja ne sera abatus,  
 Se d'autres mos ne suis batus.  
 .I. point y a qui gist en prueve,  
 Par quoy il convenra qu'on prueve  
 2545 Le contraire de mes paroles,  
 Ou je ne tenray qu'a frivoles  
 Ce que devant avez compté,  
 Nonobstant vostre grant bonté  
 Et que pour grant bien l'avez fait,  
 2550 Pour auctorisier vostre fait  
 Et pour le mien suppediter.  
 Se vueil un petit reciter  
 De ce cler qui fu vrais amis  
 Et puis en tel grieté sousmis,

- 2510 In this condition, she says: 'Friend, take this.  
I give you for your enjoyment  
The favor of bearing the fruit of honor.'  
Then come to him many thoughts  
Born of necessity:  
2515 To have her married  
According to the advice of her family.  
If she does so, he should not  
Worry about it so much that  
He begins to despair.  
2520 Instead, he ought to wish and hope  
It profits and honors her  
When through a lord's favor  
She is rightfully called a lady.  
This reason encourages the virtuous heart  
2525 To love far better than before.  
So from this point on I maintain  
He did not love her with a good intention.  
Surely this is quite apparent  
Since Good Love wants him to suffer,  
2530 Offering his body to such torment.  
Guillaume, fair sir, I'll say no more about it.  
Say whatever you wish."

### GUILLAUME

- “Charity, so God give me joy,  
You have ably and in a subtle fashion  
2535 Brought up several points — and with pretty words.  
But I do not see that what you've said  
Has done me any damage at all.  
I have a brief as consistent  
And compelling as before  
2540 In its evidence; and so I maintain  
I shall never be defeated  
Unless confronted with other arguments.  
One point remains established  
That makes it necessary for someone to prove  
2545 The opposite of what I say;  
If not, I will consider only as inconsequential  
All you have brought up,  
Notwithstanding your great goodness  
And that you have done this in a worthy cause,  
2550 To lend your opinion authority  
And denigrate my own.  
So I intend to say a little something  
About the clerk who was a true lover  
And then plunged into such misfortune

- 2555 Comme j'ay dit, .xx. ans entiers.  
 Or prouvez seulement le tiers:  
 Qu'onques nulle dame souffrist,  
 Tant son corps a la mort offrist;  
 Prouvez ce point tant seulement,  
 2560 Mais vous ne porriés nullement."

### L'ACTEUR

- Charitez volt après parler,  
 Et pour apointier son parler,  
 Elle avoit ja la bouche ouverte.  
 Mais Honnesté fu si aperte  
 2565 Que tantost fu aparillie  
 Et dist: "Charité, douce amie,  
 Que je die, mais qu'il vous plaise;  
 Que je ne seray jamais aaise  
 Se n'aie je dit mon talent  
 2570 Pour lui faire le cuer dolent."  
 Charitez bien s'i acorda,  
 Et puis Honnesté recorda  
 S'entention par voie honnestete,  
 Dont toute la court fist grant feste.

### HONNESTÉ

- 2575 S'a dit: "Guillaume, or entendez:  
 Pour la fin a quoy vous tendez,  
 Fondez estes petitement.  
 Se vous dirai raison comment.  
 Voirs est que grans grief li avint  
 2580 Et en petit d'eure li vint.  
 Mais tantost, celle heure passee,  
 Sa grant griété fu trespasssee.  
 Car combien que long temps dura,  
 Onques puis griété n'endura  
 2585 Qui point feist a son cuer touche.  
 Et s'aucuns griés au cuer li touche,  
 Il n'i a point de sentement,  
 Dés qu'il n'i a consentement.  
 C'est chose assez legiere a croire.  
 2590 Il avoit perdu sa memoire,  
 Sens, maniere, et entendement;  
 Dont on puet veoir clerement  
 Qu'il n'avoit point de volenté,  
 Fors que le cuer entalenté  
 2595 Des grans soties qu'il faisoit.  
 Quant en .i. fumier se gisoit,  
 C'estoit sa pais; c'estoit ses lis;

- 2555 For twenty full years, as I have related.  
Now prove to me only the third of these points:  
That any lady ever suffered  
So terribly she offered her body to death.  
Prove this point alone,  
2560 But this you will not be able to do."

### THE AUTHOR

- This Charity then wanted to say something,  
And she had her mouth already open  
To give shape to her speech.  
But Honesty was so quick  
2565 She was ready even faster  
And said: "Charity, sweet friend,  
Let me speak, if you please;  
For I will never be satisfied  
If I do not speak my mind  
2570 In order to trouble his heart."  
Charity was in complete agreement,  
And then Honesty presented  
Her view in an honest fashion,  
And this the court warmly welcomed.

### HONESTY

- 2575 And she said: "Guillaume, now listen:  
You have laid little foundation  
For the point you're trying to establish.  
And I will tell you why.  
It is true enough he experienced  
2580 A great misfortune that came suddenly on him.  
But immediately, that moment past,  
His terrible troubles were gone as well.  
Even though it may last long,  
A grief that pierces right to the heart  
2585 Will never endure beyond its time.  
And if any sorrow touches his heart,  
There can be no emotion  
Unless there is consent.  
This principle is easy enough to credit.  
2590 He had lost his memory,  
Reason, bearing, and understanding;  
Thus it can be clearly seen  
He had no will at all,  
Only a heart eager for  
2595 The incredible foolishness he was doing.  
When he lay down on a dung heap,  
That was his peace, his bed.

C'estoit de tous poins ses delis,  
 Ou il dormoit a grant repos.  
 2600 Encor y a autre propos  
 Que vous meïsmes dit avez.  
 C'est certain, et bien le savez,  
 Que, quant si amy le prenoient  
 fol. 39r Et en aucuns lieus l'enfermoient,  
 2605 Jamais n'i beüst ne mengast,  
 Einsois trestous vis enragast,  
 Qui le retenist malgré lui;  
 Il n'en feüst rien pour nelui  
 Et vivoit a plain comme beste.  
 2610 C'estoit vie trop deshonneste,  
 Honteuse s'il en tenist conte;  
 Mais point ne congnoissoit de honte.  
 Dont j'ay assez mon fait prouvé  
 Et vostre tort bien reprové  
 2615 Par .i. seul point qui me remort.  
 De dame qui savera mort  
 Son amy, sera plus cent tans  
 En .i. jour que cils en cent ans,  
 De griété par .i. si fait trait  
 2620 Com ci devant avez retrait.  
 Guillaume, se vous soufferez,  
 Ou d'un autre point parlerez  
 Car de cestui estes vaincus,  
 Ne vous y puet valoir escus.”

### GUILLAUME

2625 “Honesté, pour voir, non feray.  
 Encor .i. po en parleray,  
 Car je m'ay bien de quoy deffendre  
 Mais que vous le vueilliez entendre.  
 Quant tout le sens de lui perdi  
 2630 Pour le mal qu'a lui s'aërdi  
 Qui dou tout le deshonnoura,  
 Plus perdi, meins li demoura.  
 Vous dites que mal ne sentoit,  
 Pour ce que desvoiez estoit  
 2635 De maniere et d'entendement;  
 Mais il est bien tout autrement:  
 Car avant que homs son sens perde,  
 Ne que forsens a lui s'aërdi,  
 Le prent et seurprend maladie  
 2640 Qui le trait a forcenerie.  
 Si vueil faire .i. po d'argument  
 Qui vous moustrera vivement

- In every way, that was his delight,  
A place where he slept deeply.
- 2600 There is yet another matter  
You have yourself brought up.  
It is certain — and well you know it —  
That when his friends restrained him  
And in different places locked him up,
- 2605 He never ate or drank,  
But, instead, continually raged at  
Whoever held him again his will;  
He did nothing for anyone  
And lived in the open like an animal.
- 2610 His was a quite disgraceful life,  
Shameful had he taken account of it;  
But he felt no shame at all.  
So I have proved my point sufficiently  
And reproved your wrong opinion
- 2615 By the single point I have brought up.  
And a lady who comes to know  
The death of her lover will find more than a hundred times  
The suffering in a single day than will that man  
In a century through such a blow
- 2620 As you have described here above.  
Guillaume, you will either suffer  
Or you will bring up another point  
Because you are defeated in this one,  
And it is not worth a penny to you.”

**GUILLAUME**

- 2625 “Honesty, in truth, I will not do so.  
I will speak a little more about this issue,  
Since I have much with which to defend myself  
If you would please hear me out.  
When he lost all his senses
- 2630 Because of the pain that assailed him  
And deprived him of all the honor he had,  
He lost much more than what little he retained.  
You say he did not feel any pain  
Because he was disoriented
- 2635 In his behavior and understanding.  
But it is certainly quite otherwise  
Because, before a man can lose his mind  
Or madness afflict him,  
An illness grips and seizes him
- 2640 That drives him to madness.  
Now I will argue this briefly  
In order to demonstrate vividly to you

Comment m'entente prouveray  
 Dou droit que pour moy trouveray.  
 2645 Quant .ij. causes sont assamblees  
 Qui se sont a .i. corps fermees,  
 Celle qui vient premierement,  
 Elle attrait le commencement  
 Dés ce point par la premerainne,  
 2650 Pour ce que c'est la souvereinne.  
 Et qui la premiere osteroit,  
 La seconde s'en partiroit.  
 Or puelent dire tel y a:  
 'Guillaume, *verbi gracia*,  
 2655 A entendre si comme quoy?'  
 Vesci en l'eure le pourquoy:  
 Nous veons .i. chien qui enrage,  
 De quel cause li vient la rage?  
 D'un ver qui la langue li perse.  
 2660 Or est la cause si desperse  
 Qu'il pert le boire et le mengier,  
 Et puis le couvient enragier.  
 Or est dont li commencemens  
 De quoy vient li enragemens.  
 2665 Et quant il en pert l'abaier,  
 Adont se puet on esmaier  
 Dés ce point que la gent ne morde.  
 Et que de ce miex nous remorde,  
 Je vous en diray qu'il avint  
 2670 D'un chien qui enragiez devint,  
 Amez en l'ostel d'un riche homme.  
 Or entendez s'orrez la somme.  
 Li riches homs ot oy dire  
 Dont venoient si fait martire  
 2675 S'en volt veoir l'experience  
 Pour miex avoir en connoissance.  
 Se fist son chien par force prendre,  
 Loier, bersillier, et estendre  
 Et sa langue sachier a plain,  
 2680 Tant qu'on vit le ver tout a plain.  
 Lors fu li vers fors esrachiez;  
 Et quant il fu a plain sachiez,  
 fol. 39v Les mains celui prist a lechier  
 Cui il ot senti atouchier;  
 2685 Et fu la garis de tous poins.  
 Aussi di je que cils cler poins  
 Fu d'une maladie obscure;  
 Dont je vous di que la pointure  
 Dou grant mal que ses corps sentoit

- What proof I can offer for my view  
In order to gain the judgment for myself.
- 2645 When two causes are brought together  
And manifest themselves within a single body,  
The one that arises first  
Sets things into motion  
Because it has the first effect
- 2650 And therefore it is the chief cause.  
And if someone removes the first cause,  
Then the second disappears of its own accord.  
Now some might say:  
'Guillaume, *verbi gracia*,
- 2655 But what is your point?'  
Here, right now, is the explanation.  
We witness a dog going mad;  
But what brings on this madness?  
It's from a worm that pierces his tongue.
- 2660 Afterward the cause spreads so widely  
He loses the ability to drink and eat,  
And then must go mad.  
This is then the first cause  
From which the madness derives.
- 2665 And when for this reason the dog cannot bark,  
That's the time to take care  
He does not bite people.  
Now to bring this point home better,  
I'll talk about what happened to
- 2670 A dog that did go mad,  
One that was loved in a rich man's home.  
Listen now to the crux of the matter.  
The rich man had heard spoken about  
The cause of such a malady
- 2675 And wished to see it for himself,  
The better to learn about it.  
So he had his dog taken by force,  
Tied up, tightly bound, and spread-eagled,  
And then its tongue pulled completely out
- 2680 So that the worm could be plainly seen.  
Then the worm was extracted;  
And when it had been fully drawn out,  
The dog began to lick the hands  
Of the man he had felt touch him;
- 2685 And it was entirely cured.  
And so I affirm that this was the obvious  
Cause of an obscure malady;  
Therefore I maintain that the attack  
Of grievous illness the man's body suffered

2690 Le tenoit en point qu'il estoit.  
 Dont mes drois est assez prouvez  
 Et vostres grans tors reprovez."

### L'ACTEUR

Aprés s'est Franchise levee  
 Q'ne fu pas trop effraee;  
 2695 Et s'ot bon vueil et bonne chiere,  
 Et tres gracieuse maniere.  
 Si encommensa a parler  
 Et dist einsi en son parler:

### FRANCHISE

"On a veu generalement  
 2700 Toudis en amer loiaument  
 Que les dames se sont portees  
 Miex et plus loiaument gardees  
 Que les hommes en tous endrois.  
 Je le vueil prouver — and c'est drois —  
 2705 Par exemples que je vueil dire  
 Pour ce qu'il font a ma matire.

Quant cil d'Athennes eurent mort  
 Androgeüs, si grant remort  
 En ot Minos, li rois de Crete,  
 2710 Que par voie sage et discrete,  
 Par force d'armes et de guerre  
 Fist essillier toute leur terre.  
 Et les mist tous pour cest outrage  
 Minos en si mortel servage,  
 2715 Que tous les ans li envoient  
 .I. homme; mais il sortissoient,  
 Et cil seur qui li sors cheoit  
 Trop mortelment li mescheoit.  
 Car li rois Minos devouer  
 2720 Le faisoit la sans demourer  
 Par un moustre trop mervilleus,  
 Trop felon, et trop perilleus.  
 Mais nuls ne se doit mervillier  
 Se Minos volt ad ce veillier,  
 2725 Ne s'il en fu fort esmeüs,  
 Car peres fu Androgeüs.  
 Or avint que li sors cheï  
 Seur Theseüs, qui esbahi  
 Pluseurs; car il fu fils le roy,  
 2730 Preuz, vaillans, et de bel arroy.  
 Mais pour la mort Endrogeüs

2690 Kept him in the condition he was in;  
And so my point is quite adequately proved  
And your grievous error corrected."

### THE AUTHOR

After this, Frankness stood up  
And was not very timid;  
2695 She had good will and a pleasant expression,  
And her manner was gracious.  
Then she started to speak  
And said the following in her remarks:

### FRANKNESS

"It has been in most places — and always —  
2700 Observed about true loving  
That women have conducted themselves better  
And have remained more faithful in it  
Than men everywhere.  
This I think to prove — and it's right to do so —  
2705 With some instances I intend to relate  
Because they are relevant to my theme.

When those of Athens had put Androgeus  
To death, Minos, the king of Crete,  
Felt such bitterness on this account  
2710 That by wise and prudent means,  
Through the force of arms and war,  
He made desolate all their land.  
And because of this outrage, Minos  
Forced a deadly service upon them,  
2715 That every year they were to send him  
One man; but they were to cast lots  
And for that man upon whom the lot fell  
It was a quite fatal mischance.  
For King Minos would have him  
2720 Devoured there without delay  
By a monster quite strange,  
Very malevolent, and dangerous too.  
But no one ought to wonder  
If Minos wished to oversee all this,  
2725 Or if he were strongly moved to do so,  
Because he was the father of Androgeus.  
Now it happened that the lot fell  
On Theseus, and this dismayed  
Many, for he was the son of the king,  
2730 A noble man, valiant, and of fair appearance.  
But because of the death of Androgeus,

- Ala en Crete Theseüs  
 Pour lui faire estrangler au moustre  
 Se sa prouesse ne li moustre  
 2735 Si qu'envers lui se puist deffendre;  
 Autrement puet la mort attendre.  
 Et se Diex li donne victoire,  
 Il acquerra honneur et gloire,  
 Car ceuls d'Athennes franchira  
 2740 Et le servage acquitera.  
 Mais riens n'i vausist, fer ne fust,  
 Se belle Adriane ne fust,  
 Qui oublia Minos, son pere,  
 Et Androgeüs, son chier frere,  
 2745 Sa terre et ses charnels amis  
 Pour Theseüs, ou elle a mis  
 Son cuer, si qu'elle li moustra  
 Comment occis le fier moustre a  
 Pour lui delivrer dou servage;  
 2750 Et li donna son pucelage  
 Par si qu'a femme la penroit  
 Et qu'en son païs l'en menroit  
 Avec Phedra, sa chiere suer,  
 Qu'elle ne lairoit a nul fuer.  
 2755 Theseüs, qui se parjura  
 Ses diex et sa loy, li jura  
 Que jamais ne li fausseroit  
 Et qu'envers li loiaus seroit.  
 Il se menti, li renoiez.  
 fol. 40r Pour quoy ne fu en mer noiez?  
 2761 Quant sa besongne ot assevie,  
 Il les charge en sa navie.  
 Mais vers li mesprist si forment  
 Qu'Adriane laissa dormant  
 2765 Seulette en estrange contree,  
 Lasse, dolente, et esgaree,  
 Et en mena la juene touse,  
 Phedra sa suer, s'en fist s'espouse.  
 Ci a trop mortel traïson.  
 2770 Aussi dirai je de Jason,  
 Qui conquist par l'art de Medee  
 En Colcos la toison doree,  
 Et sormonta, li bourdereaus,  
 L'ardant soufflement des toreaus,  
 2775 S'endormi le serpent veillable,  
 Seur toute beste espoventable,  
 Et desconfit les chevaliers  
 Armez, a cens et a milliers.

- Theseus went to Crete  
To have himself killed by the monster  
If he should not manifest his prowess  
2735 And prove able to defend himself against him.  
Otherwise he could expect death.  
And if God should grant him victory,  
He would acquire honor and glory,  
For he would free the Athenians  
2740 And acquit them of their servitude.  
Yet nothing would have availed him, wood or iron,  
Had it not been for beautiful Ariadne,  
Who forgot about Minos, her father,  
And Androgeus, her dear brother,  
2745 Her land, and her blood relations,  
For the sake of Theseus, to whom she gave  
Her heart, and so she showed him  
How to kill the proud monster  
In order to deliver himself from bondage.  
2750 And she gave him her maidenhood  
So he would make her his wife  
And take her to his own country  
Along with Phaedra, her beloved sister,  
Whom she would leave behind on no account.  
2755 Theseus, perjuring himself,  
Swore to her by his gods and law  
He would never prove false  
And always be faithful to her.  
He lied saying this, the traitor.  
2760 Why wasn't he drowned in the sea?  
After completing his mission,  
He embarked them on his ships.  
But he grievously betrayed her  
When he left Ariadne asleep  
2765 And all alone in a strange land,  
Abandoned, sorrowing, and deceived,  
And led off the young girl,  
Her sister Phaedra, and made her his wife.  
This betrayal was quite fatal.  
2770 Also, I will talk about Jason,  
Who took by force through Medea's arts  
The golden fleece of Colchis,  
And that trickster overcame  
The fiery breath of the bulls,  
2775 Put to sleep the guardian dragon,  
More dreadful than any other beast,  
And defeated the armed knights  
In their hundreds and thousands.

- 2780 Mais nuls ce faire ne peüst  
 Se Medea fait ne l'eüst.  
 Son païs laissa et son pere,  
 Et fit decoper son chier frere.  
 Pelie occist a grant desroy,  
 Et tout, pour Jason faire roy.
- 2785 Quanqu'elle ot, li abandonna;  
 S'amour et s'onneur li donna.  
 Mais Jason Medea laissa  
 Pour Creusa, dont moult s'abaissa,  
 Et mervilleusement mesprist
- 2790 Quant la laissa et autre prist.  
 Et quant elle sot la nouvelle,  
 Qui ne li fu plaisant ne belle,  
 Elle fu si desesperee,  
 Si hors dou sens, si forsenee,
- 2795 Que .ij. enfans qui sien estoient  
 Pour ce que Jason ressambloient,  
 Occist en despit de Jason,  
 Puis mist le feu en sa maison.  
 Aprés s'en ala la chetive
- 2800 O ses dragons par l'air fuitive.  
 Mais puis en estranges contrees  
 Furent roïnes coronnees.  
 Car roys d'Athennes Egeüs  
 Fu de Medee deceüs;
- 2805 Bacus Adriane honnoura  
 Fort, car en li grant amour a.  
 Cil dui les dames espouserent  
 En leur païs et coronnerent.
- 2810 Si que, Guillaume, c'est la somme:  
 On ne porroit trouver en homme  
 Si grant loyauté comme en femme,  
 Ne jamais d'amoureuse flame  
 Ne seroient si fort espris  
 Comme seroit dame de pris.
- 2815 Car quant il y a meins d'amour,  
 Il y a tant meins de dolour  
 Puis que ce vient a mal sentir.  
 Ne je ne me puis assentir  
 Qu'en endurant les maus d'amer
- 2820 Que homs ait tant com dame d'amer.  
 Et si a de remedes cent  
 Li homs tels que fame ne sent."

- But no man could have accomplished all this  
2780 Had Medea not done it for him.  
She deserted her country and father,  
Had her brother dear cut to pieces.  
Because of her great foolishness, she killed Pelia.  
And this all was to make Jason king.  
2785 Whatever she owned, she gave him freely;  
Her honor and love she bestowed upon him.  
But Jason abandoned Medea  
For Creusa, demeaning himself greatly  
And sinning grievously  
2790 When he left her and took up with the other woman.  
When Medea learned the news,  
Hardly pleasant or appealing to her,  
She was so desperate,  
So insane, so crazed,  
2795 She killed her own  
Two children to spite Jason  
Because they resembled him;  
And then she torched her own house.  
Afterward the wretched woman fled  
2800 Through the air with her serpents.  
But later in foreign lands  
These women were crowned queens.  
For Aegeus, the king of Athens,  
Was beguiled by Medea;  
2805 Bacchus honored Ariadne  
Greatly, for he dearly loved her.  
These two married the women  
In their own countries and crowned them.
- And so, Guillaume, that is the gist.  
2810 Loyalty as great as that of women  
Cannot be found in any man,  
Nor would men ever be as deeply  
Inflamed by the spark of love  
As a worthy lady would.  
2815 For when there is less love,  
There is that much less suffering  
Because it comes from feeling pain.  
And I cannot agree  
That, enduring the ills of love,  
2820 Any man would feel as much as a woman.  
And the man has a hundred  
Remedies unavailable to women."

**GUILLAUME**

“Damoiselle, la traïson  
 De Theseüs ne de Jason  
 2825 Ne fait riens a nostre matiere,  
 Ne ce n'est mie la premiere  
 Ne la darreinne fausseté  
 Qui es amoureus ha esté,  
 Autant es fames comme es hommes.  
 2830 Ne je ne donroie .ij. pommes  
 De vostre entention prouver  
 Par si fais exemples trouver.  
 Car se mon fait prouver voloie  
 Par exemples, j'en trouveroie  
 2835 Plus de .x., voire plus de .xx.  
 Chascuns scet bien ce qu'il avint  
 De l'amy a la Chasteleinne  
 De Vergi: d'amours si certainne  
 fol. 40v L'ama qu'il s'ocist sans demour  
 2840 Quant morte la vit pour s'amour.

Li bons Lancelos et Tristans  
 Eurent plus de peinne .x. tans  
 Que femme ne porroit souffrir,  
 Tant se peüst a peinne offrir,  
 2845 Et cent fois furent plus loiaus  
 Que Jason ne fu desloiaus,  
 Ne Theseüs, qui trop mesprist  
 D'Adriane quant Phedra prist.  
 Encor vueil d'un autre compter  
 2850 Se vous me volez escouter.

Une dame sans villonnie  
 D'un chevalier estoit amie,  
 Si li donna .i. anelet  
 Trop gent (ne fu villein ne let),  
 2855 Par si qu'adés le porteroit  
 Et que jamais ne l'osteroit  
 De son doy s'elle ne l'ostoit.  
 Et li chevaliers, qui estoit  
 Tous siens, bonnement li promist,  
 2860 Et la dame en son doy le mist.  
 Or avint qu'elle avoit mari  
 Qui ot le cuer triste et mari;  
 Car l'anel a recongnëu  
 Pour ce qu'autre fois l'ot vëu.  
 2865 Si l'ala tantost demander  
 A la dame et li comander

**GUILLAUME**

“Young lady, the treason  
Of either Theseus or Jason  
2825 Has nothing to do with our issue,  
And that was hardly the first  
Or last betrayal  
There’s been with lovers,  
As often with women as with men.  
2830 And I wouldn’t give two apples  
For proving your point  
By bringing up such examples.  
For if I intended to establish my case  
By examples, I would find  
2835 More than ten, indeed more than twenty of them.  
Everyone knows well what happened  
To the lover of the Chatelaine  
De Vergy: he loved her with a love  
So certain he killed himself unhesitatingly  
2840 When he saw her dead for the sake of his love.

Virtuous Lancelot and Tristan  
Endured ten times more pain  
Than any woman could suffer,  
As much as she could subject herself to it,  
2845 And they were a hundred times more loyal  
Than Jason was disloyal,  
Or Theseus either, who sinned greatly  
Against Ariadne when he seduced Phaedra.  
Still, I wish to tell of another  
2850 If you are willing to listen to me.

A lady was loved  
By a knight without any baseness,  
And she gave him a ring that was  
Quite beautiful (it was neither cheap nor ugly),  
2855 On the condition he always wear  
And never remove it  
From his finger unless she did.  
And the knight, who was  
Hers completely, promised this in good faith,  
2860 And then the lady put it on his finger.  
Now it happened she had a husband  
Whose heart was gloomy and vexed  
Because he recognized the ring,  
Having seen it another time.  
2865 So he went at once to ask  
The woman and command her

Qu'elle li baille en la place  
 Seur peinne de perdre sa grace.  
 La dame dist qu'elle l'avoit,  
 2870 Mais ou, pas bien ne le savoit.  
 Si fist samblant de l'aler querre  
 Et, en deffermant une serre,  
 Comme dame avisée et sage,  
 Dist a un sien privé message:  
 2875 'Va sans arrest a mon ami  
 Et se li di que mal pour my  
 Se mon anel ne me renvoie.  
 Et ne demeure pas seur voie,  
 Car mon signeur le vuet avoir  
 2880 Sans nul essoinne recevoir.  
 Di li bien qu'il n'en faille mie.  
 Car s'il en faut, je sui honnie  
 Et en peril de perdre honneur  
 Et la grace de mon signeur.'  
 2885 Li messages n'atendi pas,  
 Eins s'en ala plus que le pas  
 Au chevalier et tout li conte  
 Ce que devant ai dit en conte.  
 Quant li chevaliers l'entendi,  
 2890 A po li cuers ne li fendi,  
 Car il ot paour que sa dame  
 Honte pour li n'eüst ou blasme.  
 Si dist: 'Amis, foy que li doy,  
 Avuec l'anel ara mon doy,  
 2895 Car ja par moy n'en partira.'  
 Si que lors .i. coutel tira,  
 Son doi copa, et li tramist  
 Aveques l'anel qu'elle y mist.  
 Puet on faire plus loiaument  
 2900 Riens, ne plus amoureusement?  
 Certes, nennil! Ce m'est avis.  
 Car trop fu loiaus ses amis,  
 Si que bien oseroie attendre  
 Vray jugement sans plus contendre,  
 2905 Qu'on les doit plus auctorisier  
 Et en tous estas plus prisier  
 Que les dames, de qui parole  
 Tenez que je tien a frivole,  
 Qu'on dit — et vous le savez bien —  
 2910 Que par tout doit veincre le bien.  
 Et cil furent bon et loial  
 Tenu en toute court roial,  
 Comment que les dames feïssent

- To furnish it on the spot  
On pain of losing his favor.  
The lady said she had it,  
2870 But where, she did not really know.  
So she made a show of going to look for it  
And, opening a drawer,  
Like a cunning and sharp woman  
Spoke this secret message to one of her people:  
2875 'Go directly to my lover  
And tell him I am in for a bad time  
Unless he sends my ring back;  
And do not delay along the way,  
For my master wishes to have it  
2880 Without hearing excuses.  
Make it clear he shouldn't fail me.  
For if he does, I am shamed  
And in danger of losing my honor  
And the favor of my lord.'  
2885 The messenger did not delay at all,  
But proceeded faster than a walk  
To the knight and told him everything  
I related earlier in my tale.  
When the knight heard this,  
2890 His heart nearly broke  
Because he feared his lady  
Might be dishonored or accused on his account.  
So he said: 'Friend, by the faith I owe her,  
She will have my finger along with the ring,  
2895 For I will not remove it.'  
So then he took out a knife,  
Cut off his finger, and sent it to her  
Along with the ring she had put there.  
Could anyone do something more loyal  
2900 Than this, or more loving?  
Surely, not at all. Such is my view.  
For her lover was very trustworthy,  
And so I should very much dare expect  
A judgment of truth with no more debate,  
2905 For men should have more respect  
And in every case be counted superior  
To women, whose words  
You maintain that I consider frivolous,  
Because as everyone says — and this you know well —  
2910 Virtue should triumph everywhere.  
And these men were considered  
Virtuous and loyal in every royal court,  
However much the ladies did for their lovers

Moult pour leurs amis et souffrissent.  
 2915 Mais on dit — et c'est veritez —  
 Qu'adés les .ij. extremitez,  
 C'est trop et po. Einsi l'enten ge:  
 Ne doivent recevoir loange;  
 fol. 41r Mais qui en l'amoureus loien  
 2920 Est loiez s'il tient le moiен  
 Il ouevre bien et sagement.  
 Et li sages dist qui ne ment  
 Qu'adés li bonnetüreus tiennent  
 Le moiен partout ou il viennent.”

### PRUDENCE

2925 A ce Prudence respondi,  
 Qui riens n'enclot ne repondi  
 A la matiere appartenant,  
 Et dist: “Guillaume, maintenant  
 Voy je bien vostre entention;  
 2930 Mais j'ay contraire opinion  
 Qui de la vostre est trop lontainne.  
 On scet bien que la Chastelainne  
 Fu morte pour .i. bacheler  
 Pour ce qu'il ne la sot celer.  
 2935 Car il dist toute leur besongne  
 A la Duchesse de Bourgoingne.  
 Et la Duchesse moult mesprist,  
 Qu'a une feste li reprist  
 Qu'elle savoit bien le mestier  
 2940 Dou petit chiennet affaitier.  
 S'en morut en disant 'aymi'  
 Par le deffaut de son ami.  
 Et quant li amis vit s'amie  
 Par sa gengle morte et perie,  
 2945 S'il s'ocist, il fist son devoir,  
 Qu'autre mort deüst recevoir,  
 N'il ne fist fors meins que justice.  
 S'il s'ocist pour punir son vice;  
 Qu'avoir le dehüssent detrait  
 2950 Chevaus enragiez pour ce trait.  
 Si m'est vis que la Chastelainne  
 Ot plus de meschief et de peinne  
 Quant sans cause reçut la mort,  
 Que n'ot cils qui se fu la mort  
 2955 Qui avoit desservi le pendre;  
 Et pour ce en fu sa dolour mendre.

- And no matter how much they suffered.  
2915 But people say — and true it is —  
It's always one extreme or the other,  
Too much or too little. This is how I see it:  
These extremes are not worthy of praise.  
However, anyone caught in the snares  
2920 Of love who shows moderation  
Acts wisely and well.  
And the sage, a man who does not lie, says  
The fortunate hold to the middle path  
Wherever they go."

**PRUDENCE**

- 2925 Prudence responded to this,  
And she neither implicated nor involved herself  
In the issue at hand.  
And this lady said: "Guillaume, now  
I see well your intention.  
2930 But I hold a contrary view,  
One very different from yours.  
It is well known that the Chatelaine  
Died for the sake of a young man  
Because he could not keep her secret.  
2935 Instead, he related all their affair  
To the Duchess of Burgundy.  
And the Duchess did a terrible thing  
When at a feast she let it slip  
She knew all about the business  
2940 Of the trickery with the little dog.  
So the Chatelaine died saying 'alas'  
Because of her lover's error.  
And when the lover saw his beloved  
Dead and undone because of his gossiping,  
2945 If he killed himself, he did what he should,  
For he deserved to suffer another kind of death  
And did nothing but what was just  
When he killed himself to punish his misdeed;  
For they should have had wild horses  
2950 Tear him to pieces for what he'd done.  
So it is my view the Chatelaine  
Suffered more misfortune and hurt  
When she had to die for no reason  
Than did the young man who killed himself  
2955 And deserved to hang;  
For this reason his torment was less.

Et se Tristans ou Lancelos  
 Furent vaillans, bien dire l'os  
 Que leur vaillance et leur prouesse  
 2960 Leur fu gloire, honneur, et richesse;  
 N'il n'est homs qui peüst acquerre  
 Tels biens, sans avoir peinne en terre.  
 Si que, Guillaume, j'ose dire  
 Que plus de peinne et de martyre  
 2965 Cent fois les dames soustenoient  
 Que leurs amis qu'elles fisoient,  
 Qu'elles avoient les griés pensees  
 Et les paours desordenees,  
 Les paroles de mesdisans.  
 2970 Et s'il demourassent .x. ans,  
 Ja n'eüssent parfait joie;  
 Car qui atent, trop li anoie,  
 N'a cuer humain riens tant ne grieve  
 Com mesdis et pensee grieve.  
 2975 Ne autre bienfait n'en portoient  
 Que un po de joie qu'elles avoient.  
 Einsi est il de pluseurs dames  
 Qui mettent les cuers et les ames  
 Et quanqu'elles ont en leurs amis,  
 2980 Et quant tant chascune y a mis  
 Qu'il sont en vaillance parfait,  
 Apparent par ouevre et par fait,  
 Elles n'en ont autre salaire  
 Fors un petit de gloire au faire.  
 2985 Ils ont le grain; elles ont la paille;  
 Car l'onner ont, comment qu'il aille.  
 Et s'aucune fois leur meschiet,  
 Tout premiers seur les dames chiet.  
 Certes, c'est mauvais guerredon.  
 2990 Quant pour bien ont de guerre don.

De l'autre qui son doy copa,  
 Vraiment fait .i. lait cop a.  
 Car Guillaume, quoy que nuls die,  
 Je le tien a grant cornardie,  
 2995 Si m'en pense po a debatre.  
 Car il y avoit .iij. ou .iiij.  
 Voies qui deüssent souffrire,  
 Et il prist de toutes la pire.  
 fol. 41v Et d'autre part, je ne croy mie  
 3000 Que celle qui estoit s'amie,  
 S'elle l'amoit d'amour seüre,  
 N'eüst trop plus chier l'aventure

- And if Tristan and Lancelot  
Were valiant, I dare well say  
Their valor and prowess  
2960 Meant glory, honor, and riches to them;  
And no man might acquire  
Such goods without suffering some earthly pain.  
And so, Guillaume, I dare say  
The ladies in question endured  
2965 A hundred times more pain and torment  
Than the lovers to whom they were committed,  
For they suffered mournful thoughts,  
Fears that confounded them,  
As well as the words of slanderers.  
2970 And if these men had waited ten years,  
Never would they have found perfect joy;  
For whoever waits is quite annoyed,  
And nothing grieves the human heart so much  
As slander and nagging thoughts.  
2975 And the ladies found no benefit in all this  
Except what little joy they received.  
And so it is with many ladies  
Who surrender their hearts and souls  
And whatever they own to their lovers;  
2980 And when each woman has given so much  
That their men acquire knightly honor,  
Which is manifest in word and action,  
The women draw no other salary  
Save a little glory from what they do.  
2985 The men have the kernel; the women the chaff,  
For the honor belongs to the men, whatever might happen.  
And if misfortune is sometimes their lot,  
The ladies are the first to suffer.  
Surely this is an inadequate reward  
2990 When for good they get strife in return.

- In regard to the man who cut off his finger,  
He struck an unfortunate blow in truth.  
For Guillaume, whatever anyone might say,  
I consider this quite foolish  
2995 And intend to argue a little against this view.  
For there were three or four  
Paths that should have sufficed,  
But he chose the worst of all.  
And furthermore I do not believe at all  
3000 That the woman who was his beloved,  
If the love she felt had been faithful,  
Would not have preferred the risky business

De son mari et son courrous,  
 Et deüst estre entre'eaus .ij. rous  
 3005 Li festus jusqu'a une piece,  
 Qu'oster de son ami tel piece,  
 Qu'a tous jours fu desigurez,  
 Meins prisiés, et plus empirez."

### GUILLAUME

“Certes, Franchise, vous avez  
 3010 Bien dit, que bien dire savez.  
 Mais je say sans nulle doubtance  
 Que c'est contre vo conscience,  
 Et que dit avez le contraire  
 De ce qui en vo cuer repaire.  
 3015 Mais je vous requier, s'il vous plest,  
 Que nous abregons nostre plet,  
 Car trop alongons la matiere  
 Qui meüe a esté premiere.  
 Il est certain — et je l'affirme —  
 3020 Qu'en cuer de femme n'a riens ferme,  
 Rien seür, rien d'estableté,  
 Fors toute variableté.  
 Et puis qu'elle est si variable  
 Qu'elle en rien n'est ferme n'estable  
 3025 Et que de petit se varie,  
 Il faut que de po pleure et rie,  
 Dont grant joie et grant tourment  
 N'i puelent estre longuement,  
 Car sa nature li enseingne  
 3030 Que tost rie et de po se pleingne;  
 Tost otroie, tost escondit.  
 Elle a son dit et son desdit,  
 Et s'oublie enterinement  
 Ce que ne voit legierement.  
 3035 Et puis qu'elle ne puet ravoir  
 Jamais son ami pour avoir,  
 Pour pleindre, ne crier, ne braire,  
 Ne pour chose qu'elle puist faire,  
 Et aussi que de sa nature  
 3040 Oublie toute creature  
 Legierement quant ne la voit,  
 On puet bien penser, s'elle avoit  
 De ses amis damage ou perte,  
 Que briefment seroit si aperte  
 3045 Que d'un perdu .ij. retrouvez  
 Li seroit encor reprovez.  
 Mais cuers d'omme est ferme et seürs,

3005 Of her husband and his anger,  
Even if it meant the bond ought to have been  
Broken between those two right at that moment,  
Rather than depriving her lover of a finger  
So he would always be disfigured,  
Less esteemed, and quite impaired.”

### GUILLAUME

“Frankness, no doubt you have  
3010 Spoken well, for you can speak ably.  
But I know for certain  
Your conscience says otherwise  
And you have argued the opposite  
Of what truly lies in your heart.  
3015 But, I ask you, please  
Let us focus our debate,  
For we have moved too far from the question  
Broached at its beginning.  
It is indisputable, as I affirm,  
3020 There is nothing stable in a woman’s heart,  
Nothing certain, no constancy of any kind  
Save complete changeability.  
And since she is so fickle  
That she is firm about or convinced of nothing  
3025 And alters for the slightest reason,  
It follows she laughs or cries over trifles;  
And so great joy and immense suffering  
Cannot remain with her for very long  
Because her nature leads her  
3030 To laugh easily and cry over little things;  
She agrees readily and demurs just as fast.  
She has her say but then denies it,  
And she forgets utterly  
And easily what she does not see.  
3035 Now since she cannot ever possess  
Her lover again, for money,  
For tears, moaning, lamentation,  
Or for anything she might do;  
And also since by her nature  
3040 She forgets quite readily  
Any person out of her sight,  
One could well conclude that if she experienced  
Loss and hurt because of her lover,  
She would be ready again in such a short time  
3045 ‘That for the one lost, two recovered’  
Would be the reproach made to her.  
In contrast, a man’s heart is firm, secure,

- Sages, esprouvez, et meürs,  
 Vertueus et fors pour durer,  
 3050 Et humbles pour mal endurer.  
 Et quant de l'amoureuse ardure  
 Est espris, tellement l'endure  
 Qu'einsois morroit dessous l'escu  
 Qu'on le veïst mat ne veincu.  
 3055 Ce que je di n'est pas contrueve,  
 Car chascuns le dit et apprueve;  
 Et pour ce que chascuns le dit,  
 L'ai je recordé en mon dit.  
 Se di en ma conclusion  
 3060 Que, vëu la condicion  
 D'omme et de feme, nullement  
 Feme ne puet avoir tourment,  
 Tant braie ne se desconforte,  
 Comme uns homs en son cuer le porte,  
 3065 Qu'estre ne puet en sa nature.  
 Raison s'i acorde et droiture.  
 Et aussi li maus qui termine  
 Est mendres que cils qui ne fine  
 Einsois dure jusqu'a la mort,  
 3070 Tant qu'il a son malade mort."

### LARGESSE

- Largesse, qui après seoit,  
 Parla, car moult bien li seoit,  
 Et dist: "Guillaume, vraiment,  
 Je sui mervilleuse comment  
 3075 Vous osez des dames mesdire,  
 Car ce ne deüssiez pas dire.  
 fol. 42r Et de ce qu'avez dit, li blames  
 Est plus seur vous que seur les dames.  
 Vous avez dit en vostre dit —  
 3080 Dont, certes, vous avez mal dit —  
 Que chascuns tient pour véritable  
 Que toute dame est variable,  
 Et que ce n'est de leur couvent  
 Nés que d'un cochelet au vent.  
 3085 Mais toute ceste compaingnie  
 Tient le contraire et le vous nie.  
 Et pour ce bien dire pouez  
 Que vous n'estes pas avouez;  
 Si devez paier la lamproie.  
 3090 De ce plus dire ne saroie,  
 Qu'on ne puet bon argüement  
 Faire seur mauvais fondement."

Wise, experienced, and mature,  
Virtuous and strong in endurance,  
3050 But humble in suffering adversity.  
And when all aflame  
With amorous burning, his heart is so committed  
It would rather die behind its shield  
Than be seen beaten down or vanquished.  
3055 What I maintain is hardly arguable,  
For everyone says so and agrees  
And since everyone says the same  
I have written it in my poem.  
So I say in conclusion  
3060 That, considering the nature  
Of men and women, no woman  
Can suffer as much torment,  
However much she moans and carries on,  
As any man's heart can bear,  
3065 For it is simply not in her nature.  
Reason and good custom concur.  
In any case, the misfortune that ends  
Is less severe than the one that does not,  
But rather endures right to death,  
3070 Killing whoever suffers the ill."

### GENEROSITY

Generosity, who was sitting nearby,  
Then spoke up, for it suited her well to do so,  
And she said: "Guillaume, truly,  
I am astonished how  
3075 You dare to malign women,  
For you should not talk this way.  
And any blame in what you have said  
Falls more on you than on women.  
You have said in your poem  
3080 (And surely you are wrong)  
How everyone considers it the truth  
That all women are fickle,  
And their word is worth no more  
Than a weathercock in the wind.  
3085 But this entire company  
Believes the opposite and is against you.  
So for this reason you can certainly say  
You are not endorsed  
And must pay the piper.  
3090 I don't know what more to say,  
For no one can construct a valid  
Argument on a faulty premise."

**DOUBTANCE**

“Et je ne m’en porroie taire,”  
 Ce dist Doubtance de meffaire,  
 3095 “Eins en diray ce qu’il m’en samble,  
 Car tous li cuers me frit et tramble  
 Quant einsi sans cause blamer  
 Oy les dames et diffamer.  
 Or entendez a ma demande:  
 3100 Biau Guillaume, je vous demande,  
 Se celle change ne varie  
 Qui est tous les jours de sa vie  
 Loial amie, sans fausser,  
 N’en fait, n’en desir, n’en penser?”

**GUILLAUME**

3105 “Certes, damoiselle, nennil!  
 Mais je croy qu’entre .v.<sup>c</sup> mil  
 N’en seroit pas une trouvee;  
 Car tel greinne est trop cler semee.”

**DOUBTANCE**

“Mon biau sire, se Diex me gart,  
 3110 Moult avez estrange regart,  
 Et s’avez diverse parole!  
 Et s’avez esté a l’escole,  
 Si com je croy, d’aler en change;  
 Et pour ce que li cuers vous change,  
 3115 Vous cuidiez que chascuns le face  
 Si com vous; mais ja Dieu ne place!  
 Car je prouverai le contraire  
 De fait, cui qu’il doie desplaire.”

**GUILLAUME**

“Damoiselle, ne vous desplaise,  
 3120 Se je vous resgarde a mon aaise,  
 Car pas ne vous hé si forment  
 Com je vous regart laidement;  
 Et se ma parole est diverse,  
 Bons cherretons est qui ne verse.  
 3125 Mais je cuide verité dire,  
 Comment que m’en vueilliez desdire;  
 Si me sui ci mal embatus  
 Se pour voir dire sui batus.”

**SOUFFISSANCE**

Adont se leva Soufissance  
 3130 Et dist: “Guillaume, sans doubtance,

**WARINESS**

- 3095     “*I cannot hold my peace,*”  
           Declared Wariness of misdeed,  
    “*Rather I will speak what is on my mind,*  
    For all my heart shakes and quivers  
    When for no reason I hear  
    Ladies maligned and defamed.  
    Now listen to my question.  
 3100     Fair Guillaume, I ask you  
    If that woman alters or changes  
    Who is all the days of her life  
    A loyal beloved, never betraying  
    In deed, desire, or thought?”

**GUILLAUME**

- 3105     “*Surely, damsels, not at all!*  
    But I believe not one such would be found  
    Among five hundred thousand,  
    For this seed is too thinly sown.”

**WARINESS**

- 3110     “*My fair sir, may God preserve me,*  
    Your point of view is quite strange  
    And your words amaze me!  
    You must have been to the school  
    Of constant change, or so I believe;  
    And because your own heart is fickle,  
 3115     You believe everyone is the same  
    As you. But, please God, it is not so!  
    For I will prove the contrary  
    In fact, whomever it should displease!”

**GUILLAUME**

- 3120     “*Damsel, I hope you won’t be dismayed*  
    If I look at you in a friendly way,  
    For I do not dislike you enough  
    To frown at you.  
    And if my words are unwelcome,  
    It’s a good cart that never overturns.  
 3125     But I believe I speak the truth,  
    However much you would like to dispute it.  
    So I am quite badly treated here  
    If for speaking the truth I am beaten down.”

**SUFFICIENCY**

- 3130     And then Sufficiency rose to her feet  
    And said: “*Guillaume, without a doubt,*

Vous estes or mal emparlez.  
 Resgardez coment vous parlez;  
 Car nuls homs qui vueille voir dire  
 Ne porroit des dames mesdire,  
 3135 Qu'en elles est, ce scet on bien,  
 Tout quanqu'on puet dire de bien.  
 Si que je vous lo et conseil  
 Que plus ne parlez sans conseil;  
 Car vous estes trop juenes homs  
 3140 Pour dire si faites raisons."

### GUILLAUME

Lors entroÿ une murmure,  
 Que chascune d'elles murmure  
 De ce que si fort soustenoie  
 Ce que des dames dit avoie;  
 3145 Et vi que chascune faisoit  
 Samblant, qu'il li en desplaisoit.  
 Et quant j'aperçu la maniere  
 De leur parler et de leur chiere,  
 Et que meües furent toutes  
 3150 Pour bouter le feu es estoupes,  
 fol. 42v Au juge fis une requeste  
 Qui me sambloit assez honneste,  
 Et humblement li depriay  
 Et requis en mon depri ay  
 3155 Qu'elles parlissent tout a fait,  
 Si averoient plus tost fait.  
 Si firent elles, ce me samble;  
 Qu'elles parloient tout ensamble;  
 Dont li juges prist a sousrire  
 3160 Qui vit que chascune s'aïre.  
 Et certes, j'en eus moult grant joie,  
 Quant en tel estat les veoie.  
 Mais li juges, qui sagement  
 Voloit faire son jugement,  
 3165 Tantost leur imposa silence,  
 Fors seulement a Souffissance  
 Et a Doubtance de meffaire.  
 Et lors prist Doubtance a retraire  
 .I. conte propre a sa matiere,  
 3170 Et commensa par tel maniere.

### DOUBTANCE

"Que fist Tysbé pour Piramus?  
 Quant elle vit que mors et nus  
 Estoit pour li, sans nul retour,

- You have now misspoken.  
Look to what you are saying!  
For no man who wishes to speak the truth  
Would be able to defame women  
3135 Or what they are (this is well known)  
Since so much good can be said;  
And so I advise and enjoin you  
Not to say, without counsel, any more,  
For you are a very young man  
3140 To make arguments like these."

### GUILLAUME

- Then I heard a murmuring,  
For each lady was whispering  
About how forcefully I was upholding  
What I had said about women;  
3145 And I saw each was giving the impression  
She was displeased.  
And taking note of how  
They were speaking and the looks on their faces,  
And that all were eager  
3150 To add fuel to the fire,  
I made a request to the judge,  
Who seemed fairly honest to me,  
And I begged him humbly  
And stated in my proposal  
3155 That they should speak at once  
And thus have done more quickly.  
For so they were doing, it seemed to me,  
Talking all at once, that is;  
And at this the judge started to smile,  
3160 For he saw they were all growing angry.  
And, to be sure, I felt quite great joy  
Seeing them in such a state.  
But the judge, who was intent on  
Making a wise judgment,  
3165 Immediately imposed silence on them,  
With the exceptions of Sufficiency  
And Wariness of misdeed as well.  
And Wariness began to rehearse  
A story that reflected her viewpoint,  
3170 And she began in this fashion.

### WARINESS

- “What did Thisb   do for Pyramus?  
When she saw him naked and dead  
Because of her, without any recourse,

- A doloir s'en prist par tel tour,  
 3175 Que d'une espee s'acoura  
 Seur le corps et la demoura;  
 Car aprés li ne volt pas vivre,  
 Eins fina s'amour et son vivre  
 En pleins, en plours, et en clamours.
- Certes, ce fu parfaite amours;  
 3180 Car il n'est dolour ne remort  
 Qu'on puist comparer a la mort.  
 Ne nuls ne me feroit entendre  
 Q'nuls homs vosist son cuer fendre  
 3185 Si crueusement, n'entamer,  
 Comme Tysbé fist pour amer.  
 Et qui diroit uns homs est fors  
 Pour souffrir d'amours les effors,  
 Et s'a cuer plus dur qu'aÿmant  
 3190 Ou que ne soit .i. dÿamant,  
 Je ne donroie de sa force  
 Le quart d'une pourrie escorce,  
 Ne je ne pris riens sa durté,  
 Sa vertu, ne sa mëurté,  
 3195 Ne chose qu'il endure aussi.  
 Mais quant une dame a soussi  
 Qu'en son cuer secretement cuevre,  
 Par tel guise le met a ouevre  
 Qu'elle y met le corps et la vie.
- Mais, Guillaume, je ne croy mie  
 3200 Que on veïst onques morir  
 Homme par deffaut de merir  
 Et qui tost ne fust confortez,  
 Tant fust ses cuers desconfortez;  
 3205 N'il n'est doleur qui se compere  
 A mort, com grieve qu'elle appere,  
 Ne que li feus, fais en peinture,  
 Encontre le feu de nature.  
 Car Nature ne puet pas faire,  
 3210 Tant soit a corps humein contraire;  
 Ne cuers ne puet riens endurer  
 Qu'on peüst a mort comparer."

### **SOUFFISSANCE**

- "Doubtance, laissiez le plaidier,  
 Car .i. petit vous vueil aidier,  
 3215 Pour mettre nostre entention  
 A plus vraie conclusion,  
 Comment qu'aiez si bien conclus  
 Selonc raison, qu'on ne puet plus.

- She became so grief-stricken  
3175 She ran herself through with a sword,  
Right through the body, and left it there.  
For she would not live on after him,  
But instead put an end to her love and life  
With laments, tears, and wailing.
- 3180 Surely this was a perfect love.  
For there is no pain or suffering  
That can be compared to death;  
Nor could anyone convince me  
That any man's heart could break
- 3185 So cruelly, or that he could injure himself  
As did Thisb  for love.  
And whoever would say a man is strong  
In suffering the hardships of loving,  
With a heart stronger than adamant
- 3190 Or any diamond might be,  
I would not give for his strength  
A bit of putrid peel,  
Nor do I value highly his fortitude,  
His virtue or maturity either,
- 3195 Or anything he endures.  
But when a woman suffers pain  
She conceals in her heart,  
She proceeds to  
Give herself to it body and soul.
- 3200 But, Guillaume, I don't believe at all  
That any man has ever been seen  
Who died from a lack of reward  
Or who was not quickly comforted,  
However disconsolate his heart might have been;
- 3205 Nor is there any pain comparable  
To death, however grievous it may seem,  
No more than fire depicted in a painting  
Can be compared to fire in nature.  
For Nature cannot produce anything,
- 3210 No matter how contrary to the human body,  
Comparable to death,  
Nor can a heart endure anything like it."

#### SUFFICIENCY

- "Wariness, stop your arguing,  
For I wish to help you a bit  
3215 In bringing your point  
To an even truer conclusion,  
Although you've developed it quite well  
And reasonably, better than others could.

- Adont commensa Souffissance  
 3220 Et dist ainsi en audience:
- “Leandus, li biaus et li cointes,  
 D'une pucelle estoit acointes  
 Qui bele Hero fu nommee;  
 N'avoit en toute la contree  
 3225 Nulle si cointe damoiselle,  
 De trop si gente, ne si belle;  
 N'en Abidois n'avoit, n'en Crete  
 Nulle amour qui fust si secrete,  
 fol. 43r Car nuls ne savoit leur couvine,  
 3230 Fors seulement une meschine  
 Qui belle Hero norrie avoit;  
 Celle seulement le savoit.  
 De moult parfaite amour s'amoient;  
 Mais a grant peinne se veoient,  
 3235 Qu'entre Hero et Leandus  
 Fu un bras de mer espandus  
 Qui estoit larges et parfons,  
 Si qu'on n'i preist jamais fons;  
 Et ce leur faisoit trop d'anuis.
- 3240 Mais Leandus toutes les nus  
 Passoit le bras de mer au large,  
 Tous nus, seuls, sans nef et sans barge.  
 Belle Hero au gent atour  
 Ot en sa maison une tour  
 3245 Ou toutes les nus l'atendoit,  
 Et .i. sierge ardant la tendoit,  
 Auquel Leandus se ravoie  
 Souvent quant la mer le desvoie.  
 Or avint que la mer tourbla  
 3250 Pour le fort vent qui y souffla  
 Si qu'elle en devint toute tourble  
 Pour le vent qui l'esmuet et trouble.  
 Leandus se tient a la rive,  
 Qui fort contre son cuer estrive;
- 3255 Qu'Amours li enjoint et commande  
 Et ses cuers, qu'a passer entende,  
 Et la plus belle de ce mont  
 Voit d'autre part qui l'en semont;  
 Si que li las ne sot que faire,
- 3260 N'il ne voit goute en son affaire.  
 Car il voit la mer si orrible  
 Que de passer est impossible.  
 Et de sa tempeste et son bruit  
 Toute la region en bruit.

- Sufficiency then began by saying  
3220 The following for all to hear:
- “Leander, that handsome and clever man,  
Was friendly with a young girl  
Named Hero the beautiful;  
In all the land there was no  
3225 Damsel so attractive,  
None so noble by far or so lovely;  
Nor was there in Abydos or Crete  
Any love affair as secret,  
For no one knew of their bond  
3230 Save a serving woman  
Who had raised beautiful Hero.  
She alone was in the know.  
They loved each other with a quite perfect love.  
It was very hard for them to meet,  
3235 For between Hero and Leander  
Extended an arm of the sea  
That was so wide and deep  
No one had ever found its bottom.  
And this troubled them greatly.  
3240 But every night Leander  
Passed over that arm of the sea in the open  
Completely naked, alone, with no boat or barge.  
Beautiful Hero of the noble appearance  
Had a house with a tower  
3245 Where every night she waited for him,  
Keeping a candle burning  
Toward which Leander often directed himself  
When the sea threw him off course.  
Now it happened that the sea, troubled by  
3250 A strong wind, rose high,  
And it became roiled by the wind  
That disturbed and roused it.  
Leander stayed on the shore,  
Struggling mightily against his heart,  
3255 For Love enjoined and commanded him,  
As did his heart, that he should determine to cross.  
And on the other side, summoning him,  
He saw the most beautiful woman in the world;  
And so the miserable man did not know what to do,  
3260 Nor could he figure a way out of the fix,  
For the sea, he saw, was so threatening  
It was impossible to traverse.  
And all the region was in an uproar  
With storm and thundering.

3265 Mais finalment tant l'assailly  
 Amours, que en la mer sailli,  
 Dont briefment le couvint noier,  
 Car a li ne pot forsoier.  
 Et certes, ce fu grans damages,  
 3270 Car moult estoit vaillans et sages.

Bele Hero ne scet que dire;  
 Tant a de meschief, tant a d'ire,  
 Qu'en nulle riens ne se conforte.  
 Elle vorroit bien estre morte  
 3275 Quant son dous amy tant demeure.  
 Dou cuer souspire, des yex pleure;  
 La nuit ot plus de mil pensees,  
 Par .v. <sup>c</sup> mille fois doublees.  
 Elle ne fait que reclamer  
 3280 Nepturnus, le dieu de la mer,  
 Et li promet veaus et genices,  
 Oblations et sacrefices  
 Mais que la mer face cesser  
 Par quoy Leandus puist passer.  
 3285 Einsi toute nuit se maintint  
 Et l'ardant sierge en sa main tint  
 Jusqu'a tant qu'il fu adjourné.  
 Mais mar vit pour li ce jour né,  
 Qu'entre les flos vit Leandont,  
 3290 Qui floteloit a abandon.  
 Et quant de pres le pot veoir,  
 Seur le corps se laissa cheoir  
 Au piet de sa tour droitement;  
 Si l'embrassoit estroitement,  
 3295 Forcenee et criant: 'Haro!'  
 Einsi fina belle Hero,  
 Qui de dueil fu noïe en mer  
 Avec son ami pour amer.  
 Si qu'il n'est doleurs ne meschiés  
 3300 Dont cuers d'amant soit entechiez  
 Qui soit de si triste marrien  
 Com celle qui n'espargna rien,  
 Que Hero ne meïst a mort  
 Pour son amy qu'elle vit mort,  
 3305 Ne nuls n'en porroit par raison  
 Faire juste comparaison,  
 Ne que de fiel encontre baume.  
 Et pour ce je vous lo, Guillaume,  
 fol. 43v Que cils debas soit en deport,  
 3310 Car vraiment, vous avez tort."

3265 But in the end Love so inspired him  
He leapt into the water,  
Where he quickly drowned,  
For he could not make his way to her.  
And, surely, this was a great loss,  
3270 For he was a man quite valiant and wise.

Beautiful Hero did not know what to say;  
So much anguish and anger did she feel  
She could find consolation in nothing.  
She wished very much to be dead  
3275 When her lover was so delayed.  
From the heart she sighed; from the eyes she cried.  
That night she had more than a thousand thoughts,  
Multiplied some five hundred thousand times.  
All she could do was call upon  
3280 Neptune, the god of the sea,  
And she promised him calves and heifers,  
Oblations and sacrifices  
If only he would calm the sea  
So Leander might cross it.  
3285 She continued all night doing so  
And held the burning candle in her hand  
Until a new day dawned at last.  
But this day brought her ill luck,  
For in the waves she spied Leander,  
3290 Who was floating aimlessly.  
And when she could see him close up,  
She threw herself upon his body  
Right at the foot of her tower;  
And she held him close,  
3295 Crazed as she was, and cried out: 'Alas!'  
Beautiful Hero met her end in this way,  
Drowned in the sea from grief  
Along with her lover because of love.  
And so there is no pain or misfortune  
3300 That might afflict a lover's heart  
And bring on such grievous pain  
As that which spared nothing,  
Which made Hero die  
For the sake of the lover she saw dead.  
3305 Nor could anyone with reason  
Make a true comparison to anything else,  
No more than bitterness set against balm.  
And so, Guillaume, I counsel you  
To suspend this debate,  
3310 For truly you are mistaken."

**GUILLAUME**

- “Damoiselle, se tort avoie,  
 Bien say que condempnez seroie  
 Nom pas par vous; car l’ordenance  
 Ne doit pas de ceste sentence  
 3315 Estre couchié en vostre bouche,  
 Pour ce que la chose vous touche.  
 Eins la doit pronuncier le juge,  
 Qui a point et loyaument juge.  
 Mais j’ay le cuer moult esjoÿ  
 3320 De ce que j’ay de vous oy;  
 Car c’est tout pour moy, vraiment.”

**SOUFFISSANCE**

“Pour vous, biau Guillaume? Et comment?”

**GUILLAUME**

- “Damoiselle, or vueilliez entendre,  
 Et je le dirai sans attendre;  
 3325 Quant Amours si fort enlassoit  
 Leandus, que la mer passoit  
 A no, sans batel n’aviron,  
 A la minuit ou environ,  
 Li fols qui tant y trespassa  
 3330 Que d’amer en mer trespassa,  
 Il fist trop plus et plus souffri  
 Que Hero, qui a mort s’offri,  
 Considerés les grans peris  
 Ou il fu en la fin peris,  
 3335 Que ne fist Hero pour s’amour,  
 Non contestant mort ne clamour.  
 Car cils qui fait premierement  
 Honneur, on dit communement  
 Qu’il a la grace dou bien fait,  
 3340 Nom pas cils a qui on le fait.  
 Et plus va a Amour tirant  
 Cils qui preste que cils qui rant.  
 Einsi est il de tous services,  
 Et aussi de tous malefices:  
 3345 Car qui d’autrui grever se peinne,  
 Certes, il doit porter la peinne.  
 Si que, ma chiere damoiselle,  
 Qui moult amez honneur la belle,  
 Vous devez bien, a dire voir,  
 3350 De ce cop ci honneur avoir.  
 Car bien et bel et sagement

**GUILLAUME**

- “Young lady, if I am in the wrong,  
I know well I shall be condemned,  
But not by you; for the passing  
Of this sentence ought not  
3315 To come from your mouth  
Since you are involved.  
Instead it must be pronounced by the judge,  
Who will decide fittingly and truthfully.  
But my heart greatly rejoices  
3320 In what I have heard you say;  
For truly it all helps my case.”

**SUFFICIENCY**

“Helps yours, fair Guillaume? How so?”

**GUILLAUME**

- “Young lady, now please listen,  
And I will tell you without delay.  
3325 When Love so tightly snared  
Leander, who was swimming across the sea  
Naked, without boat or oar,  
At midnight or thereabouts,  
The fool who erred terribly  
3330 In crossing the sea for the sake of love,  
Did more and suffered worse  
Than did Hero, who gave herself to death,  
If one considers the great perils  
That in the end destroyed him,  
3335 Since Hero did not do the same out of love for him,  
Notwithstanding her death and lamentation.  
For he who first does  
Something honorable is commonly said  
To get the grace from the good deed,  
3340 Not the one for whom it is done.  
And he is truer to Love who bestows  
Than he who gives in return.  
So it is with all kinds of service,  
And likewise with every kind of mistreatment.  
3345 For whoever troubles himself to hurt another  
Ought surely to bear the punishment for it.  
Thus, my dear damsel, you  
Who are very keen to honor the beautiful lady,  
To speak the truth, you should certainly  
3350 Have the honor of this encounter.  
For you have discoursed ably,

L'avez dit; et certainnement,  
Diex pour moy dire le vous fit,  
Car j'en averai le profit.

- 3355 Si que, gentils dame de pris,  
Je croy que bien avez compris  
L'entention des .ij. parties.  
Et se celles qui ci parties  
Sont contre moy vuelent plus dire,  
3360 Ce ne vueil je pas contredire,  
Mais j'en ay dit ce qu'il m'en samble,  
Present elles toutes ensamble,  
Et tant, que je ne double mie  
Que n'iae droit de ma partie."

#### LA DAME

- 3365 Adont la dame souvereinne,  
Des .xij. droite cheveteinne  
Qui avoient parlé pour li,  
Dont au juge moult abelly,  
Prist a dire tout en oiant;  
3370 "De riens ne me va anoiant  
Ce qui est fait de nostre plait,  
Mais moult soufissanment me plait,  
Et bien m'en vueil passer atant.  
Sires juges, jugiez atant  
3375 Que sentence sera rendue.  
Je suis de moult bonne attendue  
Pour attendre vostre jugier  
Quant il vous en plaira jugier.  
Bon conseil avez et seür,  
3380 Bien attempré et bien meür.  
S'alez, s'il vous plaist, a conseil,  
Je le lo einsi et conseil.  
Et vous conseilliez tout a trait.  
Faire ne pouez plus biau trait  
fol. 44r Que de traitemblement attraire  
3386 Bon conseil et puis de retraire  
Les articles dou jugement,  
Selonc le nostre entendement,  
En gardant toudis nostre honneur.  
3390 Faire le devez, mon signeur.  
Et vous estes bien si vaillans  
Que point n'en serez defaillans."

Skillfully, and wisely; but surely  
God made you speak for my sake,  
For I am the one who will profit from it.

- 3355 And so, noble and worthy lady,  
I think you understand quite well  
The opinions of the two parties.  
And if the ladies who have here sided  
Against me wish to say something more,  
3360 I will offer no protest,  
But I have said what I think  
In the presence of the ladies here assembled,  
And it is sufficient, I do not doubt at all,  
To win the debate for me.”

#### THE LADY

- 3365 And then the sovereign lady,  
True leader of the twelve  
Who had spoken on her side  
(And this pleased the judge greatly),  
Said this so all could hear:  
3370 “I find nothing that has happened  
In our debate displeasing;  
Instead I am quite well satisfied  
And wish to be done with it now.  
Sir judge, render your decision  
3375 So that sentence may be passed.  
I have very high hopes  
For the judgment I expect from you.  
When it pleases you to decide,  
You have competent and assured counselors  
3380 Who are cool-headed and quite mature.  
So proceed, if you please, to deliberate;  
I so advise and recommend,  
And take this matter under advisement at once.  
You could do no better  
3385 Than to request in a fitting way  
Some good advice and afterward rehearse  
The issues that bear on the judgment,  
According to our understanding,  
Preserving our honor at all times.  
3390 This you ought to do, my lord,  
For you certainly are so competent  
You shall not be found wanting in any way.”

**LE JUGE**

Li juges, qui bien l'escouta  
 Ses paroles, si bien nota  
 3395 Qu'a entendre pas ne failly.  
 Tantost son conseil acueilly,  
 Et puis de la se departirent.  
 Or ne sceus je pas qu'il deïrent  
 En leur secret quant ad present,  
 3400 Mais assez tost m'en fist present.  
 Uns amans qui tant bien m'ama  
 Que de tous poins m'en enfourma,  
 Non pas par favourableté,  
 Mais de sa debonnaireté,  
 3405 Afin que point ne variasse  
 Et que de riens ne m'esmaisse,  
 Par quoy je preïsse maniere  
 Uniement toudis entiere;  
 Qu'autel samblant devoie faire  
 3410 Dou droit pour moy com dou contraire.  
 Or me fonday seur ce propos;  
 S'en fu mes cuers plus a repos.

Quant a conseil se furent mis,  
 Li juges dist: "Je suis commis  
 3415 A estre bons juges fiables,  
 Aus .ij. parties amiabes  
 Justement a point sans cliner.  
 Si doy moult bien examiner  
 Trestout le fait par ordenence  
 3420 Qui appert en notre audience  
 Afin que loiaument en juge.  
 Einsi doivent faire bon juge.  
 Et vous vous devez travillier  
 De moy loyaument consillier.  
 3425 S'en die chascuns son plaisir,  
 Tandis com nous avons loisir."  
 Dont Avis dist tantost après,  
 Qui fu de Congnoissance pres:

**AVIS**

"Avis sui qui doy bien viser  
 3430 Comment je vous puisse aviser,  
 Car on puet faire trop envis  
 Bon jugement sans bon avis.

Je vous avis que bien faciés  
 Et que le contraire effaciés.

**THE JUDGE**

- The judge, listening closely  
 To her words, paid such good attention  
 3395 He did not fail to understand them.  
 His advisers he assembled at once,  
 And then they retired.  
 Now I did not know at the moment  
 What they said in private.  
 3400 But quite soon afterward a lover  
 Who was very fond of me did me the favor  
 Of telling me about everything,  
 Not through favoritism on his part,  
 But because of his good breeding,  
 3405 So that I would not disagree at all  
 Or be surprised by anything  
 And thus could assume a manner  
 Of complete composure and assurance;  
 For I was obliged to react the same  
 3410 To a decision for me as to one against.  
 And so I set myself upon this course;  
 Therefore my heart was put more at ease.

- When they had disposed themselves in council,  
 The judge said: "I have been commissioned  
 3415 To be a competent and trustworthy judge,  
 Amicable toward the two parties  
 To the same degree and without bias.  
 Thus I must examine quite carefully  
 All the evidence as it was presented  
 3420 To us while we listened  
 So I can judge faithfully.  
 This is what good judges should do.  
 And you all should exert yourselves  
 To advise me in good faith.  
 3425 So let everyone say what she wishes  
 Because we have time for it."  
 And immediately afterward Discretion,  
 Who was at the side of Understanding, said:

**DISCRETION**

- "I am Discretion, who must attend carefully  
 3430 To how I should advise you,  
 For someone might be quite unwilling  
 To judge without good advice.

I advise you to do what is good  
 And undo what is wrong.

- 3435 S'il vient par devant vostre face,  
 Afin que point ne se parface,  
 En avisant seur .iiij. choses  
 Qui ne sont mie si encloses  
 Qu'on ne les puist assez veoir,  
 3440 Qui un po s'en vuet pourveoir.  
 Ce jugement avez a rendre,  
 Premierement devez entendre  
 De savoir quels est li meffais  
 Et a qui il a esté fais.  
 3445 Et si devez aussi savoir  
 Et enquérir, par grant savoir,  
 Quant vous saverez le forfait  
 Et a cui cils l'averá fait,  
 Que vous sachiez dou tout l'affaire,  
 3450 Quel cause l'esmuet ad ce faire.  
 Or avez de .iiij. les trois.  
 Et li quars est li plus estrois  
 Au quel on doit bien regarder  
 Comment on le puist bien garder:  
 3455 C'est que vous metés vostre cure  
 A sieuir les poins de nature  
 Ou coustume attraite de droit.  
 Se jugerez en bon endroit.  
 Plus n'en di. Qui vuet, si en die.  
 3460 J'en ay assez dit ma partie."

### CONGNOISSANCE

- Congnoissance, qui avisa  
 Les poins qu'Avis bien devisa,  
 Dist en haut: "Avis, mes amis,  
 fol. 44v Ha oreンドroit en termes mis  
 3465 Aucuns poins qu'il a devisé,  
 Les quels j'ay moult bien avisé,  
 Pour quoy dont je sui Congnoissance,  
 Qui donne a bon Avis substance  
 Pour deviser ce qu'il devise,  
 3470 De quoy la bonne gent avise.  
 Je fais le scens d'Avis congnoistre,  
 Et il fait Congnoissance croistre  
 Par le courtois avis qu'il donne  
 De son droit a mainte personne.  
 3475 Juges se vous apointerez  
 Comment seurement tenrez  
 D'Avis les poins et les usages.  
 Faites le, si ferez que sages.  
 Et de moy qui sui sa compaingne

- 3435 And thus it is your task,  
So nothing may lack perfection,  
To attend to four things  
That are not so troublesome  
A man cannot see to them properly  
3440 If he wishes to spend some time on them.  
As for this judgment you must render,  
You must undertake first  
To learn what the wrong might be  
And against whom it has been done.  
3445 And then you must also come to learn  
And seek out with great wisdom,  
Having already discovered the wrong  
And the injured party as well,  
In order to understand the matter entirely —  
3450 Namely what moved the man to do it.  
Now of the four things you have three.  
And the fourth is the most difficult  
And you must carefully attend to it  
In whatever way it can be best seen to:  
3455 And that is you should pay attention  
To following the principles of nature  
Or of custom related to law.  
In this way, you will judge on a sound basis.  
Now I will say no more. Whoever wishes, let her speak.  
3460 For my part, I have said enough."

### UNDERSTANDING

- Understanding, who paid attention  
To the points Discretion had well developed,  
Said loudly: "Discretion, my friend,  
Has just given voice to several issues  
3465 He has described,  
And these I have noted well  
Because I am Understanding,  
Who lends good Discretion the substance  
To devise what he devises,  
3470 With which he advises this good company.  
I make understood the meaning of Discretion,  
And he makes Understanding increase  
Through the courtly advice he gives  
Many a person by his right.  
3475 Judge, please make plain  
How closely you will hold  
To the terms and customs of Discretion.  
Do so and you act wisely.  
And as for me who am his companion,

- 3480 Entendez que je vous enseingne.  
 On a ci ce plait demené  
 Tant qu'on l'a par poins amené  
 Jusques au jugement oïr.  
 Resgardez qui en doit joïr.
- 3485 Jugiez selonc le plaidié  
 Qu'on a devant vous plaidié.  
 Par ce point ne poez mesprendre;  
 Car s'on vous en voloit reprendre,  
 Li plaïdiers aprederoit
- 3490 Le scens qui vous deffenderoit.  
 Jugiez einsi hardiemment  
 Et le faites congnoissanment  
 Au condempné bien amender.  
 Vous le pouez bien commander.
- 3495 Je, Congnoissance, m'i acort.  
 Et s'en preng aussi le recort  
 De Mesure, qui la se siet  
 Lez Raison, et moult bien li siet,  
 Et Raison aussi en dira
- 3500 Ce qui bon li en semblera."

### MESURE

- Adont s'est Mesure levee,  
 En disant: "Ma tresbien amee  
 Congnoissance, dire ne vueil  
 Riens qui soit contre vostre vueil,  
 3505 Eins sui moult tres bien accordans  
 Ad ce qu'estes ci recordans.  
 S'en parleray a vostre honneur  
 Au juge, ce noble seigneur  
 Qui est courtois et amiabes,  
 3510 Sages, vaillans, et honnourables."  
 Lors tourna devers li sa chiere  
 De si amoureuse maniere,  
 Qu'il ne s'en pot tenir de rire.  
 Et Mesure li prist a dire:  
 3515 "Biau sire, bien eüreus fustes  
 Dou conseil que vous esleüstes.  
 Vous avez tout premierement  
 A Avis si bel commencement,  
 Qu'on faurroit bien en court roial  
 3520 D'avoir conseil aussi loial.  
 Je ne di pas qu'aucune gent  
 Ne moustrassent bien aussi gent  
 Conseil et aussi bien baillié,  
 Et d'aussi bel parler taillié.

- 3480 Listen to how I instruct you.  
This debate has been here conducted,  
Proceeding through its different stages  
Until the point of hearing a judgment.  
Look to who shall be pleased with it.
- 3485 Judge according to the testimony  
That has been offered before you.  
In this way you cannot go wrong;  
For if anyone wished to fault you,  
The pleadings would demonstrate
- 3490 The rationale to justify you.  
Be bold in your judgment  
And require that with full understanding  
The condemned party pay the price.  
You have the right to command him.
- 3495 I, Understanding, am in agreement.  
And I accept also the opinion  
Of Moderation, who is seated there  
At the side of Reason, and this suits her well,  
And Reason will also say
- 3500 Whatever she deems appropriate."

#### MODERATION

- Then Moderation rose,  
Saying: "My highly esteemed friend  
Understanding, I wish to say nothing  
You might find objectionable;
- 3505 Instead I very much agree  
With what you have been saying here.  
And in your honor I will speak of it  
To the judge, this noble lord  
Who is courteous and friendly,
- 3510 Wise, valiant, and honorable."
- Then toward him she turned her face  
In such a flirtatious fashion  
He could not refrain from laughing.  
And Moderation began to say to him:
- 3515 "Fair sir, you have been fortunate  
In the counsel you sought out.  
At first you had a quite good  
Beginning with Discretion,  
For one assuredly should in a royal court
- 3520 Receive advice as trustworthy as this.  
I do not say another company  
Would not proffer advice  
As proper and as well considered,  
Fittingly dressed out with proper speech.

3525 Mais veons la condition  
 D'Avis selonc s'entention:  
 Il donne conseil franc et quitte  
 Et n'en attent autre merite  
 Fors ce que li juges tant face  
 3530 Qu'il en ait pais, honneur, et grace.  
 Et Congnoissance, sa compaingne,  
 A tel salaire s'accompaingne,  
 Sans demander nulle autre chose;  
 Dont loiaus juges se repose  
 3535 Qui de tels gens est consilliez.  
 Sire, s'en devez estre liez.  
 Comment qu'il aient dit a point,  
 Se passerai je oultre d'un point  
 Qu'Avis avoit bien avisé —  
 3540 Et se ne l'a pas devisé —  
 Et Congnoissance congñeu.  
 Mais il s'en sont en cas dëu  
 fol. 45r Pour moy porter honneur, souffert;  
 Dont de moy vous sera offert,  
 3545 Pour ce que j'ay bien entendu  
 Qu'il s'en sont a moy attendu.  
 Mais einsois averai ditte  
 D'un petit de ma qualité.

3550 Je suis Mesure mesuree,  
 En tous bons fais amesuree,  
 Et aussi sui je mesurans,  
 Ferme, seüre, et bien durans  
 A ceuls qui vuelent sans ruser  
 Justement de mesure user;  
 3555 Et qui non, aveingne qu'aveingne.  
 De son damage li souveingne.  
 Dont uns maistres de grant science  
 Et de tres bonne conscience  
 A un sien deciple enseingne  
 3560 Et li moustre de moy l'enseingne,  
 Disant; 'Amis, je te chastoy;  
 Se tu ne mes Mesure en toy,  
 Elle s'i mettra maugré tien.  
 Ceste parole bien retien:  
 3565 S'elle s'i met, tu es peris;  
 Se tu l'i mes, tu es garis.'  
 Or vueil passer les poins tout outre  
 Qu'Avis et Congnoissance moustre.  
 Il ont servi courtoisement  
 3570 De leur bon conseil largement,

- 3525 But let us look to the nature  
Of Discretion as he himself understands it.  
He provides counsel free and clear,  
Expecting no reward at all in return  
Except that the judge might do  
3530 What would bring peace, honor, and thanks.  
And Understanding, his companion,  
Accompanies him for the same salary,  
Without demanding anything further;  
And so a trustworthy judge rests easy,  
3535 One advised by such as these.  
Therefore, sire, you ought to be happy about it.  
Although they have spoken ably,  
I will say something more about a point  
Discretion has taken notice of —  
3540 And yet has not described at length —  
And that Understanding has understood.  
Now in this case they have been obliged  
To exert themselves to honor me;  
And so I will offer it to you  
3545 Because I have certainly noticed  
They have paid me due heed.  
Even so, I will go ahead and say  
Some things about my nature.

- I am moderated Moderation,  
3550 Temperate in all good deeds,  
And also I am moderating,  
Firm, stable, and strong in endurance  
For all who wish without trickery  
To make proper use of moderation;  
3555 And whoever does not, what will be, will be.  
And let him be mindful of his own hurt.  
In this regard, a master of great wisdom,  
Who had a very virtuous conscience,  
Was instructing his disciple  
3560 And explaining the teachings about me,  
Saying: 'Friend, I admonish you.  
If you do not acquire Moderation yourself,  
She will make herself felt in you regardless.  
Remember this saying well:  
3565 If she comes to you, you are done for.  
But if you welcome her, you will be all right.'  
Now I would like to review thoroughly all the points  
Discretion and Understanding raise.  
They have served out generously  
3570 And courteously their good advice,

Si comme on sert a un mengier,  
Sans rien d'espacial jugier.  
Et de ce qu'il ont bien servi,  
Dont il ont grace desservi,  
3575 J'en vorray l'escot assener,  
Et a chascun son droit donner.  
Guillaumes, qui en ses affaires  
Soloit estre si debonnaires,  
Si honestes et si courtois,  
3580 Enclins aus amoureus chastois,  
A attenté contre Franchise,  
Et tout de sa premiere assise,  
Quant ma dame a point l'aprocha  
Dou fait qu'elle li reprocha,  
3585 Et il s'en senti aprochiez  
A juste cause et reprochiez.  
Il ala avant par rigueur,  
Et se mist tout sa vigueur  
Pour lui deffendre encontre li.  
3590 Cils poins fort me desabeli,  
Pour ce qu'il se desmesura:  
Par ces raisons de Mesure ha  
Les regles et les poins perdus,  
Dont il sera moult esperdus  
3595 Quant a moy le retourneray;  
Car d'onner le destourneray  
Quant Congnoissance li dira  
Le meffait que fait avera.  
Il deüst avoir mesuré  
3600 L'estat dou gent corps honnouré  
De celle dame souvereinne;  
Qu'en tout le crestien demainne  
N'a homme, s'il la congnoissoit,  
— C'est bon a croire qu'einsi soit —  
3605 Qui hautement ne l'onnourast  
Et qui de li ne mesurast  
Humble et courtoise petitesse  
Au resgart de sa grant noblesse.  
Dont Guillaumes est deceüs  
3610 Quant il ne s'en est perceüs.  
Car trop hautement commensa,  
Dont petitement s'avansa.  
Pour bien sa cause soustenir;  
Eins est assez pour li punir.  
3615 Or veons au fait proprement  
Dés le premier commencement,  
Pour bien deviser les parties,

- Just as one serves at a meal,  
Without judging the particulars of the case.  
And since they have served well,  
They have earned thanks.
- 3575 I would like to add up the bill  
And give everyone his due.  
Guillaume, who once was  
So well mannered in all his actions,  
So honest and courteous as well,
- 3580 Conforming to the chastisements of love,  
Launched an attack against Frankness  
And all those of her high rank  
When my lady properly approached him  
About the deed she reprimanded him for,
- 3585 And he felt himself upbraided  
For just case and reproached as well.  
He then proceeded forcefully,  
Putting every effort into it,  
To defend himself against her.
- 3590 This fact distresses me a great deal  
Because he acted immoderately.  
For these reasons, he has abandoned  
The rules and principles of Moderation,  
And this will trouble him greatly
- 3595 When I bring him back to me;  
For I will turn him away from honor  
When Understanding informs him  
Of the misdeed he has committed.  
He should have properly measured
- 3600 The station of the gentle, honored person  
Of that sovereign lady;  
For in all the Christian realm  
There is no man who, if he knew her  
— And it is good to believe it would be so —
- 3605 Would not honor her highly  
And would not measure himself  
As humble and of lesser courtliness  
In regard to her great nobility;  
And so Guillaume was deceived
- 3610 When he did not perceive this.  
For he began much too haughtily,  
And so has advanced himself but little  
In the competent presentation of his case.  
And this is quite enough to have him punished.
- 3615 Now let us look to the issue itself  
From its proper commencement  
In order to distinguish between the parties,

Comment elles sont departies,  
A savoir la quele se tort.  
3620 Je di que Guillaumes a tort,  
Car de tous les crueus meschiés  
La mort en est li propres chiés;  
fol. 45v A dire est que tous meschiés passe,  
Et pour ce que nuls n'en respasse.  
3625 Car on se puet trop miex passer  
De ce dont on puet respasser.  
Plus de vueil de ce fait espondre,  
Car j'ay assez, pour lui confondre,  
D'autres choses trop plus greveinnes,  
3630 Simples, foles, vuides, et veinnes.

Sires juges, or m'entendez;  
Pour la fin a quoy vous tendez,  
De rendre loial jugement,  
Je vueil un po viser comment  
3635 On a alligué de ce plait.  
Et vous meïsmes, s'il vous plait,  
.I. petit y resgarderez  
Si que miex vous en garderez  
De jugier autrement qu'a point.  
3640 Car vous congnoisterez le point  
De quoy justice est a point pointe  
Quant juges sus bon droit s'apointe.  
Je vueil que vous soiez certains  
Que Guillaumes doit estre attains  
3645 De son plait en celle partie  
Ou sa cause est mal plaidöie,  
Non obstant ce qu'en tous endrois  
Par tout est contre lui li drois;  
Dont ma dame a tout sormonté,  
3650 Tant dou plait com de la bonté  
De sa querelle, qui est toute  
Mise en clarté et hors de doute.  
Ma dame, par ses damoiselles,  
A alligué raisons tres beles  
3655 Et toutes choses veritables,  
Fermes, seüres, et estables,  
Toutes traitez de l'escriture  
Et ramenees a droiture.  
Mais qui tout vorroit deviser,  
3660 Trop y averoit a viser.  
Et, d'autre part, chose est certainne:  
Que la court en est assez pleinne  
De tout ce qu'on a volu dire

- How they are divided,  
In order to learn which one is in error.
- 3620 I say Guillaume is wrong,  
For of all cruel misfortunes,  
Death is the absolute worst;  
Which is to say, it surpasses all miseries,  
And that is because no one recovers from it.
- 3625 For a person can suffer more easily  
What he can recover from.  
I do not wish to go on further,  
For to condemn him I have enough  
Evidence, much more grievous things that are
- 3630 Simpleminded, foolish, inane, and vainglorious.
- Sir judge, now listen to me;  
For the sake of the goal at which you aim,  
Namely the rendering of a faithful judgment,  
I wish to consider somewhat
- 3635 How this trial was conducted.  
And if you please, look  
Into this a little yourself  
So you can the better refrain  
From judging in any but the proper fashion.
- 3640 For you will recognize the point  
On which justice is properly fixed  
When a judge aims at true justice.  
I want you to be certain  
That Guillaume is to be reproached
- 3645 For the part of his argument  
That has been badly presented,  
Notwithstanding that in every way  
And in everything the law is against him;  
And so my lady is completely victorious,
- 3650 As much in the debate as in the correctness  
Of her complaint, which has been completely  
Clarified and put out of doubt.  
My lady has through her damsels  
Alleged quite pertinent reasons
- 3655 And facts that are all true,  
Firm, assured, and unassailable,  
All drawn from written tradition  
And connected to the law.  
But whoever might want to recount all this
- 3660 Would have too much to consider here.  
And, furthermore, one thing is certain:  
The court has been sufficiently provided  
With all that anyone wished to say

- De par ma dame sans mesdire;  
 3665 Si que de ma dame me tais.  
     Et de Guillaume, qui entais  
     A esté d'alliguer s'entente,  
     Parleray — car il me talente —,  
     De son plaidié seulement.
- 3670 Et se m'en passerai briefment,  
     Foy que devez tous vos amis.  
     Veons qu'il a en terme mis:  
     Dou clerc qui hors dou sens devint,  
     A il prouvé dont ce li vint,
- 3675 Que ce li venist de sa dame?  
     Sires juges, foy que doi m'ame,  
     Il n'en a nulle riens prouvé;  
     Se li doit estre reprové.  
     Et dou chevalier qui par ire
- 3680 Pour ce qu'il ne se volt desdire  
     Copa son doi a tout l'anel,  
     Il fist en s'onieur .i. crenel  
     De honte pleinne de sotie  
     Avec tres grant forcenerie
- 3685 Quant a sa dame l'envoia.  
     Car bien croy qu'il li enuya;  
     Au mains li dut il ennuier  
     D'un si fait present envoyer.  
     Car quant dame son amy aimme,
- 3690 Dou droit d'Amours pour sien le claimme  
     Et puet clamer, ce m'est avis.  
     Or resgardons sus ce devis  
     Comment li chevaliers meffist:  
     Ce qu'elle amoit, il le deffist,
- 3695 Q'estoit sien dou droit d'Amour;  
     Dont je fais ci une clamour  
     Contre Guillaume de ce fait,  
     Que avis m'est qu'il n'a riens fait,  
     Car cils poins qu'il a mis en prueve
- 3700 Sa cause punist et reprovee.  
     Et aussi de la Chastelainne  
     De Vergi, a petite peinne
- fol. 46r Assez reprover le porray  
     Par les raisons que je diray:
- 3705 Li fais que Guillaumes soustient,  
     Sire, vous savez qu'il contient  
     Qu'amans, garnis de loiauté,  
     Truist en sa dame fausseté.  
     Et sus ceste devision
- 3710 Il fait une allegation,

- On my lady's behalf with no infamy;  
3665 And so I will be silent about my lady.  
And concerning Guillaume, who has been  
Intent on arguing his case,  
I will say something — for I wish to do so —  
But only in regard to his pleading.
- 3670 And I will pass over this quickly  
By the faith you owe all your friends.  
Let us see what he has brought up.  
Concerning the clerk who went mad,  
Has he proved what caused this,
- 3675 That it was something his lady did?  
Sir judge, by the faith I owe my soul,  
He has proved nothing of the kind;  
And so he ought to be reproved.  
And concerning the knight who in his anguish
- 3680 Not to violate his pledge  
Cut off his finger with the ring still on it,  
He erected in her honor a monument  
Full of shame and madness  
When in a fit of great craziness
- 3685 The man sent it on to his lady.  
For I certainly believe she found it troubling,  
Or at least it should have troubled her  
To have sent her such a thing as a present.  
For when a lady loves her lover,
- 3690 By the law of Love she claims him as her own  
And has the right to claim an injury, so I think.  
Now let us consider how in regard  
To this principle the knight erred.  
The thing she loved he harmed,
- 3695 And it was hers by the law of Love;  
And so I lodge a complaint  
Against Guillaume on this point  
Because I think he has accomplished nothing.  
For this instance he has presented as evidence
- 3700 Damages and undermines his case.  
And also, in regard to the Chatelaine  
Of Vergy, I can refute this example  
Sufficiently with only a little trouble,  
Using the reasons I will here rehearse.
- 3705 The evidence that Guillaume adduces,  
Sire, you know contends  
That the lover, filled with loyalty,  
Found falseness in his lady.  
And beginning with this assumption,
- 3710 He makes an allegation

Pour prouver par .i. fait contraire.  
 La chasteleinne debonnaire  
 N'avoit son ami riens meffait.  
 Mais il meïsmes fist le fait  
 3715 Pour quoy elle se mist a mort.  
 Quant il le sceut, il se remort  
 Et se mist en la congoissance  
 Qu'il y apartenoit vengence;  
 Dont il meïsmes se juga,  
 3720 Punist dou tout et corriga,  
 Dont Guillaumes a par son dit  
 Pour son profit meins que nient dit.  
 Plus n'en di; mais Raisons dira  
 Ci aprés ce qu'il li plaira."

### L'ACTEUR

3725 A ces mos s'est Raison drecié  
 Comme sage et bien adrecié,

### RAISON

Disant: "Raiions en consistoire.  
 La porrons par parole voire,  
 Ce m'est vis, bon jugement rendre,  
 3730 S'il est qui bien le sache entendre."  
 Atant de la se departirent.  
 Es propres lieus se rasseïrent  
 Ou il avoient devant sis.  
 Lors dist Raisons par mos rassis:  
 3735 "Sire juges, certainnement  
 Chose n'a sous le firmament  
 Qui ne tende a conclusion:  
 Les unes a perfection  
 Pour pluseurs cas de leur droit tendent;  
 3740 Et si a autres qui descendant  
 De haut ou elles ont esté  
 En declinant d'un temps d'esté  
 En l'iver qu'on dit anientir.  
 Dont cils plais desire a sentir  
 3745 De droit conclusion hastyve  
 Par sentence diffinitive,  
 Pour ce qui est bien pris parfaire  
 Et ce qui est mal pris deffaire.  
 Et il est temps, bien le savez,  
 3750 Que desormais dire en devez,  
 Ou ordener qu'on en dira."

- To be proven by a contrary fact.  
The respectable chatelaine  
Did not wrong her lover in any way.  
Instead, he himself did  
3715 What caused her to kill herself.  
When he found out, he felt remorse  
And came to the recognition  
That vengeance was required;  
And so he passed judgment on himself,  
3720 Punished and corrected himself for everything,  
And thus Guillaume, with all he has said,  
Has said less than nothing to his profit.  
I will say no more; rather Reason will say  
Whatever she wishes.”

**THE AUTHOR**

- 3725 At these words, Reason stood up  
In the manner of one well schooled and wise,

**REASON**

- Saying, “Let us return to the council room.  
There we can with truthful speech  
Render a truthful judgment, I think,  
3730 If there is any man capable of understanding it.”  
At once they left that place.  
And they again sat down in their own seats  
Where they had sat earlier.  
With measured words, Reason then said:  
3735 “Sir judge, certainly  
There is nothing beneath the firmament  
That does not seek its proper end:  
Some things tend toward perfection  
For various reasons pertaining to their own laws;  
3740 And there are yet others that descend  
From on high where they have been,  
Declining from a season of summer  
Into the so-called winter of destruction.  
Just so, this pleading is tending to arrive at  
3745 A speedy conclusion according to the law  
Through a definitive sentence,  
So as to perfect what has been done well  
And remedy what has been done badly.  
And the moment has arrived, as well you know,  
3750 When you must speak of it  
Or command that it be spoken of.”

**LE JUGE**

“Raison, dame, ne m’avenra  
 Que j’en die, quant ad present.  
 Mais je reçoy bien le present  
 3755 D’ordener. Et de m’ordenance,  
 Mais qu’il soit a notre plaisir,  
 Dites en et tant en faciez  
 Que le tort dou tout effaciez  
 Et metez le droit en couleur  
 3760 De toute honnourable honneur,  
 Qui savez en tels couleurs teindre  
 Ou nuls fors vous ne puet ateindre.”

**GUILLAUME**

Lors Raisons .i. po s’arresta  
 Et puis sus destre s’acota,  
 3765 En regardant devers senestre,  
 Pour miex aviser de mon estre.

**RAISON**

Se me dist: “Guillaume, biaus sire,  
 Vous avez piessa oÿ dire  
 Que c’est folie d’entreprendre  
 3770 Plus que pooirs ne puet estendre.  
 Et toute voie, s’on emprent  
 Aucun fait de quoy on mesprend,  
 S’on s’en repent au moiien point,  
 Encor y vient il bien a point.  
 3775 Mais qui son forfait continue  
 Et dou parfaire s’esvertue  
 Jusqu’a tant qu’il vient au darrain,  
 fol. 46v Et a ce point ne trueve rien  
 Fors que son dueil et son damage,  
 3780 Se lors recongnoist son outrage,  
 Il vient trop tart au repentir.  
 Guillaume, sachiez sans mentir,  
 Qu’ensement avez vous ouvré.  
 S’en avez un dueil recouvré  
 3785 Q’vous venra procheinement,  
 Et se vous durra longuement,  
 Voire, se ne vous repentez.  
 Mais je croy que vous estes, telz  
 Que vous ne le deingnuries faire.  
 3790 Car trop fustes de rude affaire,  
 Quant la dame vous aprocha  
 D’un fait qu’elle vous reprocha  
 Que fait aviés en temps passé.

**THE JUDGE**

“Lady Reason, it is not fitting for me  
To speak at this present time.  
But I receive well the notion  
3755 Of deciding. And concerning my decision,  
So that it may be to our liking,  
It is up to you to say and do  
Enough to efface everything wrong  
And restore the right to the hue  
3760 Of every honorable honor,  
You who can paint in such colors  
As no one else save you can manage.”

**GUILLAUME**

Then Reason halted a little  
And leaned toward her right,  
3765 While glancing to her left  
In order to see better how I was doing,

**REASON**

And she said to me: “Guillaume, fair sir,  
You have just now heard said  
It is madness to take on  
3770 More than ability can compass.  
And yet when a man undertakes to do  
Something that gives offense,  
If he repents in the middle,  
Then he will still make out all right.  
3775 But he who persists in his error  
And exerts himself to see it through  
Until he comes right to the very end,  
And at that point he finds nothing  
Except his own grief and harm,  
3780 If then he acknowledges his own misdeed,  
He comes too late to repentance.  
Guillaume, be sure — and it’s no lie —  
This is how you have carried on,  
And so you have merited some unpleasantness  
3785 That will soon fall to your lot,  
And it will long endure,  
Truly, if you do not repent.  
But I believe you are the kind of man  
Who will not deign to do so,  
3790 For you were quite rude in your behavior  
When the lady approached you  
About the deed for which she reproached you,  
Something you did some time ago.

- Se vous heüssiez compassé  
 3795 En vous aucune congoissance  
 Qui fust signes de repentence  
 De ce que vous aviez mespris  
 Contre les dames de haut pris,  
 Vous heüssiez fait moult que sages.
- 3800 Car d'Amours est tels li usages  
 Que s'aucuns des dames mesdit,  
 S'il ne s'en refreint et desdit,  
 Amender le doit hautement  
 Ou comparer moult chierement.
- 3805 Or de ce meffait premerein  
 Vous di de par le souverain  
 Amours, q'est maistres et sires,  
 Des plaies amoureuses mires:  
 Jugemens en est ordenez
- 3810 Dou quel vous estez condempnez.  
 Si qu'amender le vous couvient;  
 Hastivement li termes vient.  
 Encor vous puis je commander  
 Si qu'il vous couvient amender
- 3815 Un autre fait qui me desplait,  
 De ce q'vous prenistes plait  
 Contre dame de tel vaillance  
 Et de si tres noble puissance,  
 Que je ne say haute personne,
- 3820 Tant com li siecles environne,  
 Prince ne duc, conte ne roy,  
 Qui osast faire tel desroy,  
 Guillaume, comme vous feïstes  
 Dou plait qu'a li entrepreïstes.
- 3825 Et meïstes force et vigueur  
 En aler avant par rigueur;  
 Einsi l'avez continué;  
 S'avez vostre sens desnué  
 De courtoisie et d'ordenance.
- 3830 Se ce ne fust la pacïence  
 Qui est en li, vous perdissiez  
 Tant qu'a meschief le portissiez."

### GUILLAUME

- Quant j'oy ce, je fui dolens;  
 Mais je ne fui feintis ne lens  
 3835 De li demander humblement  
 Qu'elle me devisast briefment  
 De la dame la verité  
 D'un petit de sa poësté.

- If you had shown in yourself  
3795 Any recognition of this at all,  
Which would have been a sign of repentance  
For having committed this wrong  
Against ladies of great worthiness,  
You would have acted very much the wise man.
- 3800 For the custom of Love is such  
That when any man vilifies women,  
If he does not recant and henceforth refrain  
From so doing, he must make great amends  
Or pay a very high price.
- 3805 Now concerning this initial misdeed  
I tell you on behalf of sovereign  
Love, who is master and lord,  
The physician for the wounds of love,  
Namely that a judgment has been rendered
- 3810 Condemning you in this matter.  
And so it is necessary you make amends;  
The time for this quickly approaches.  
In addition, I am empowered to order  
You to make amends
- 3815 For another deed that displeases me,  
In that you undertook to debate  
A lady of such worthiness  
And of such very noble authority  
That no highborn person I know of,
- 3820 So far as the world extends,  
No prince or duke, count or king,  
Would dare commit such an outrage,  
Guillaume, as the one you did  
In the dispute you undertook against her.
- 3825 And you put into this force and vigor  
As you proceeded aggressively;  
And you've continued in the same vein.  
In this way, you have stripped your mind  
Of courtesy and respectfulness.
- 3830 And if she did not have the patience  
That she does, you would have lost so much  
You would have come to grief."

**GUILLAUME**

- Hearing this, I was distressed;  
But I was neither abashed nor hesitant  
3835 To ask her humbly  
If she would briefly explain to me  
The truth about the lady  
And something about her powers.

**RAISON**

- Lors dist: "Guillaume, volentiers.  
 3840 Mais je n'en dirai hui le tiers,  
 Non mie, par Dieu, le centisme.  
 Car dés le ciel jusques en bisme  
 Ses puissances par tout s'espandent,  
 Et de ses puissances descendant  
 3845 Circonstances trop mervilleuses,  
 Et sont a dire perilleuses,  
 Qui s'apruevent par leur contraire.  
 Par ces raisons s'en couvient taire  
 Pour les entendemens divers  
 3850 Qui sont aucune fois pervers.  
 La dame a nom Bonneürté,  
 Qui tient en sa main Seürté  
 En la partie de Fortune.  
 Car il n'est personne nesune  
 3855 Cui Fortune peüst abatre,  
 fol. 47r Se la dame le vuet debatre.  
 Et quant elle vuet en Nature  
 Ouvrer par especial cure,  
 La la voit on sans nul moien  
 3860 Voire li astronomien  
 Qui congnoissent les nations  
 Parmi les constellations,  
 C'est assavoir és enfans nestre  
 De quel couvine il doivent estre.  
 3865 Dont, quant la chiere dame regne  
 Et uns enfés naïst en son regne,  
 Se Bonneürtez l'entrepren,  
 Nature point ne l'en reprend,  
 Eins l'en laist moult bien couvenir,  
 3870 Comment qu'il en doie avenir.  
 Voirs est que Nature norrit  
 Par quoy li enfés vit et rit.  
 Et Bonneürtez le demeinne  
 Tout parmi l'eüreus demainne,  
 3875 Tant qu'il est temps qu'en lui appere  
 Que de Bonneürté se pere.
- Or sont celle gent si parent,  
 Dont elle est en euls apparent  
 Parmi le bien qu'il en reçoivent,  
 3880 Afin que ne lui n'en deçoivent.  
 Or vous vueil je dire en appert  
 En quels manieres elle appert,  
 En aucunes, non pas en toutes;

**REASON**

- Then she said: "Guillaume, willingly.  
3840 But today I will not describe even a third,  
No, not even a hundredth part.  
For from the sky down to the pit of hell,  
Her powers extend through all things,  
And from these powers flow  
3845 Quite marvelous results,  
Things that are dangerous to utter  
And show this through their contraries.  
For these reasons, it is well to pass them over in silence  
Because of faulty understandings,  
3850 And these sometimes are perverse.  
The lady's name is Happiness,  
And she holds Security by the hand  
Among the company of Fortune.  
For there is no person  
3855 Whom Fortune can bring down  
If the lady wishes to contest it.  
And when she intends to work through Nature  
Because she has some special concern  
She can be seen there readily  
3860 In truth by the astrologers  
Who recognize the different nations  
Among the constellations,  
That is to say, in the birth of infants,  
To what sign they will belong.  
3865 And so when the dear lady is regnant  
And an infant is born into his sign,  
If Happiness takes charge of him,  
Nature does not take him back from her,  
But instead very much lets her do her will,  
3870 No matter how it is to turn out.  
It is true that Nature takes care of  
How the infant lives and laughs.  
And Happiness leads him  
Into the domain of good luck  
3875 Until the time has come for it to show  
That Happiness is caring for him.
- Now these people are all around us,  
And in them the lady makes herself manifest  
Through the benefits they receive,  
3880 As long as they do not betray her somehow.  
Now I want to tell you specifically  
In what different ways she manifests herself,  
In some, but not in all.

- Et si ne faites nulles doubtes  
 3885 Des paroles que j'en diray,  
 Car de riens ne vous mentiray.  
 Elle appert en prosperité  
 Et en issir de povreté;  
 Elle appert en acquerre amis  
 3890 Et en punir ses anemis  
 Par victoire, sans nul tort faire.  
 Elle appert en tout bon affaire,  
 Et quant elle appert en amours,  
 C'est quant amans, par reclamours,  
 3895 Par servir ou par ses prières  
 Et en toutes bonnes manieres,  
 Puet en pais de dame joïr  
 Dou droit especial joïr,  
 Qu'Amours donne de sa franchise.  
 3900 La est Bonneürtés assise  
 Entre ami et loial amie  
 Qui ne vuelent que courtoisie  
 Et ont par certainne affiance  
 Li uns a l'autre grant fiance.  
 3905 La les tient elle en moult grant point.  
 Elle est a tous biens mettre a point.  
 S'en est moult plus gaie et plus cointe.  
 Elle est de tous les biens acointe.  
 Elle appert en mains esbanois,  
 3910 Tant en joustes comme en tournois,  
 Pour chevalerie essaucier  
 Et les fais des bons avancier  
 A la congnoissance des dames.  
 La croist honneur; la chiet diffames.  
 3915 Car tels a esté diffamez  
 Qui puis est chieris et amez  
 De ceuls qui ains le diffamoient,  
 Pour ce qu'apertement veoient  
 Qu'il met son corps en aventure;  
 3920 Dont tels fois est qu'il aventure  
 Dou fait d'armes qu'il a empris,  
 Tant qu'il vient au souverein pris.  
 Einsi Bonneürtez avance  
 Les siens de sa haute puissance.  
 3925 Se Bonneürtez par nature,  
 Par fortune ou selonc droiture,  
 Appert en la chevalerie,  
 Elle appert aussi en clergie.  
 La tient elle honneur en ses mains.

- And have no doubt of any kind  
3885 About the words I will speak,  
For in no way will I lie.  
She appears in prosperity  
And in the leaving behind of poverty.  
She is there in the making of friends  
3890 And in the punishment of enemies  
Through a victory, without any wrongdoing.  
She appears in every good deed,  
And when she is present in love,  
It is that the lover, through his demands,  
3895 Through his service and pleadings,  
And because of proper deeds of all kinds,  
Is able to enjoy his lady in peace,  
To take pleasure in the special privilege  
Love grants in her generosity.  
3900 There Happiness sits  
Between the lover and loyal beloved,  
Those who wish for only what is courtly  
And who have by an explicit pledge  
Placed great trust in one another.  
3905 She sustains them in a quite grand style.  
All goods are hers to bestow properly.  
And so she is much more gay and friendly.  
She is acquainted with all good things.  
She appears in many diversions,  
3910 In jousts as much as in tourneys,  
In order to exalt chivalry  
And advance the deeds of good men  
In the understanding of women.  
There honor grows; there infamy falls away.  
3915 For the man who has been maligned  
Is afterward cherished and loved  
By those who spoke ill of him  
Because they see openly  
That he puts his life at risk;  
3920 And so the time comes when he takes his chance  
In a trial of arms he embarks upon,  
Until in the end he rises to the highest rank.  
In this way Happiness advances  
Her own through her great power.  
3925 If Happiness through Nature,  
Or by fortune, or according to custom  
Does appear in chivalry,  
She also appears in learning.  
There she holds honor in her hands.

- 3930 A l'un plus et a l'autre mains  
 En fait ses larges departies;  
 S'en donne les plus grans parties  
 A ceuls qui tiennent miex l'adresse  
 Ou Bonneürtés les adresse.
- 3935 Aussi appert elle en science,  
 fol. 47v Et se s'enclot en conscience,  
 Pour garder ceuls aucune fois  
 En cui est pais et bonne fois,  
 Qui n'ont pas par voie autentique
- 3940 Mis leur scens en fourme publique,  
 Eins sont sage secretement.  
 La se tient elle closement;  
 La li tiennent grant compaignie  
 Loiaus Secrez et Bonne Vie.
- 3945 La se vuet elle reposer  
 Et les cuers a point disposer  
 En la vie contemplative.  
 Or revient par la voie active  
 Pour esmouvoir ceuls de parler
- 3950 Qui tiennent volentiers parler  
 Des biens de contemplation;  
 Dont maint, par bonne entention,  
 S'enlcinent si a sa doctrine  
 Que chascuns par soy se doctrine
- 3955 D'estre diligens et hastis  
 De devenir contemplatis.  
 Que vous iroie je contant?  
 En Bonneürté a de biens tant  
 Que jamais n'aroie compté
- 3960 Le centisme de sa bonté.  
 Dont au monde n'a grant signeur  
 Ne dame, tant aient d'onneur,  
 Qu'il ne leur fust et bel et gent,  
 S'estre pooient de sa gent.
- 3965 Atant m'en tais; je n'en di plus,  
 Mais que venir vueil au seurplus  
 Des .ij. poins dont condamnés estes.  
 Et s'ay mes raisons toutes prestes  
 Dou tiers point que je vous diray,
- 3970 Dou quel je vous condempneray.
- Il est bien veritable chose  
 Que s'aucuns a .i. plait s'oppose  
 S'il se trait a production  
 Et il vient a probation,  
 3975 Se s'entention bien ne prueve,

- 3930 More to one and less to another  
She makes her generous distribution;  
And she gives out the greatest shares  
To those who obey better the summons  
Happiness issues them.
- 3935 She is also manifest in knowledge  
And encloses herself within the mind  
In order to safeguard at times those  
In whom are peace and good faith,  
Those who have not in any acknowledged fashion
- 3940 Put their wisdom into a public form,  
But rather are wise in secret.  
In them she keeps herself hidden;  
And in them Faithful Secrets and Good Living  
Afford her good companionship.
- 3945 And there she wishes to rest  
And appropriately turn those hearts  
Toward the contemplative life.  
Then by the active path she returns  
To encourage those to speak
- 3950 Who willingly hold discussion  
About the virtues of contemplation.  
And therefore many, with good intentions,  
Then incline themselves to her teachings,  
So they each teach themselves on their own
- 3955 How to be diligent and eager  
To become contemplative.  
Why should I go on speaking about this to you?  
Happiness possesses so many goods  
Never might I have related
- 3960 The hundredth part of her virtue.  
So in the world there is no great lord,  
No lady, however much honor they might possess,  
For whom it would not be pleasing and noble  
If they could be among her company.
- 3965 Now I will be silent. I will say no more about her,  
But deal instead with what remains  
Of the two counts on which you have been condemned.  
And I have my thoughts in order  
For what I intend to tell you about the third count
- 3970 On which I shall condemn you.
- It is certainly an indisputable fact  
That if someone opposes a complaint,  
Busies himself with producing evidence,  
And then comes to the test,  
3975 Yet fails to prove his view adequately,

Verité de droit li repreuve  
 Qu'il en doit estre condempnez.  
 Cils drois est de si long temps nez  
 Qu'il n'est memoire dou contraire.  
 3980 Or veons a quoy je vueil traire,  
 Et s'entendez bien a mon dit:  
 De quanque la dame vous dit  
 De son fait, vous vous opposastes  
 Et dou prouver vous avansastes.  
 3985 Mais vous avez si mal prouvé  
 Qu'il vous doit estre reprové  
 A vostre condempnation,  
 Selonc la mienne entention.  
 Vous n'avez ci dit que paroles  
 3990 Qui sont aussi comme frivoles.  
 Belles sont a conter en chambre,  
 Mais elles ne contiennent membre  
 Dont pourfis vous peüst venir  
 Pour vostre prueve soustenir.  
 3995 Et si avons si bien gardé  
 Com nous poons, et regardé,  
 Pour querir loyal jugement.  
 S'il vous plaist a savoir comment,  
 On vous en dira les parties,  
 4000 Comment elles sont departies.  
 Et de vostre erreur tous les poins.  
 Et se vous veez qu'il soit poins  
 Qu'on vous die vostre sentence,  
 Se nous dites que vos cuers pense.  
 4005 Qu'il vous en plaist, on le fera  
 Si a point que bien souffira."

### GUILLAUME

"Dame, bien vous ay entendu,  
 Et s'ay bonne piece attendu  
 Que je fusse sentenciez.  
 4010 Se vous pri que vous en soiez  
 Diligens de moy delivrer,  
 Quant a ma sentence livrer.  
 Dés que mes fais est si estrois  
 Que je doy des amendes trois  
 fol. 48r Et qu'autrement ne puet aler,  
 4016 Je n'en quier plus faire parler."

### RAISON

"Guillaume, soiez tous certains  
 Que de droit y estes ateins;

- The truth of the law then reproves him  
And he must be condemned.  
This legal principle arose so long ago  
There is no memory of its contrary.
- 3980 Now let us see what I wish to recount,  
So listen carefully to what I say.  
Whatever the lady told you  
About her evidence, you opposed,  
And you tried to offer proof for your view.
- 3985 Yet you have so badly failed to prove it  
You ought to be reprimanded  
And, as a consequence, condemned  
In my opinion.  
You have said nothing here save
- 3990 Words that are frivolous.  
They are pretty to mouth in private,  
But they contain no substance  
To afford you an advantage  
In sustaining the proof of your case.
- 3995 And so we have looked into and  
Examined this case as best we could  
In order to seek out a faithful judgment.  
If it pleases you to know the particulars,  
You will be told about the different opinions,
- 4000 And how they are distributed to those involved,  
And also all aspects of your error.  
And if you see it might be time  
For your sentence to be pronounced,  
Then tell us what you think in your heart.
- 4005 For whatever pleases you, it will be done  
Thoroughly enough to satisfy you.”

### GUILLAUME

- “Lady, I have listened to you quite well  
And have waited some time  
To be sentenced.
- 4010 So I beg you to be diligent  
About delivering me to it,  
That is, about granting me my sentence.  
Since what I did is so serious,  
Three amends are required,
- 4015 And since things cannot go otherwise,  
I do not wish to discuss the matter further.”

### REASON

- “Guillaume, be completely assured  
That you have received justice here.

Se n'en serons point negligens.  
 4020 Or soiez aussi diligens,  
     Et puis maintenant vous levez  
     Pour faire ce que vous devez  
     Vers celui qui pour juge siet.  
     S'en fera ce que bon l'en siet.  
 4025 Dés or mais a lui appartient,  
     Car tout le droit en sa main tient."

### GUILLAUME

A ce mot au juge en alay  
 Et d'un genouil m'agonouillay.  
 La li presentai je mon corps  
 4030 Par si couvenable recors,  
     Comme je peüs et li sceüs dire;  
     Dont il prist un petit a rire.  
     Lors pris mes gans, si li tendi;  
     Dont il qui bien y entendi  
 4035 Les prist, et puis si les laissa.  
     Aprés .i. po se rabaissa,  
     Si que secondelement les prist,  
     Puis les laissa, puis les reprist,  
     En signe de moy moustrer voie  
 4040 Que troie amendes li devoie.  
     Moult bien le me signefia,  
     Et pour verité m'affia  
     Qu'il les me couvenrooit paier.  
     Lors me dist il, sans delaier,  
 4045 Que je me ralasse seoir,  
     Car il se voloit pourveoir  
     Quel penitence il me donroit,  
     Et que brief m'en delivreroit.  
  
 Lors pres de la dame se trait,  
 4050 Et Raison aussi, tout attrait,  
     A leur secret conseil se mist  
     Et de bas parler s'entremist.  
     Mais a leur parler bassement  
     Pris un petit d'aligement,  
 4055 Pour ce que je bien percevoie  
     Que leurs consaus estoit de joie,  
     Car d'eures en autres rioient,  
     Et a ce droit point qu'il estoient  
     Au plus estoit de leur conseil,  
 4060 Avis me dist: "Je vous conseil  
     Que ceste dame resgardez  
     Et songneusement entendez

- And we will not be negligent in any way.  
4020 But now you should be just as diligent.  
So get on your feet at this time  
To do what you should do  
In the presence of that man who sits as judge.  
And then he will do what he thinks right.  
4025 From now on the matter rests with him  
Since he holds in his hands all the legal power."

**GUILLAUME**

- At this word, I went over to the judge  
And got down on one knee.  
There I offered my person to him  
4030 In as appropriate a speech  
As I was able and knew how to deliver.  
And it made him smile a little.  
I then took my gloves and tendered them to him.  
And he who paid this close attention  
4035 Seized and then dropped them.  
In a moment, he leaned down again  
And took them up a second time,  
Then letting them drop, then taking them up once more  
As a sign to demonstrate to me how  
4040 I owed him three payments for damages.  
Quite well he signified this to me,  
Assuring me in truth  
That I would have to pay them.  
Then without hesitation he told me  
4045 I should go back and sit down,  
For he wished to look to  
What penance he would assign me,  
And to this he would shortly deliver me.
- Then he drew up close to the lady,  
4050 As did Reason, quite demurely,  
And he counseled privately with them,  
Taking care to speak softly.  
But in their whispering  
I found some relief,  
4055 Because I saw well  
Their council was a pleasant one,  
For from time to time they laughed,  
And just at that moment when they were  
Most seriously deliberating,  
4060 Discretion said to me: "I advise you  
To look at this lady  
And attend carefully to

- Aus drois poins de sa qualité.  
 La verrez vous grant quantité  
 4065 De sa grace et de son effort.  
 S'en averez le cuer plus fort  
 Pour endurer et pour souffrir  
 Ce que drois vous vorra offrir.”  
 Lors li dis je: “Biaus dous amis,  
 4070 Mais vous m'en faites le devis  
 Qui congnoissez de moult de choses  
 Les apparans et les encloses.  
 Souvent en estes a l'essay,  
 C'est une chose que bien say.”
- 4075 Adont dist Avis: “Ce vaut fait.  
 Or entendez bien tout a fait:  
 Quant aus parties deviser,  
 Se bien vous volez aviser,  
 Elle ot vestu une chemise  
 4080 Qui est appellee Franchise  
 Pour secrés amans afranchir  
 Et de Sobreté enrichir  
 En la partie de Silence  
 Parmi l'acort de Congnoissance.  
 4085 Car pour tant qu'elle n'est veüe  
 Sa cause doit estre teüe.  
 Et sa pelice, c'est Simplesse  
 Si souëf que point ne la blesse,  
 Car elle est de Beniveillance,  
 4090 Orfroisié de Soufissance,  
 A pelles de Douce Plaisance  
 Qui bons cuers en tous biens avance.  
 fol. 48v Et li changes qu'elle a vestu  
 Par tres honnourable vertu  
 4095 Fu fais de Loial Acointance  
 Et ridez de Continuance  
 A pointes de Perseverence  
 Egalment, sans desordenance.  
 Or est cils changes biaus et lés,  
 4100 Et est de son droit appellés  
 Pour certainne condition  
 Honneste Conversation.  
 Et la sainture qu'elle ha sainte  
 N'est pas en amours chose fainte,  
 4105 C'est propre loial Couvenance,  
 Cloee de ferme Fiance.  
 Quar qui couvenances affie,  
 Necessité est qu'on s'i fie.

- The rightful aspects of her estate.  
There you will see a great deal  
4065 Of her grace and power.  
And in this way you will have a much stronger heart  
For enduring and for suffering  
Whatever justice she will render you.”  
Then I said to him: “Dear sweet friend,  
4070 You describe these things to me,  
You who know the obvious  
And hidden details of so many things.  
Often you take on such a task;  
That’s something I know well.”
- 4075 Discretion said then: “This merits doing.  
Now pay quick attention:  
As far as describing the parts is concerned,  
If this is something you wish to mark well,  
She has put on a shift  
4080 That is called Frankness  
In order to liberate secret lovers  
And enrich them with Seriousness  
On behalf of Silence,  
With Understanding in agreement.
- 4085 For until she has been seen  
Her cause should be kept silent.  
And her fur tunic, that is Simplicity,  
So soft it does not wound her,  
For it comes from Goodwill,  
4090 Gilt-edged by Sufficiency,  
With the pelts from Sweet Pleasure,  
Who moves good hearts toward every good.  
And the robe with linen sleeves that she wears  
In very honorable virtue  
4095 Was crafted by Loyal Friendship,  
Pleated by Steadfastness  
Tipped with ribbons from Perseverance,  
Neatly, without any disorder.  
Now this robe is beautiful and flowing,  
4100 And by proper right it is called,  
Because of its special status,  
Honest Familiarity,  
And the belt she has girded herself with  
Is no insignificant thing in regard to love,  
4105 For it is properly called Loyal Promise,  
Studded with Stable Commitment,  
For whoever makes promises,  
It is necessary they be trusted.

Et li mordans, pour ce qu'il poise,  
 4110 Sert d'abaissier tençon et noise,  
 Si que jusqu'a ses piez li bat.  
 Et si piet deffont maint debat  
 Entre amie et loial amy,  
 Quant aucuns amans dit: 'Aimy!  
 4115 De ma dame sui refusez;  
 Mais mes drois n'est pas abusez,  
 Car je croy bien qu'elle le fit  
 A s'onner et a mon profit.'  
 Einsi si piet la gent demainne,  
 4120 Cui elle tient en son demainne;  
 Car il sont chaucié d'Aligence,  
 Lacié a laz de Diligence.  
 Et s'a mis blans gans en ses mains,  
 Li quel sont fait ne plus ne mains  
 4125 Entre Charité et Largesse,  
 Dont elle depart la richesse  
 D'Amours qu'on ne puet espuisier  
 Ne par nul jour apetisier.  
 Plus en prent on, plus en demeure  
 4130 De jour en jour et d'eure en heure.

Dou mantel vous vueil avisier  
 Comme il est biaus a deviser,  
 Et mieudres que biaus qui s'en cuevre  
 Par dit, par maintieng, et par ouevre.  
 4135 Lainne de bons Appensemens  
 Avecques courtois Parlemens,  
 Scienteuse Introduction,  
 Et amiable Entention  
 Furent ensamble compilees,  
 4140 De Bonté proprement drapees;  
 Et de ses choses asamblant  
 Fu fais li dras de Bon Samblant,  
 Tains en une gaiе couleur  
 De tres honnourable valeur  
 4145 Qui est appellee Noblesse,  
 Et est fourrez de Gentillesse.  
 Or est Bonneürtez couverte  
 Dou mantel, et est chose aperte  
 Que par dessous tous biens enclot.  
 4150 Mais veritablement esclot  
 Quanqu'il a sous sa couverture  
 Li apparans de sa figure,  
 Si comme en sa fisonomie  
 Li bien de toute courtoisie

- And the belt medallion, because it is heavy,  
4110 Serves to beat down dissension and discord,  
And thus it hangs down all the way to her feet.  
And her feet prevent many an argument  
Between the beloved and loyal lover  
Whenever any lover cries 'Alas!'  
4115 I have been refused by my lady;  
But my right has not been abused,  
For I believe she has done so  
To my profit and to her honor.'  
And so her feet keep this company in line,  
4120 Whomever she holds in her domain;  
For they are shod with Relief,  
Laced with the cord of Diligence.  
And she has put white gloves on her hands,  
Which have been equally made  
4125 By both Charity and Generosity,  
With which she shares out the riches  
Of Love, which cannot be exhausted  
Or reduced as time goes by.  
The more that is taken, the more remains  
4130 From day to day and hour to hour.

- I would like to tell you about the mantle,  
Which is so handsome to describe,  
And he who wears it finds it better than handsome  
In words, demeanor, and deeds.  
4135 The wool of Good Reflection  
Along with Courtly Speech,  
Knowledgeable Introduction,  
And Friendly Intention  
Were woven there together,  
4140 Properly felted by Goodness.  
And the cloth of Good Appearance  
Was made by assembling these things,  
Dyed a merry color  
Of most honorable worthiness  
4145 That is called Nobility,  
And it was lined with Gentility.  
Now Happiness is covered  
With the mantle, and it is obvious  
That all good things are therein enclosed.  
4150 But it reveals, in truth,  
No matter what she is beneath her covering,  
The appearance of her face,  
Which is such that in her features  
The benefits of courtesy of every kind

- 4155 Tres souffissanment y apperent,  
Dont ses damoiselles se perent.  
Et elle est aussi bien paree  
D'elles, sans estre separee  
D'elles et de leur bon arroy.
- 4160 Car elles souffissent pour roy  
Et pour souvereinne roÿne.  
Pour ces raisons vous determine  
Que Bonneürtez dou tout passe  
Toutes roÿnes et trespassée.
- 4165 Se je voloie sa coronne  
Deviser, qui est belle et bonne,  
Trop longuement vous en tenroie;  
Car je voy bien la droite voie  
Que leur consaus va a declin.
- 4170 Atant pais de ce vous declin."

### GUILLAUME

Quant leur consaus fu affinez,  
fol. 49r Li juges s'est vers moy tournés,

### LE JUGE

- En disant: "Guillaume, par m'ame,  
Ytant vous di de par ma dame
- 4175 Et de par Raison ensement,  
Et je sui en l'acordement,  
Que de .iij. amendes devez  
Devisees, et eslevez,  
Lesqueles vous devez sans faille
- 4180 Par jugement, comment qu'il aille.  
Il vous couvient, chose est certainne,  
Faire .i. lay pour la premereinne  
Amiablement, sans tenson;  
Pour la seconde une chanson
- 4185 De .iij. vers et a un refrein  
— Oëz, comment je le refrein —  
Qui par le refrein se commence,  
Si comme on doit chanter a dance;  
Et pour la tierce, une balade.
- 4190 Or n'en faites pas le malade,  
Eins respondez haitiement  
Aprés nostre commandement  
De tous poins vostre entention.  
Je fais ci ma conclusion."

- 4155 Appear there in abundance,  
With which her damsels are adorned.  
And she is as well adorned  
As they, without being set apart  
From them and their beautiful array.
- 4160 For they are fine enough for a king,  
And for a sovereign queen as well.  
For these reasons I put it to you  
That Happiness completely surpasses  
And is of higher estate than all queens.
- 4165 If I wished to describe  
Her crown, which is beautiful and becoming,  
I would detain you too long;  
For I readily see, and there can be no doubt,  
That their council is drawing to a close.
- 4170 And so I will spare you its description."

**GUILLAUME**

When their council ended,  
The judge turned my way,

**THE JUDGE**

- And said: "Guillaume, by my soul,  
I will tell you this on my lady's behalf  
4175 And on behalf of Reason as well,  
And I am in agreement with them,  
That you owe three compensations,  
As these have been determined and decribed,  
And for these you are responsible  
4180 According to the judgment, without fail.  
You must — the thing is certain —  
Compose a lay for the first  
And agreeably, without resisting;  
For the second, a song  
4185 Of three stanzas and a refrain  
— Listen how I qualify this —  
Which begins with the refrain,  
Just like the ones sung at dancing;  
And for the third, a ballade.  
4190 Now do not make as if this sickens you  
But rather respond happily  
In regard to our command,  
About your intentions on all these points.  
I make here an end."

**GUILLAUME**

4195 Et pour ce que trop fort mespris,  
Quant a dame de si haut pris  
M'osay nullement aastir  
De plait encontre li bastir,  
Je, Guillaumes dessus nommez,  
4200 Qui de Machau sui seurnommez,  
Pour miex congnoistre mon meffait,  
Ay ce livret rimé et fait.  
S'en feray ma dame present,  
Et mon service li present,  
4205 Li priant que tout me pardoint.  
Et Diex pais et honneur li doint  
Et de paradis la grant joie  
Tele que pour moy la voudroie.  
Mais pour ce que je ne vueil mie  
4210 Que m'amende ne soit paié.  
Pour la paier vueil sans delay  
Commencier .i. amoureus lay.

Explicit *le Jugement le Roy de Navarre contre le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne.*

**GUILLAUME**

- 4195 And because I so grievously erred  
When I dared to make trouble  
With a lady of such high estate  
In that I attempted to dispute with her,  
I, the Guillaume named above,
- 4200 Who has the surname de Machaut,  
In order the better to acknowledge my fault,  
Have composed and rhymed this little book.  
And of it I will make my lady a present,  
Offering her my service and
- 4205 Begging her to pardon me for everything.  
And may God grant her peace and honor  
And the great joy of Paradise  
Such as I would wish for myself.  
But because I do not want in any way
- 4210 That my fine should remain unpaid,  
I wish to retire the debt without delay  
By beginning work on a lay whose theme is love.

Here ends *The Judgment of the King of Navarre* against *The Judgment of the King of Bohemia*.



## LE LAY DE PLOUR, MUSIC EDITED BY URI SMILANSKY

Ci commence le lay de plour

Qui bien aim - me a tart ou - bli - e, Et cuers  
Quar plai - sen - ce si me li - e Que ja -

7 qui ou - blie a tart Res - sam - ble le feu qui  
mais l'a - mou - reus dart N'iert hors trait, a tiers n'a

13 art Qui de le - gier n'es - teint mi - e. Aus -  
quart, De mon cuer, quoy que nuls di - e, Car

19 si qui ha ma - la - di - e Qui plait en - vis  
tant m'a fait com-pai - gni - e Que c'est ni - ant

25 se de - part. En ce point, se Dieus me gart,  
dou de - part, Ne que ja - mais, par nul art,

31 Me tient A - mours et mais - tri - e,  
Soit sa poin - tu - re ga - ri - e,

35 II. Qu'en-vis puet on des - ra - ci - ner  
Cer - tes, ein - si est il d'a - mer. Un grant ar -  
Carquant uns

40

bre sans de - mou - rer De la ra - ci - ne,  
cuers se vuet en - ter En a-mour fi - ne,

46

Qu'on voit puis flou-rir et por - ter Et ses bran - ches croi -  
En - vis puet s'a-mour ou - bli - er; Ein-sois a - dés par

52

stre et ge - ter En brief ter - mi - ne.  
ra - mem - brer A li s'en - cli - ne.

57

III.

Car l'iau - e qui chiet des - seu-re La ra - ci - ne  
Et c'est ce qui me de - veu-re. C'est ce qui mon

63

qui de - meu-re Fait renn-ver - dir et flo - rir Et por - ter  
vis es - pleu-re. C'est ce pour quoi je sou - pir. A ce me

69

fruit. Tout ein - si mes cuers, qui pleu-re Par - fon - de-ment  
duit Vraie A - mour, qui me court seu-re, Et Bon - té, qui

76

a tou - te heu-re, A - croi - stre mon sou - ve - nir Fait  
l'as - sa - veu - re, Qu'en moy ne puis-sent ve - nir. Ce

81

jour et nuit.  
me des - truit.

83

IV. Rai-sons et Droi - tu - re, Plai-sen - ce et Na -  
Et je m'as-se - u - re Que,tant com je

89

tu - re Font par leur po - oir Tou - te cre - a -  
du - re, Ne por - ray ve - oir A-mour si se -

96

tu - re De vo - len - té pu - re Ten - dre\_a  
u - re, Bon - té si me - u - re, N'a tant

103

mieus va - loir.  
de sa - voir.

105

V. Aus - si voit on cle - re - ment Que li cuer qui  
Or say je cer - tein - ne - ment Que mien - ne es - toit

110

loy - au - ment Et sans fo - lour Aim - ment de tres fi - ne\_a -  
li - ge - ment La droit - te flour De ceaus qui ont plus d'on -

117

mour Cui - dent sou - vent Qu'en mil - leur et en plus  
nour. Quar tou - te gent Di - soi - ent com - mu - ne -

123

gent Ai - ent se - jour. Car plai - sen - ce et sa ri - gour Ce  
ment, Et li mil - lour, Qu'il a - voit tou - te va - lour En -

130

leur a - prent.  
tie - re - ment.

VI.

132

Et quant si bon ne mil - lour ne plus coin - te  
Qu'en mon cuer est si tres fer-me et si join - te

137

N'est, ne si bel, ne d'on - neur si a - coin - te, A droit ju -  
L'a-mour de li qu'es-tre n'en puet des - join - te. Car cuer en -

143

gier, Mer-vil - lier Ne se doit Nulz se ne vueil par l'a - mou-reu - se  
tier Qui tri - chier Ne sa - roit Par sou - ve - nir vuet que dou tout m'a -

149

poin - te Nou - vel - le - ment d'au - tre\_a - mour es - tre poin -  
poin - te Si qu'au - tre\_a - mour n'en - tre - prein - gne, n'a - coin -

155

te. Pour ce chan - gier Ne me quier, Et j'ay droit.  
te, Qu'au - tre\_a - coin - tier Em - pi - rier Me fe - roit.

VII.

160

Dont le bon re - cort Qui de li re - cort  
"A - mis, mi con - fort, Mi joi - eus de - port,

166

Fait qu'a ce m'a - cort Que ja ne soie en a - cort  
Ma pais, mi res - sort, Et tuit mi a - mou-reus sort

173

D'a - voir au - tre a - my. Mais en des-con - - fort Sans nul  
Es - toi - ent en ty. Or ay un re - - mort De toy

180

re - con - fort De tout mon ef - fort Vueil plein -  
qui me mort Et point si tres fort, Que o toy

186

dre et plou - rer sa mort, En di - sant ein - si:  
sont tuit mi bien mort Et en - se - ve - ly.

192

VIII.

Dous a - mis, tant fort me dueil, Tant te plaint,  
Dous a - mis, seur ton sar - cueil, Sont mi plaint

197

Tant te com - plaint Le cuer de moy, Tant ay grief que, par ma  
Et mi com - plaint. La m'es - ba - noy; Par pen - se - e la te

203

fo y, Tout mal re - cueil; Dont mi oueil Que sou - vent mueil, Et  
voy; Plus que ne sueil La me vueil; La sont mi vueil; La

209

cuer es - treint, Vi - ai - re pa - li et taint, Gar - ni d'ef -  
mes cuers maint. La Mort pri que la me maint, Car la m'ot -

216

froy Et d'a - noy, Sans es - ba - noy Mou - strent mon dueil.  
troy. La, ce croy, De la Mort doy Pas - ser le sueil.

IX. 222

La sous - pi - re, La s'a - i - re Mes cuers qui tant  
La se\_em - pi - re Ti - re\_a ti - re; La ne fait que

228

a mar - ty - re Et de mor - tel pein - ne Et tant  
fon - dre et fri - re; La son dueil de - mein - ne; La sans

235

de\_i - re, Qu'a voir di - re Son mal ne por - roit des -  
ri - re Se mar - ti - re; La se mour - drist; la de -

241

cri - re Cre - a - tu - re\_hu - mein - ne.  
si - re Qu'il ait mort pro - chein - ne.

X. 246

Dous a - mis, tant ay gre - ven - ce, Tant ay grief souf -  
En toy es - toit m'es-pe - ran - ce Tou-te\_et ma fi -

251

fran - ce, Tant ay dueil, tant ay pe - sen - ce, Quant ja -  
an - ce, Ma joi - e, ma sous-te - nan - ce. Las - set -

258

mais ne te ver - ray Que do - leur me point et lan - ce  
te! Or per - du les ay. Bien pert a ma con - te - nen - ce

265

De si mor - tel lan - ce Au cuer qu'en des - es - pe - ren - ce  
Et a ma lo - quen - ce, Car ma - nie - re ne puis - san - ce

272

Pour toy mes jours fi - ne - ray.  
N'ay, tant me dueil et es - may.

276

XI. A cuer pen - sis Re-gret et de - vis  
Mes es - pe - ris Et mes pa - ra - dis

282

Ton haut pris Que tant pris. Ein - si le cou - vient. Et  
Es - tient mis Et as - sis En toy; s'a - par - tient Que

288

vis a vis Te voy, ce m'est vis, Dous a - mis,  
soit fe - nis Mes cuers est pe - ris, Qu'est che - tis

294

Et tou - dis De toy me sou - vient.  
Et re - mis, Quant vi - e le tient.

298

XII. A - mis, je fus - se moult li - e S'e-us -  
Ta mort tant me con-tra - li - e Et tant

304

ses cuer plus cou - art; Mieux vau - sist a mon es -  
de maus me re - part, A - mis, que li cuers me

310

gart Que vo - len - té si har - di - e. Mais  
part. Mais ein - sois que je de - vi - e, Hum -

316

hon - neur, che - va - le - ri - e, Et tes re - nons  
ble - ment mes cuers sup - pli - e Au vray Dieu qu'il  
qui s'es - part Par le mon-de en main - te part  
nous re - gart De si a - mou - reux re - gart  
Ont fait de nous de - par - ti - e.  
Qu'en liv - re soi - ens de vi - e."

322

328

Explicit le lay  
de plour



## LE LAY DE PLOUR

---

Ci commence le lay de plour

### I

Qui bien aimme a tart oublie,  
Et cuers qui oublie a tart  
Ressamble le feu qui art  
Qui de legier n'esteint mie.  
5      Aussi qui ha maladie  
Qui plaist envis se depart.  
En ce point, se Dieus me gart,  
Me tient Amours et maistrie,  
Quar plaisir si me lie  
10     Que jamais l'amoureus dart  
N'iert hors trait, a tiers n'a quart,  
De mon cuer, quoy que nuls die,  
Car tant m'a fait compaignie  
Que c'est niant dou depart,  
15     Ne que jamais, par nul art,  
Soit sa pointure garie.

### II

Qu'envis puet on descraciner  
Un grant arbre sans demourer  
    De la racine,  
20     Qu'on voit puis flourir et porter  
Et ses branches croistre et geter  
    En brief termine.  
Certes, einsi est il d'amer.  
Car quant uns cuers se vuet enter  
25     En amour fine,  
Envis puet s'amour oublier;  
Einsois adés par ramembrer  
    A li s'encline.



## THE LAY DE PLOUR

---

Here begins *The Lay de Plour*

### I

- 1      Whoever loves well forgets slowly,  
And the heart that slowly forgets  
Is like the fire that burns  
But cannot easily be put out.  
5      And whoever suffers an illness  
That pleases unwillingly recovers.  
In such a state, so God give me help,  
Love restrains and commands me,  
For Pleasure has me so snared  
10     That the arrow of loving  
Will never be drawn out, not even a little,  
From my heart, whatever anyone might say,  
For it's been in me so long  
That there's no question of its leaving,  
15     Nor ever, by any art,  
Will that wound be healed.

### II

- A huge tree can hardly be  
Uprooted without leaving behind  
Some of its roots,  
20     And so in a short time it is seen  
Bearing flowers and fruit, its branches  
Growing and spreading.  
Surely, it's the same with love,  
For when a heart's bent on  
25     A noble love affair,  
It can hardly forget its loved one,  
Rather, always, through memory  
Inclines toward him.

## III

30      Car l'iaue qui chiet desseure  
       La racine qui demeure  
       Fait rennverdir et florir  
            Et porter fruit.  
       Tout einsi mes cuers, qui pleure  
       Parfondement a toute heure,  
       35     A croistre mon souvenir  
            Fait jour et nuit.  
       Et c'est ce qui me deveure.  
       C'est ce qui mon vis espleure.  
       C'est ce pour quoi je soupir.  
       40     A ce me duit,  
       Vraie Amour, qui me court seure,  
       Et Bonté, qui l'assaveure,  
       Qu'en moy ne puissent venir.  
            Ce me destruit.

## IV

45      Raisons et Droiture,  
       Plaisence et Nature  
       Font par leur pooir  
       Toute creature  
       De volenté pure  
       50     Tendre a mieus valoir.  
       Et je m'asseüre  
       Que, tant com je dure,  
       Ne porray veoir  
       Amour si seüre,  
       55     Bonté si meüre,  
       N'a tant de savoir.

## V

Aussi voit on clerement  
       Qui le cuer qui loyaument  
            Et sans folour  
       60     Aimment de tres fine amour,  
            Cuident souvent  
       Qu'en milleur et en plus gent  
            Aient sejour.  
       Car plaisirce et sa rigour  
            Ce leur aprent.

## III

30      For the water flowing down  
To the root that remains  
Makes it green again and flourish,  
    Bearing fruit:  
Just the same, my heart, weeping  
Bitterly all the time,  
35      Makes my memory grow  
    Both day and night.  
And this drives me mad;  
This covers my face in tears;  
This is the reason I cry out;  
40      True Love  
Drives me to it, assaulting me,  
And Goodness finds it sweet:  
But they cannot enter me,  
    And I am destroyed.

## IV

45      Reason and Justice,  
Pleasure and Nature,  
Create by their power  
All that lives  
Through pure will  
50      To incline toward greater worthiness.  
And I console myself,  
For, as long as I endure,  
I'll never see  
A love so certain,  
55      A goodness so well grown,  
Nor so much wisdom.

## V

And more, it is obvious  
That the hearts which loyally  
    And without madness  
60      Love with a quite noble love  
    Often think  
To find a relief that's better  
    And more noble;  
For pleasure in its insistence  
    Suggests this to them:  
65

Or say je certainnement  
 Que mienne estoit ligement  
 La droite flour  
 De ceaus qui ont plus d'onnour,  
 70                   Quar toute gent  
 Disoient communement,  
 Et li millour,  
 Qu'il avoit toute valour  
 Entierement.

## VI

75       Et quant si bon ne millour ne plus cointe  
 N'est, ne si bel, ne d'onour si acointe,  
 A droit jugier,  
 Merveillier  
 Ne se doit  
 80       Nulz se ne vueil par l'amoureuse pointe  
 Nouvellement d'autre amour estre pointe.  
 Pour ce changier  
 Ne me quier,  
 Et j'ay droit.  
 85       Qu'en mon cuer est si tres ferme et si jointe  
 L'amour de li qu'estre n'en puet desjointe.  
 Car cuer entier  
 Qui trichier  
 Ne saroit  
 90       Par souvenir vuet que dou tout m'apointe  
 Si qu'autre amour n'entrepreingne, n'acointe,  
 Qu'autre acointier  
 Empirier  
 Me feroit.

## VII

95                   Dont le bon recort  
 Que de li recort  
 Fait qu'a ce m'acort  
 Que ja ne soie en acort  
 D'avoir autre amy.  
 100               Mais en desconfort  
 Sans nul reconfort  
 De tout mon effort  
 Vueil pleindre et plourer sa mort,  
 En disant einsi:

Now I know for sure  
That my lover, without doubt,  
    Was the rightful flower  
Of those men with the greatest honor:  
70              For everyone  
Says this everywhere,  
    And the best people in fact,  
That his alone was complete  
    Worthiness.

## VI

75      And since there's none better, more genteel,  
None more handsome, so familiar with honor,  
    No one,  
    To judge truly,  
    Should wonder  
80      If I don't wish to be wounded  
By the shaft from another lover.  
    I don't want  
    To change this,  
    And I'm right;  
85      For my love for him is so implanted, so firm  
In my heart it cannot be removed;  
    For a heart undivided  
    Which cannot  
    Be false  
90      Intends that I spur myself on through memory  
To never undertake a new love, or meet with one;  
    For to take up with some other man  
    Would do  
    Me harm.

## VII

95              For the beautiful memory  
That recalls him to me  
    Makes me determined  
Never to agree  
    To have another lover;  
100              Rather in misery,  
    With no relief,  
    But with all my strength  
I intend to lament and weep over his death,  
    Saying this:

105           “Amis, mi confort,  
           Mi joieus deport,  
           Ma pais, mi ressort,  
   Et tuit mi amoureus sort  
           Estoient en ty.  
 110           Or ay un remort  
           De toy qui me mort  
           Et point si tres fort  
   Que o toy sont tuit mi bien mort  
           Et ensevely.

## VIII

115           Dous amis, tant fort me dueil,  
           Tant te plaint,  
           Tant te complaint  
           Le cuer de moy,  
   Tant ay grief que, par ma foy,  
 120           Tout mal recueil:  
           Dont mi oueil  
           Que souvent mueil,  
           Et cuer estreint,  
   Vaire pali et taint,  
 125           Garni d'effroy  
           Et d'anoy,  
           Sans esbanoy  
           Moustrent mon dueil.  
   Dous amis, seur ton sarcueil  
 130           Sont mi plaint  
           Et mi complaint.  
           La m'esbanoy;  
   Par pensee la te voy;  
           Plus que ne sueil  
 135           La me vueil;  
           La sont mi vueil;  
           La mes cuers maint.  
   Le mort pri que la me maint,  
           Car la m'ottroy.  
 140           La, ce croy,  
           De la mort doy  
           Passer le sueil.

- 105            "Lover, my comfort,  
          My joyous pleasure,  
          My peace, my refuge,  
And all my loving destiny  
Were in you.
- 110            Oh I'll have pain again  
          To tear at me on your account,  
          Wounding me so terribly,  
For all my goods died with you  
          And were put in the ground.

## VIII

- 115            Sweet love, I grieve so hard;  
          My heart  
          Mourns you so much,  
          Laments you so much,  
My grief's so great, by my faith,
- 120            I reap all ills;  
          Thus my eyes  
          Are very often wet,  
          My heart quite anguished,  
My face pale, tear-stained,  
          Wracked by troubles,  
          And pain,  
          Lacking comfort;  
          These show my sorrow.
- 125            Sweet lover, on your bier  
          Lie my lament,  
          And all my weeping;  
          There I find pleasure,  
Seeing you in my thoughts;  
          More than I was wont  
          I wish to be there.
- 130            There lie my desires.  
          My heart remains there.  
I beg for the death that leads me there.  
          For there I offer myself.
- 135            There, I believe,  
          I ought pass over  
          Death's threshold.

## IX

- La souspire,  
La s'aïre
- 145    Mes cuers qui tant a martyre  
      Et de mortel peinne  
      Et tant de ire,  
      Qu'avoir dire  
Son mal ne porroit descrire  
150    Creature humeinne.  
      La se empire  
      Tire a tire;  
La ne fait que fondre et frire;  
      La son dueil demeinne;  
155    La sans rire  
      Se martire;  
La se mourdrist; la desire  
      Qu'il ait mort procheinne.

## X

- Dous amis, tant ay grevence,  
160    Tant ay grief souffrance,  
Tant ay dueil, tant ay pensence,  
Quant jamais ne te verray  
Que doleur me point et lance  
      De si mortel lance
- 165    Au cuer qu'en desesperence  
Pour toy mes jours fineray.  
En toy estoit m'esperance  
      Toute et ma fiancé,  
Ma joie, ma soustenance.
- 170    Lassette! Or perdu les ay.  
Bien pert a ma continence  
      Et a ma loquence,  
Car maniere ne puissance  
N'ay, tant me dueil et esmay.

## XI

- 175    A cuer pensis  
Regret et devis  
      Ton haut pris  
      Que tant pris.  
Einsi le couvient.

## IX

- My heart  
Sighs there  
145 Grows angry there, there suffers martyrdom.  
Feels such deadly pain  
And so much regret,  
That to tell the truth  
No person alive could even  
150 Describe it.  
There my heart grows worse  
Without stopping;  
There it can only tremble and burst;  
There it manifests grief;  
155 There, hardly laughing,  
It suffers;  
There it kills itself; there it wishes for  
A death that's on its way.

## X

- Sweet lover, my grief's so great,  
160 My suffering so terrible,  
I feel such pain, worrying so much,  
Since I never will see you,  
And so sorrow stabs and wounds me  
With such a deadly lance  
165 In the heart that despairing  
For you I'll end my days.  
All my hope was in  
You, my trust as well,  
My joy, my nourishment.  
170 Sorrowful one! Now I've lost them.  
It's readily apparent in my look  
And in my speech,  
For I've no strength or direction,  
So much do I sorrow and grieve.

## XI

- 175 With a heavy heart  
I mourn and recall  
Your great worthiness  
Which I prized so much.  
It must be so;

180                   Et vis a vis  
 Te voy, ce m'est vis,  
                   Dous amis,  
                   Et toudis  
 De toy me souvient.  
 185                   Mes esperis  
 Et mes paradis  
                   Estient mis  
                   Et assis  
 En toy; s'apartient  
 190                   Que soit fenis  
 Mes cuers et peris,  
                   Qu'est chetis  
                   Et remis,  
 Quant vie le tient.

## XII

195                   Amis, je fusse moult lie  
 S'eusses cuer plus courant;  
 Mieux vausist a mon esgart  
 Que volenté si hardie.  
 Mais honneur, chevalerie,  
 200                   Et tes renons qui s'espart  
 Par le monde en mainte part  
 Ont fait de nous departie.  
 Ta mort tant me contrarie  
 Et tant de maus me repart,  
 205                   Amis, que lie cuers me part.  
 Mais einsois que je devie,  
 Humblement mes cuers supplie  
 Au vray Dieu qu'il nous regart  
 De si amoureux regart  
 210                   Qu'en livre soiens de vie."

Explicit *le Lay de Plour*

- 180                    And I see you  
          Face to face, so I think,  
                          Sweet lover,  
                          And always  
I remember you.  
185                    My soul  
          And my paradise  
                          Were placed  
                          And set  
In you; and so it follows  
190                    That my heart  
          Is finished and done for,  
                          For it is wretched  
                          And brought to nothing,  
While life clings to it.

## XII

- 195                    Lover, I would have been quite happy  
          If you had had more the coward's heart;  
          This would have been worth more to me  
          Than a will so hardy.  
          But honor, chivalry,  
200                    And your renown, spreading  
          Throughout the world in many places,  
          Have brought us to an end.  
          Your death does trouble me so much,  
          And so much ill comes upon me,  
205                    Lover, that the heart goes out of me;  
          But before I do die,  
          My heart humbly begs  
          The True God to look upon us  
          With such a loving countenance  
210                    That in a book we'll find life."

Here ends *The Lay de Plour*





## EXPLANATORY NOTES

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**ABBREVIATIONS:** **BD:** Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*, ed. Benson; **DMF:** *Analyse et Traitement Informatique de la Langue Française Dictionnaire de Moyen Français*; **LGW:** Chaucer, *Legend of Good Women*, ed. Benson; **CA:** Gower, *Confessio Amantis*; **Hassell:** Hassell, *Middle French Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases*; **JRB:** Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne*; **JRN:** Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre*; **OM:** Ovide Moralisé, ed. Cornelis de Boer; **RR:** *Roman de la Rose*, trans. Dahlberg; **TC:** Chaucer, *Troilus and Criseyde*, ed. Benson.

### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE BEHAINGNE

- 1–40        *Au temps pascour . . . ne le porroire.* This section draws explicitly on *RR*, in which the archetypal Lover similarly falls prey to the enticements of springtime. Here, however, Machaut radically transforms the structure by rejecting allegorical personages in favor of a confrontation between two human characters.
- 27        “*Ocy! Oci!*”. “Ocy” is not a sound that birds were, at least conventionally, thought to make in Middle French. The word, however, is the imperative form of the verb *kill*. Perhaps here the springtime birds sing out “Kill! Kill!” in acknowledgment of Love’s proverbial destructiveness, but it is difficult to pin down the precise meaning of the word in this context. It is also used in a number of sung *virelais* of this period that imitate birdsong (so-called “realistic” *virelais*).
- 28ff.        *Qu'en .i. destour . . .* In Machaut’s hands, the idealized pastoral landscape familiar from *RR* becomes, as Ardis Butterfield explains, “a place of carefully defined seclusion” (“Pastoral,” p. 11). As in his other *dits*, Machaut’s “landscape is an isolated, wild area, difficult of access but placed within a courtly, civilized enclosure. Such a conjunction between the courtly and the wild is a characteristic pastoral relation and one exploited to the full by Spenser, for example, in his Bower of Bliss or in Froissart’s *Paradys d’amours* (“Pastoral,” p. 11).
- 41–1223        *Mais tout einsi . . . de ma partie.* At this point, the narrator is displaced from his role as main character of the developing story and becomes, if only for a time, a clerkly witness (not himself of noble birth) to the debate between the two aristocratic figures. As part of a wider discussion connecting sight, power, and authorship, Jacqueline Cerquiglini-Toulet describes the position of clerkly witness as passive, or impotent. She explains that it is the ear of the author that overhears conversations, the mouth of the author that relates

them, and the hand of the author that records them, but the poet is denied sight, the most noble of the five senses. For a further discussion of the theme of a clerk listening from a concealed position, see Cerquiglini-Toulet, “L’écriture louche,” pp. 25–27. It may be of interest to note that Jean de Luxembourg, himself was blind.

- 56ff. *Mais quant amis . . . .* This “first confrontation between the sorrowing knight and the equally distraught lady . . . . leads to a second encounter scene between them and the poet, who finally brings about a third between them and the king as judge. In each situation the balance of social decorum subtly alters as the equally matched pair of grieving courtly lovers gives way first to the ingenuity of the clerical poet and then to the superior courtly authority of the king himself” (Butterfield, “Pastoral,” p. 10).
- 125 *vij. ans ou .vij. entiers.* The seven years marks the completion of the lover’s apprenticeship; the eighth year would start a new beginning, this time into rewards. Compare *BD*, lines 37–38, where the protagonist has suffered sickness for “this eight yere” [eighth year], yet his “bote is never the nere” [unfulfilled].
- 125–205 *Sire il a . . . . je me dueil.* The debate proper begins at this point, with the lady’s long account of her experience with love.
- 126 *sers et rentiers.* The lady describes herself as the “serf and vassal,” a theme which frequently recurs in the poem (e.g., the knight’s description of himself as his lady’s “vassal” in line 279) and also in other works.
- 130–32 *Cuer, corps, povoi . . . . En son servage.* Compare Alceone’s vow to sacrifice herself “with good wille, body, herte, and al” (*BD*, line 116) to Juno for word of the missing king, Ceyx. Her sacrificial pledge of thralldom to Love is repeated by the Black Knight in, line 768, “with good entente” (line 766).
- 148–76 *Et je l’amoie . . . . En nos amours.* As William Calin notes, the lady and her lover’s relationship was “successful, honest and genuine . . . [and] could only be destroyed by powers beyond human control” (*Poet at the Fountain*, p. 44). Compare her story to the description of the knight’s account of his love affair, where we hear mainly of “frustration, anguish and protracted love-service” (p. 44).
- 156–59 *Tous mes confors . . . . mes ressors.* Compare Chaucer’s *TC* 3.477–81: he was “a wal / Of stiel and shield from every displesaunce, / . . . she was namore afered.”
- 169–76 *Tuit d’un acort . . . . en nos amours.* Compare *BD*, lines 1288–97, on the lovers being so well-matched a pair. They suffered “oo blysse and eke oo sorwe bothe” (line 1293) and were both glad and upset as a single being.
- 177–208 *Lasse, dolente . . . . Cheï com morte.* Here, the sickness and longing for death caused by disappointed love is described in detail. It also recurs elsewhere in the poem (e.g., in line 719) and in other works, such as *RR*.

- 220–30     *Qu'elle est pasmee . . . par loiaument amer.* In this section, the lady faints and the knight sprinkles dew on her face to revive her. Perhaps this implies a courtly “baptism,” especially considering the implications of love’s capacities of restoration. Such fainting scenes are common in courtly literatures for both women and men. Compare *TC* 3.1086–92 (Troilus’ swoon) and 4.1150–80. (Criseyde’s swoon).
- 259–880     *Dont vous diray . . . qui me martyre.* Here the lover offers his account of the suffering inflicted by his faithless ladylove. James Wimsatt, *Chaucer and His French Contemporaries*, suggests that “in presenting a perfidious lady and stating that the knight suffered more . . . than the lady whose gentle lover had died, Machaut evidently stimulated a protest from at least one great lady, perhaps Bonne of Luxembourg” (p. 161), which prompted him to write *JRN*. The name of Bonneürté from *JRN* is “particularly suggestive” (p. 323n19). This problem is similar to that which Chaucer had with some noble ladies in his audience’s criticism of his portrayal of Criseyde (p. 161). For another explanation see Wimsatt’s “Preface” to this volume (pp. ix–xv).
- As Katherine Heinrichs, *Myths of Love*, remarks that the formal structure of the poem is “odd.” Heinrichs accounts for this structural asymmetry by suggesting that it is here and in Reason’s later response to the knight (lines 1755–84) that the “real *matière*” of the poem is located: “Machaut’s emphasis is not really upon [the lovers] or the *jugement*, [they] merely furnish . . . the witty pretext for a discussion of the causes and consequences of misplaced spiritual allegiance” (pp. 184–88).
- 286–452     *Si en choisi . . . son dous viaire.* The long portrait of the lady’s appearance, her dancing, laughter and song follow a love poetry convention, as much illustrative of the lover’s devotion as of the charms possessed by the object of his desire. As J. J. Anderson, “Man in Black,” makes clear, the description of White in Chaucer’s *BD* draws heavily on this passage. See *BD*, lines 847–54.
- 302–95     *Car si cheveus . . . maintien estoit paree.* The lady is described in a “head-to foot- portrait,” a traditional rhetorical device in medieval descriptions of ideal beauty (Kibler and Wimsatt, “Question of His Personal Supervision”).
- 305     *Blanc et poly.* Compare the extrametrical riddling on the countenance of “the good faire White” in *BD*: “Hyt was whit, smothe, streght . . .” (line 942) and she “was whit, rody, fressh and lyvely hewed” (line 905).
- 319–35     *Tous pleins de . . . il cheoit proprement.* Here love is described using the language of hunting, a trope that recurs several times throughout the poem (e.g., lines 428–35, 517–20, and 1237–39), as well as a reminder of the call of the birds in the opening stanza (line 27).
- 321–35     *Et s'estoient clungnetant . . . il cheoit proprement.* On the piercing potential of the beloved’s eyes, see the opening lines of Chaucer’s “Merciles Beaute”: “your yen two wol slee me sodenly; / I may the beautee of hem not sustene.” The idea is echoed in lines 433–34. See *RR*, lines 1688–1718, where love’s darts pierce Amans through the eye, and strike deep into his heart.

- 409–27 *Si que, dame . . . plaire li deuisse.* In this section, the knight claims that his lady's beauty has left a physical impression on his heart. *TC*, *RR* and *CA* also describe wounds as a physical effect of love.
- 421 *Othevien.* Grandnephew of Julius Caesar, Octavian (63 BCE–14 CE), is better known as Augustus Caesar, the name he took after becoming the first emperor of Rome. His reign was marked by lavish expenditures on public buildings and the road system of the empire. Octavian was also a generous patron of the arts.
- 422 *Galien.* Galen, who lived c. 130–200, was the most noted physician of the ancient world. Born of Greek parents in Asia Minor, he moved in his early thirties to Rome, where he eventually became court physician to the emperor Marcus Aurelius. A remarkable polymath, Galen was the author of more than five hundred writings, mostly on human physiology, but on other topics as well, including philosophy.
- 457–82 *Et d'autre part . . . me faisoit esperer.* In this passage, the knight refers to a number of allegorical figures, including Fair Welcome and Sweet Hope. However, unlike those who appear in the trial scene (see note to line 1484), they do not interact with other characters. Instead, “the Knight evokes these figures only to proceed to other matters . . . they serve but to underscore the Knight’s anguish” (Calin, *Poet at the Fountain*, p. 46). When drawing attention to the links between Machaut and John Gower, Peter Nicholson, shows how these figures are part of the heritage of the conventions of *RR*. Poets such as Machaut and Gower who were self-consciously departing from the tradition nonetheless retained elements such as these figures, the setting of the garden and so on. For more details, see Nicholson, *Love and Ethics*, pp. 3–40.
- 671–83 *Et elle aussi . . . et li rois.* A euphoric interlude of mutual joy in new love before Fortune turns her wheel further. Compare *TC* 3.450–83.
- 684 *Fortune.* The figure of the goddess Fortune (Fortuna) derives from one of the best-known works of the Middle Ages, Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy* (c. 525). The ancient Roman worshiped Fortuna, the personification of luck, but Boethius assigns her a more important role in human affairs, making her responsible for the apparently random and capricious distribution of goods to human beings. Those she favors climb up on the wheel she holds as a symbol of her power, but the wheel, ever turning, eventually throws them off into the mud, depriving them of the benefits that they had previously enjoyed.
- 725–860 *Car il m'est . . . D'ore en avant.* See note to lines 457–82 above. Again, allegorical figures are mentioned but only in passing.
- 745–54 *Chascun deçoit et . . . seur li commandement.* Instead of blaming his lady for his unhappiness, the knight chooses to blame Fortune who appears in this section as an allegorical character. The classic presentation of the jealous lover is Jean de Meun’s (*RR* lines 8425–9462), who is more violent than Machaut’s lover. Gower’s Amans is more akin to Machaut in the subtleties of his disappointment in *CA* 3.865–930; Gower’s Genius defines Jealousy in *CA*

- 5.455–578.
- 749–822 *Le ferai je . . . dolours ne doy.* The lover demonstrates both his virtue and his intellectual finesse in his extended meditation on the cause of his suffering. Should he blame Love or his lady? He decides that neither is actually at fault, thereby showing his loyalty to both the divinity and his beloved.
- 881–928 *Certes, sire, pas . . . Selonc nature.* Here the dialogue resumes and the lady responds to the knight's story, explaining that she is more tormented than he is because there is the possibility that he can win his lover back, whereas for her, this is impossible.
- 963 *Nés que feroit .i. estuef seur .i. toit.* A tennis reference. The medieval game was played on indoor courts with roofed galleries. Balls hit on the roof that rolled back down were still in play.
- 1000–01 *Car nourreture . . . et passe nature.* Proverbial; see Hassell N35. Also referred to by Froissart in *Le trésor amoureux* (lines 2649–53) and in Christine de Pizan's *Mutacions de fortune* (lines 5801–02).
- 1002–03 *Et toudis va . . . leux au bois.* Proverbial. See Hassell L101. Also referred to by Froissart in *Le joli buisson de jonece* (lines 1380–87).
- 1007 *serai matez en l'angle point.* Literally “caught in the sharp angle . . .” This is a metaphor from chess.
- 1071 *Et n'arreste ne que fueille de tramble.* A very popular proverbial phrase. See Hassell F75.
- 1074 *au feu, a la table.* As Kibler and Wimsatt, “Question of His Personal Supervision,” note, this image “suggest[s] the conventional presentation of the month of January in medieval picture calendars, in which the dining table and the fire are the foci of activity” (p. 486).
- 1081–87 *Einsi est il . . . tost se part.* The lover, understandably, here charges his lady with fickleness and instability, two of the conventional “truths” about women in the misogynistic traditions.
- 1185–98 *Et quant je . . . j'iroie a eaus.* Long a silent witness to the debate between two people of higher rank, the narrator now feels summoned to action by the difficulty they are experiencing in finding a judge to decide between them. See Andreas Capellanus, *The Art of Courtly Love*, as a model for love debates requiring a judge. The literary genre is discussed in the introduction to this volume (pp. 14–17).
- 1204–13 *Le petit chien . . . paour son abay.* Kibler and Wimsatt, “Question of His Personal Supervision,” point out that “there are very few small domestic dogs in medieval fiction. Tristan's *Petitcreu* is one, but he is a fairy dog, quite unreal, whereas Machaut's dog, as Chaucer's after him, acts in a naturalistic manner” (p. 486). Compare the dog's behavior to the bird in lines 25–32 who leads the narrator onto the solitary path where he overhears the conversation between the lady and the knight.

- 1267–84 *Et je li dis . . . chief en chief.* Here, as Kevin Brownlee, *Poetic Identity*, notes, the re-telling of the beginning of the poem functions as “a process of textual self-authentication . . . The main narrative thread of the *Behaingne* thus becomes, in summary form, a secondary narrative embedded in itself. The process of what might be called narrative doubling will be repeated several times in the course of the poem” (pp. 161–62). See the introduction for further discussion on this point (pp. 29–30).
- 1293 *I. chevalier qui moult fait a amer.* This laudatory portrait of Jean de Luxembourg, king of Bohemia, is one of several in Machaut’s works. See the extended passage devoted to Jean in Machaut’s *Prise d’Alixandre*, lines 989–1058 in Volume 6 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.
- 1297 *Alixandre.* Alexander the Great (356–323 BCE) was king of Macedon and conqueror of much of Asia Minor in the Middle East.
- Hector.* Hector, the son of Priam, king of Troy, is one of the principal characters of Homer’s *Iliad*, and in the tradition of Virgil, Godfrey of Monmouth, and Anglo-Norman literature, the hero of the poem.
- 1327 *Ovides.* Publius Ovidius Naso (43 BCE–18 CE), usually known as Ovid, was one of the most celebrated poets of ancient Rome. His works on love, particularly *Ars Amatoria* (*The Art of Love*), a guidebook for prospective lovers, exerted a great influence on the writers of the Middle Ages.
- 1337 *roys de Behaingne.* For further discussion of Jean de Luxembourg, king of Bohemia, see the introduction (pp. 3–4).
- 1362–442 *Je respondi . . . dist qu’il iroit.* In this section the narrator switches back and forth between the clerky witness of the story and an individual with “an explicitly extradiegetic dimension” (Brownlee, *Poetic Identity*, p. 162), where Machaut’s intimate knowledge of Jean, his habits, and his residence overlap with the story. Here, the speaking “I” is “simultaneously within and without . . . the narrative he recounts” (p. 164): the narrator is a participant as he leads the knight and the lady up to the castle door, but speaks as Machaut when he describes the customs of castle life.
- 1366 *Durbui.* Durbuy, one of Jean’s favorite residences, is now a small city in the Belgian province of Luxembourg. See also note to lines 1379–92 and 1394 below.
- 1379–92 *Et quant il . . . En la contree.* The castle mentioned here had just been reconstituted by Jean when this poem was composed during the 1330s. The site, on an outcropping of limestone, was first fortified in the 900s and had been completely destroyed in local warfare in 1317, requiring Jean to rebuild it. The castle still stands and was thoroughly refurbished in 1882.
- 1394 *iaue.* The reference here is to the Durthe, which flows through the city of Durbuy, granted its charter by Jean in 1331.
- 1443 *Mais tout einsi com de nou se partoit.* At this point, the narrator ceases to play an active role in the plot and returns to his previous position of clerky witness.

- 1474      *.i. clerc que nommer ne saroie.* Both Brownlee, *Poetic Identity*, pp. 165–66, and Kibler and Wimsatt, “Question of his Personal Supervision,” pp. 8–10, draw attention to the anonymous clerk in Jean’s entourage who is reading out loud to the king. Almost as soon as the narrator draws attention to him, he is immediately dismissed, which must be a self-referential and ironic moment of awareness on Machaut’s part.
- 1475      *Qui li lisoit la bataille de Troie.* Poets, such as Christine de Pizan, Froissart, and Machaut himself saw themselves as “advisors of princes and sages,” not as entertainers; the creators of “books, not performances.” Cerquiglini-Toulet, *Color of Melancholy*, reminds us of the status of books as texts to be read, as well as “beautiful objects” which were bought and collected by princes (pp. 40–41).
- 1484      *Cil .xvj.* Sylvia Huot compares these allegorical figures to those who appear in the *JRN*, lines 1152–54: “from a self-indulgent idealization of aristocratic life in terms of chivalric prowess, youthful pleasures, wealth, and leisure, we have moved to the arena of moral and spiritual virtues. In this context, what is valorized is not the persistence of desire in the face of rejection, but rather the constancy of love and devotion in the face of death (“Patience in Adversity,” p. 232).
- 1509–608    *Ci pres a . . . . Vous en prions.* Here is another example of narrative doubling. This time, the knight is summarizing the plot of the poem for the benefit of the king. See note to lines 1267–84.
- 1595–96     *Si comme il . . . . Y ci dessus.* The nobleman’s playful and, in the context, nonsensical reference to the “written” text of his encounter with the lady, calls attention to the poem’s fictionality, to the fact that it does not represent “real” experience. Later, Reason makes much the same kind of metafictional reference in line 1782.
- 1626–59     *Cils chevaliers qui . . . . bien le savez.* Another example of narrative doubling. Now the king is re-telling the story of the knight and the lady to his allegorical jury. See note to lines 1267–84.
- 1668–69     *Si com la . . . se degaste et empire.* Proverbial. See Hassell C209.
- 1698–99     *je ne donroie . . . une pomme porrie.* Proverbial. See Hassell P232.
- 1665–723    *je di que . . . fuer la dolour.* Reason’s argument to this point may be readily summarized: (1) because the lady’s lover is beyond recovery, Reason will work to make her forget him, an attachment to the dead being an unreasonable state; (2) Youth, preoccupied with jollity and the pleasures of the present, will also push the lady toward forgetfulness; and (3) there is no love without sexual attraction and, in the absence of a body to love, it will disappear, especially since the soul is always ambivalent about the emotion, which is inherently sinful to some degree.
- 1724–79     *Mai cils amis . . . . vous avez oy.* Unlike the lady, so Reason argues, the lover is forced by Youth, Companionship, Beauty, Love, and Loyalty to continue in his affection for his faithless beloved, the constant sight of whom fills him

- with pain. And there is no relief possible since, even if his beloved took him back, he would no longer be able to trust her.
- 1782 *Car en escript l'ay ci dessus trouvé.* See note to line 1595–96 above.
- 1786–1811 *Amours parla qui . . . le fait doloir.* Love agrees with Reason's assessment of the lover's suffering, but finds nothing extraordinary in the man's inability to find secure happiness, for it is the fate of all lovers to serve without the expectation of meriting the reward of the lady's favor.
- 1821–47 *Loiauté se retrait . . . dame a tort.* Offended by the lady's faithlessness, Loyalty sides with the nobleman, accepting Reason's explanation of why his suffering is greater.
- 1848–91 *Et quant Jueneſſe . . . porte et souſtient.* At this point in the dispute, the question for which the court has been convened has been forgotten completely. Youth addresses instead the issue of the nobleman's situation and finds, much like Love, that it is hardly desperate or regrettable.
- 1892–1928 *Lors s'avisa . . . com moy samble.* Though he himself admonishes Youth to allow the nobleman to abandon his attachment to an undeserving woman, the king reminds the court that they have other business to consider.
- 1929–56 *Or estes vous . . . Et de grevance.* The knight is judged the winner in the debate, an indication, perhaps, of the greater power of male reasoning and discernment. It could be argued that the author who has created a fiction that so obviously favors men over women has insulted the gentler sex. Whether Machaut is guilty of this charge is the question that, with no little humor and irony, is debated in the *JRN*.
- 1968–88 *Adont li rois . . . de leur vie.* After passing judgment, the king advises both the knight and the lady to avoid giving in to their grief. Wallowing in pain, he tells them, can lead to the death of the heart, as well as the self.
- 2012–43 *Car Courtoisie . . . gentil ne virent.* The king's entertainment of the knight and the lady has a number of points in common with King Sarpedoun's hospitality to Pandarus and Troilus, and their leave taking in Chaucer's *TC*, 5.435–48.
- 2040–51 *Si se partirent . . . a Durbui retournerent.* The lady and the knight return to their homes after an eight-day stay with Jean. Although they both agree to accept the king's judgment, Machaut leaves the question of whether they take his advice unanswered.
- 2052–54 *Ci fineray . . . a rimer ay.* Here, for the first time, the narrator steps outside the poem to reveal himself as the poet, rather than as the character of a clerkly witness.
- 2055–66 *Mais en la . . . ne m'en prisera.* Characteristically, Machaut signs his poems with an anagram to be solved by rearranging the letters of a verse or pair of verses. The solution to the anagram contained, as Machaut tells us, in the poem's last line, is not straightforward. Once the required letters are removed to spell the invariable form *Machaut*, the ones which remain cannot

spell *Guillaume*. However, as Ernest Höpffner (“Anagramme,” p. 405) notes, the anagram can be successfully solved. He proposes the well-attested by-form *Guillemin* as a solution. In his article, he goes on to demonstrate that this same form is necessary to solve the similar anagram that closes Machaut’s *Remede de Fortune*.

Machaut makes his authorship part of the text, difficult either to ignore or to delete when copying or reading. For a similar example of an author riddling his name into the text, see John Gower’s *Prologue* to Book I of *Vox Clamantis*, lines 1.19–24, a device conceivably learned from Machaut.

### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE NAVARRE

- 1–458      *Au departir dou . . . en terre mis.* Instead of evoking the springtime setting that is such a conventional element of love poetry, this section takes place during the autumn and describes the events surrounding the outbreak of the Black Death. For further discussion, see the introduction to this volume (p. 21).
- 9            *hoqués.* The term *hoqués* is interestingly ambiguous here since its two commonly attested senses, a musical form and a musical style characterized by rapid alternation of fragments of melody between the voices, giving a hiccupping effect, are each meaningful here. In the *Prologue* Machaut uses the term to denote a kind of musical work, so I have translated with that sense in mind here. But the line could alternatively be rendered: “held their service with notes and rests.”
- 62            *Jehans li Ermites.* Likely a reference to St. John the Silent (d. 558), who was appointed bishop of Colonia in his native Armenia at age twenty-eight. After serving in that office for nine years, he retired to a monastery where he eventually had himself walled up, there to live as a recluse. Later, for some years, he lived as a hermit in the desert.
- 109–42      *Et pour ce . . . plus grant merencolie.* The reference to the Book of Ecclesiastes is a commonplace element in the *topos mundus senescit* or “the world grows old.” Machaut’s pessimism and world-weariness here are thoroughly conventional.
- 151–80      *Car ce fu . . . en fu perie.* The astrological and meteorological events mentioned here are attested in the various chronicles of the period. Machaut is likely following one of them closely. See also lines 214–56.
- 158–62      *De lune esclipse . . . clarté et couleur.* The most notable of the heavenly signs, including various astrological configurations, and seen as predicting the coming epidemic, was the lunar eclipse on 17 January 1348.
- 172            *La terre trambla de paour.* This devastating earthquake occurred on 25 January 1348.
- 175            *Quarenteinne.* Carinthia or Kärnten is the southernmost province in Austria.

- 189–228     *Car les batailles . . . ceste mortel descouvenue.* Machaut's point about human destructiveness is a general one, but he is also likely to be referring in particular to the depredations of the ongoing struggle between France and England known to modern historians as the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453).
- 212–28     *une merdaille . . . Ceste mortel descouvenue.* By the early fourteenth century a population of Jews numbering at least 100,000 had settled in northern France, with an especially strong and vibrant community in Machaut's native Champagne. Persecutions and expulsions followed the spreading of rumors that the Jews, secretly in the service of the Muslim ruler of Granada, were plotting to poison the wells and murder the Christian population. At the outbreak of the plague in 1348, these rumors of a Jewish plot were revived and credited by many in the Christian community, including educated men like Machaut. Persecution and murder followed, and in 1394 the Jewish community in France was again expelled, this time definitively for some centuries.
- 241–56     *En ce temps . . . chans estoit herisie.* The flagellant movement, a distortion of a more widespread Christian practice, did not begin, as Machaut suggests, at the time of the plague's outbreak. Originating in thirteenth-century northern Italy, this group, which amounted to a rival Christian sect with its own preachers and devotions, was officially condemned by Pope Clement IV in 1349. By that time, it had spread northward across the Alps to Germany, Bohemia, and Poland. With the outbreak of the epidemic, itinerant bands of adherents made their way from the east to northern France and traveled from town to town. In public places they would strip down and beat themselves and each other bloody with, among other instruments, leather whips studded with small nails designed to tear the flesh. Their preachers would exhort the townspeople to repent of their sins, which, they maintained, had brought down God's wrath, like many at the time endorsed. Those devotions included the singing of hymns, as Machaut indicates.
- 406     *De cent n'en demorroit que nuef.* Modern historians estimate that between a quarter and a half of the population died from the disease in northern France. As Machaut indicates, "scientific" explanations for the epidemic ranged from the poisoning of the wells to meteorological conditions (a deadly "miasma") to unusual astrological conjunctions.
- 431–58     *Et quant je . . . en terre mis.* If this part of the poem is accurate autobiography, then Machaut is probably referring to his residence in Reims as the "house" where, far from the rest of the city, he sat out the ravages of the epidemic. See Bowers, "Canonry of Reims," for a different view.
- 459     *Si qu'einsfui lonc temps en mue.* Here, the historical Machaut makes way for his textual counterpart, the bumbling and ungracious Guillaume who resembles the real-life poet only in some particulars. As Calin notes, the timidity and misogyny displayed by Guillaume are "traditionally ascribed to the clergy." He continues that it is "appropriate that a canon at Reims should be afflicted with them, but incongruous that a master in the doctrine of love and potential

- lover should fear or dislike the object of love" (Calin, *Poet at the Fountain*, p. 117).
- 480      *Je n'os mie cuer esperdu.* At this point, the poem leaves behind history, with its sadness, death, and political turmoil, for the conventional setting of love poetry, as a new springtime appropriately turns the narrator's thoughts to the outdoors and, after some coaxing, to matters of love.
- 507–19    *Or porroit aucuns . . . chose ne pensoie.* Hare-hunting in the courtly texts of the period is often a slyly oblique way of referring to the pursuit of women (based on an obscene double entendre). Machaut does not reproduce the double entendre here, so it is not certain whether he meant the passage to be read in other than a literal sense. It is known from other sources that he did possess a horse named Grisart (line 489) and owned some hunting dogs; this means that a literal, autobiographical meaning may well be intended here.
- 611–12    *Si fais estas . . . homme en valeur.* The grammar of these lines is very obscure. The translation offered here is not certain, hardly more than an educated guess.
- 760–68    *Guillaume, mervilleussement . . . les dames prisiez.* After the extended opening section discussing the plague and Guillaume's encounter with the lady, this is the first mention of the main subject matter of the poem.
- 779–801    *Guillaume, que vous . . . devez bien escuser.* Note that the gender politics of the failed-greeting motif from *JRB* are reversed here. In the earlier poem, it was the lady who, lost in grief, ignored the nobleman's salute, while here it is Guillaume, preoccupied with his hunting, who does not acknowledge the lady's presence. See *JRB*, lines 56–74. Perhaps Guillaume protests too much about his innocence of the lady's initial charge of failing to pay her proper attention. In *JRB*, the lady is overcome with grief when she first crosses paths with her nobleman, but here Guillaume's excuses are weaker: preoccupation with his pursuit of hares and the unlikeliness that he would deliberately wish to offend her.
- 811        *Vers les dames estes forfais.* As this line indicates, the infidelity versus death debate is quickly forgotten and the dispute becomes one of men against women: a battle of the sexes to decide who loves best (Calin, "Contre la fin'amor," pp. 76–77).
- 827–34    *je le doubtay . . . mainnent bonne vie.* Guillaume's overconfidence about his own innocence is evidenced by his admission here that he fears only the malevolence of lying gossips, not any error he might have made. Yet his failure to notice the presence of his lady suggests that the poet's monitoring of his own behavior, particularly toward women whom he should respect, might be less than reliable.
- 844–47    *Pour faire certain . . . Amener a conclusion.* Another indication of the main theme of the poem.
- 884–95    *J'ay bien de . . . longuement y metteroie.* "Behind the humor of this passage we can clearly see Machaut's pride in the number and diversity of his poetic

works. At the same time, the entire discussion stresses that these disparate works are united as the work of a single individual. Properly arranged, they would create a coherent composite picture of his poetic craft and his doctrine of love" (Huot, *From Song to Book*, p. 248). Huot goes on to discuss Machaut's possible involvement with manuscript production as part of the creation of a larger corpus, and draws a parallel between the sentiments of the fictional Guillaume and those of the real-life poet (pp. 248–59).

- 929–1030 *Un question fu . . . avez griefment meffait.* Though it is not named, it is clear from the summary that this is *JRB*, where the king's decision about who suffers more, a betrayed man or a bereaved woman, becomes the issue debated by Guillaume and the lady, later revealed as Happiness. See note to *JRB*, lines 1267–84, for more on narrative doubling.
- 1037 *Car li contraires, c'est li drois.* Guillaume, as it turns out, never embraces the "opposite view," as his lady puts it, but simply acknowledges that he has been defeated in the debate and, impressed by the great nobility of his erstwhile opponent, agrees to complete the assigned penance.
- 1071–88 *Nous penrons un . . . Q'vaurront auques jugemens.* Note that Guillaume, rejecting the lady's accusation of his shortcomings, demands that their case be presented to a man for judgment. Appropriately enough, he gets his wish when the King of Navarre agrees to decide the question. Ironically, though, the king chooses as advisers three of the lady's female courtiers: Discernment, Moderation, and Reason, who are hardly predisposed to Guillaume's point of view.
- 1096–114 *Navarrois . . . adés en parloie.* This very flattering description of Charles de Navarre can be compared to that of Jean de Luxembourg in *JRB*, lines 1291–348. The laudatory portrait was an essential part of the patronage system.
- 1151 *N'i fu Margot ne Agnesot.* The literal translation here is "there was no Maggie or Agnes present."
- 1155–328 *La premiere estoit . . . passoit sa biauté.* Here follows a long catalogue and "characterization" of twelve allegorical figures who embody different aspects of the lady's character. Compare those introduced in lines 1476–85 in the *JRB*. Just what the twelve are varies somewhat, though the idea comes mainly from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* 4.2–5, which had strong bearing on Aquinas and most medieval analyses of moral behavior. Machaut's twelve figures that define the character of his lady are: 1) Understanding manifesting with Discretion; 2) Reason; 3) Temperance; 4) Peace with Concord; 5) Faith; 6) Constancy; 7) Charity; 8) Honesty; 9) Prudence, with Wisdom in her heart; 10) Generosity, who condemns Avarice; 11) Wariness of Misdeed, being perpetually on guard, protected by Shame and Fear (compare *RR*, see Intro, pp. 16–17); and 12) Sufficiency, who places her beyond Fortune's grasp. Aristotle's catalogue, defining virtue as consciousness of choice, is as follows: 1) Courage; 2) Temperance manifesting self control; 3) Liberality or generosity; 4) Magnificence; 5) Magnanimity or

high-mindedness; 6) Ambition, modified by balance toward the mean; 7) Gentleness or mansuetude; 8) Friendship and Courtesy; 9) Honesty or truthfulness about oneself; 10) Wittiness and Jocularity; 11) Modesty, with a sense of shame; 12) Justice and Fairness, righteous indignation that deserves a separate chapter unto itself. Spenser initially appears to have planned *The Faerie Queene* to be in twelve books, each defined by one of the virtues (see his Prologue), though he completed only six: Holiness, Temperance, Chastity, Friendship, Justice, and Courtesy.

- 1374–92 *Ma chiere dame . . . j'en parleray.* Once again, Guillaume fails here to be guided by his lady's pleasure, preferring to wait until the (male) judge arrives rather than presenting his case to her female courtiers.
- 1385–89 *Et si croy . . . supposant sans prejudice.* Here, as throughout the debate, the technical language of scholastic debate is invoked to describe the proceedings, creating an ironic disjunction between the formality of the language (and the intellectual procedure it is meant to control) and the often comic tone of the disputation.
- 1462–91 *Ma dame chiere . . . moult se debatirent.* The mini-debate between the King of Navarre and the lady is filled with class humor, satirizing the fine points of polite behavior and distinctions in rank that hardly seem significant, a perhaps excessive concern on the part of these noble characters.
- 1515–44 *Car de cause . . . protestation dou contraire.* Again the story of *JRB* and the lady's subsequent displeasure is repeated.
- 1565–66 *que j'esliray / Tel conseil, comme je vorray.* Navarre's decision to use consultants in making his choices is admirable, especially if he were "to take counsel from all sides" (line 1571). However, they all come from the lady's entourage, such as Understanding (line 1583), Discretion (line 1585), Reason (line 1589), and Moderation (1597), which may not work much to Guillaume's advantage. He should be accompanied by the same virtues which are, of course, not gender specific.
- 1619–28 *Se fourmerez vostre . . . le puis savoir.* Setting the tone of the trial, the King of Navarre suggests that each party should air their general concerns, rather than once again describing the specific details of the case in *JRB*. In the section that follows, the lady's speech (lines 1629–1702) follows the king's command by setting out the terms of the debate with considerable rhetorical flourish in the form of an extended metaphor: the turtle dove and the stork are both birds conventionally associated with faithfulness and loyalty to a single mate. In her opinion, they are a fitting description of the feminine experience of love. With the lady's formal presentation of her complaint, the debate — or perhaps the trial — begins here.
- 1696–1700 *Mais la dame . . . amans ne sent.* The lady's point is that men, with more control over their lives than women, have at their disposal many courses of action to remediate romantic sorrow, including that caused by a lover's betrayal.

- 1809–25 *Vous avez . . . en lui venir.* Surely Temperance is correct in pointing out that Guillaume is arrogant to claim victory, having only proven that, when faced with a lover's betrayal, a man cannot claim his lot by surrendering to violence, a mortal sin.
- 1857ff. *S'en compteray i. petit compte . . .* In order to argue their cases, Guillaume and the allegorical prosecution use a series of exemplary stories which illustrate the points that they are attempting to make. Thus, the narrative turns away from the original catalyst for the trial: “the *Jugement Navarre* [sic] moves very quickly beyond the parameters of the earlier poem [*JRB*], becoming an extended meditation on the intertwined phenomena of love and pain, as experienced by men, on the one hand, and women, on the other” (Huot, “Consolation of Poetry,” p. 180). In contrast to the tales in the *Confort d'amis* (see volume 2), which are biblical and classical, the stories in this text include some which are specifically French and seem near-contemporary. See also the episode of the clerk from Orleans (lines 2215–314) and that of the Chatelaine de Vergy (lines 2836–38).
- 1863–2010 *Il n'a pas . . . en fu tourmentee.* This first story told by Temperance outlines the feminine response to suffering that will be upheld by the lady and her counselors throughout the debate. Huot describes this reaction as “characterized by bodily reactions of illness or death, whether by suicide or simply from the effects of grief and emotional trauma” (“Consolation of Poetry,” p. 180).
- 1903 *Premiers s'orine resgarderent.* Examination of the patient's urine is the first diagnostic step in matters of internal medicine, picked up frequently in literature to indicate a doctor's competence. Compare the Ellesmere drawing of Chaucer's Physician holding a urine flask on high even as he rides his horse, with the mockery of such a gesture by the Host in the prologue to the Pardonner's Tale: “God so save thy gentil cors, / And eek thyne urynals and thy jurdones” (*CT VI [C]* 304–5). See also *The Croxton Play of the Sacrament*, where, when another Jonathas is sorely afflicted, those in attendance call “the most famous phesycyan / That ever sawe uryne” (lines 535–36).
- 1929 *li bons philosophes.* The “good philosopher” is likely Galen, the Greek thinker and physician (c. 130–200) whose opinions of medicine and human physiology were rarely challenged during the Middle Ages.
- 1933 *Sont curees par leur contraire.* According to Hippocrates, “Diseases caused by repletion are cured by depletion; those caused by depletion are cured by repletion, and in general contraries are cured by contraries” (Hippocrates, *Aphorisms* section 2, ch. 22). The concept became proverbial; see Whiting C414, and Hassell C287.
- 2055–58 *La est il . . . la le delivreroit.* The meaning of these lines is fairly clear, but the relevance of the ideas contained therein is questionable. This may well be another example of Guillaume's “ineffective” argument. See lines 1750–62 and the corresponding note above for a similar lapse of good rhetoric.
- 2095–132 *Dydo roïne de Cartage . . . truis en l'istoire.* The Middle Ages knew the tragic

story of the love affair between the Trojan Aeneas and his beloved Carthaginian Dido from Virgil's epic poem, the *Aeneid*, and from the writings of Ovid. Machaut may have drawn on the long twelfth-century romance based on Virgil's epic, the *Roman d'Eneas*, but it seems more likely that his main source was the monumental early-fourteenth-century French translation of Ovid's works, the *Ovide Moralisé*, for the details of the story, including Dido's pregnancy, which is not mentioned in Virgil. After the murder of her husband Sychaeus, Dido has fled her native Phoenicia for Carthage, where, remaining faithful to the dead man, she establishes a powerful kingdom. When the shipwrecked Aeneas makes his way to her palace, Dido is seduced into loving him by the man's divine mother, the goddess Venus. This love affair shames her in the eyes of her people and neighboring rulers. Summoned by the gods to reestablish the Trojan kingdom in Italy, Aeneas abandons Dido, who commits suicide rather than face the wrath of the gods and the ignominy of this betrayal. See *OM* 14.302–602. In this context, the story serves to highlight the depths of feminine grief when a woman's love has been betrayed. For other reworkings of this story, see Chaucer, *LGW*, lines 924–1367, and Gower, *CA*, 4.77–137. Machaut's extensive borrowings from *OM* are discussed in more detail in the introduction to Volume 2 of *Guillaume de Machaut: The Complete Poetry and Music*.

- 2215–314 *A Orliens . . . mesjugier vous gardez.* The story of the clerk from Orleans is an example of the masculine response to suffering, according to Huot. Here the clerk “escape[s] it entirely through the amnesia of madness” (“Consolation of Poetry,” p. 180). It is interesting that the protagonists of this story are neither members of the nobility, nor are they drawn from classical sources, but come from Machaut’s own social and economic milieu.
- 2362–76 *Aussi de vostre . . . le sache diter.* Faith’s counter-argument.
- 2377–80 *Damoiselle vueilliez laissier . . . le cuer doloir.* Guillaume’s defensiveness seems humorously out of proportion to the “threatening” to which he suggests he has been subjected.
- 2434–532 *Uns riches homs . . . plait a dire.* Machaut also draws upon the story of the nobleman and the tree in the *Lay de Plour*, lines 33–37.
- 2434–70 *Un riche homs . . . Plaisamment et esbanier.* This passage plays on the fact that French has grammatical gender; *ente* is feminine, while *arbre* is masculine. The French term for a “graft” has multiple resonances — scion, offshoot, flowering branch, new growth and fruitfulness (see *DMF*, *ente* (n.1), sense B). Figuratively, it can mean descent or “stock,” which might apply here too. The grafting as she matures proclaims a rich and worthy descent, that appeals to her lord and those who love her.
- 2561 L’ACTEUR. Here, the authorial speaker narrates the actions of two characters, rather than speaking as the character, Guillaume. The speech heading here is from the base MS (as are all the speech headings). These speech markers may have been copied for *in vivo* reading to an audience, so “l’acteur” can be understood as either author or performer (reader).

- “L’acteur” appears twice more as a speech heading, at lines 2693 and 3725.
- 2654      *verbi gracia*. That is, “thanks for the words.”
- 2699–706    *On a veu . . . a ma matrie*. As in *JRB*, the debate here widens in scope from the agreed-upon question of relative suffering to the more general issue of whether it is men or women who love more faithfully and deeply.
- 2707–822    *Quant cil d’Athennes . . . fame ne sent*. Like that of Dido and Aeneas, the story of Theseus was well known to the Middle Ages, especially through the writings of Ovid. Machaut’s source for the legend is here again *OM* (7.1681–2038). Minos, King of Crete, is married to Pasiphaë, who has borne him a son, Androgeus, as well as two daughters, Ariadne and Phaedra. Because of a slight to his dignity, the god Poseidon causes the woman to develop a fatal passion for a bull; the result of their coupling is the Minotaur, a monster with the head of a bull and the body of a man. King Aegeus of Athens kills Androgeus, and Minos then imposes a deadly yearly tax on the citizens of the city of seven young men and seven young maidens, who are sacrificed to the Minotaur. Theseus is chosen by lot to be one of those sacrificed, but he proves able to win the affections of Ariadne who provides him with a ball of thread with which to escape from the labyrinth where the monster lives. Theseus then kills the beast and escapes from Crete with Ariadne and her sister, Phaedra. Stopping at the island of Naxos, he leaves Ariadne behind and makes his way to Athens with Phaedra, whom he subsequently marries. Ariadne, however, does not fail to prosper; the god Dionysus falls in love with and then marries her, and she is made immortal by Zeus. Though Frankness narrates the myth in detail, it is the story of Ariadne’s desertion by Theseus that is most relevant to her argument. A popular theme in art and literature; for other examples, see Ovid, *Heroides* letter 10 and Chaucer, *LGW*, lines 1886–2227.
- 2770–800    *Aussi dirai je . . . par l’air fuitive*. The story of Jason’s pursuit of the Golden Fleece, though treated in Greek epic, was better known in the Middle Ages in the Roman poet Ovid’s shortened version. Machaut’s sources, as for all the classic tales retold in *JRN*, is *OM* (7.8–682), though he may also have known a Latin version of the Troy story in which the tale of Jason appears, the *Historia Destructionis Troiae* of Guido delle Colonne. Jason and his companions, the Argonauts, journey to Colchis to obtain a great treasure, the Golden Fleece. Medea, the king’s daughter, falls in love with Jason and helps him to obtain the fleece. After several harrowing adventures, in which Medea’s command of the black arts figures significantly, the two establish themselves in Corinth, there to rule together until Jason attempts to divorce Medea so that he can marry Creusa. Medea sends the unfortunate woman a poisoned robe that delivers her to a horrible death and, to gain further vengeance on her betraying husband, murders their children, afterwards escaping the city in a chariot drawn by dragons. For other examples of a sympathetic portrayal of Medea, see Chaucer, *LGW*, lines 1580–1671 and, especially, Gower, *CA* 5.3247–4237.
- 2810–11      *On ne porroit . . . comme en femme*. These classical exempla, of course, also

provide histories of well-known faithless, conscienceless men: Jason and Theseus.

- 2836–40 *Chascuns scet bien . . . vit pour s'amour.* The reference is to the thirteenth-century French romance, *La Chatelaine de Vergy*, which traces the misery and pain that result from, first, a young wife's betrayal of her husband and, second, a jealous woman's betrayal of her husband's trust. The chatelaine's lover is approached by the Duchess of Burgundy, his lord's wife, and he refuses her love, protesting that he loves another, although no one knows of their affair. The knight has promised the chatelaine never to reveal their relationship, but he is forced to break his word when the duchess complains to her husband that the man has insulted and lied to her. Only by telling the duke of his affair, his meetings arranged by the little dog the chatelaine lets into the garden to signal she is alone, does he free himself from his lord's anger and probable exile. The duke promises never to reveal the knight's secret, but he in turn breaks the promise when the duchess extorts the truth from him, though he does enjoin her on pain of death never to reveal the secret. The jealous woman does so, however, causing the deaths of the chatelaine and her lover, who stabs himself when a servant tells him the truth. The duke exacts a terrible revenge on his wife, killing the woman, and then he departs on a crusade. It might be pointed out that this is a particularly inept example for Guillaume to adduce, since the story involves the betrayal of a sworn trust by two otherwise morally irreproachable men, the lover and the duke. A translation of this work is included in Palmer, *Medieval Epic and Romance*, pp. 799–824.
- 2841 *Lancelos et Tristans.* These famed lovers were involved in tragic relationships with the wives of their sovereigns, Tristan with Iseut, the wife of King Marc, and Lancelot with Guinevere, the wife of King Arthur. As incorporated within Arthurian legend in the thirteenth century, Tristan's story ends with the young man, estranged from his beloved, dying on a battlefield of his wounds and despair. Iseut finds his body and dies herself from grief. In that same tradition, likely known to Machaut, the illicit affair between Lancelot and Guinevere leads in part to the destruction of Arthur's kingdom. "Virtuous" Lancelot and Tristan, of course, are both involved in adulterous affairs with the wives of their lords — perhaps yet another instance of Guillaume's inattention to detail in the case he makes in support of men. Machaut also points to Tristan and Lancelot as examples of ideal lovers in *Confort*, line 2803 and *Lyon*, line 1321. For other references to this story, see Oton de Granson's «J'ay tout perdu; le festu est rompu», «A Dalida, Jhezabel, et Thays» and *Le Livre Messire Ode* (Poems, ed. Nicholson and Grenier-Winther, pp. 54, 60–62, 212–326 respectively).
- 2851–98 *Une dame sans . . . qu'elle y mist.* According to Huot, the story of the knight who cut off his finger stages "a masculine response to suffering" by transforming it into a heroic gesture ("Consolation of Poetry," p. 180). See the story of the clerk from Orleans (lines 2215–314) for a masculine response to emotional turmoil.

- 2920–95 *Est loiez s'il . . . po a debatre.* The theme of moderation reflects the advice that the narrator gives Charles in lines 1675–78 of the *Confort*. However, Guillaume makes himself an unintended butt of humor by praising the power of moderation after telling the story of a man who cuts off his own finger to demonstrate his obedience to his lover's commands.
- 3009–10 *Certes Franchise vous . . . bien dire savez.* Guillaume here responds to Franchise, pointedly ignoring what Prudence had just said.
- 3019–46 *Il est certain . . . seroit encor reprovez.* Guillaume's description of the fickleness of a woman's heart is a common *topos* in misogynist literature, in which the voice is that of a frustrated male. See, for example, the Chaucerian lyric “Against Women Unconstant” (Benson, *Riverside Chaucer*, p. 657). The motif is prominent in Jean de Meun's treatment of a jealous husband and his dissatisfaction with women who are disobedient to his wishes (*RR* lines 8425–9462).
- 3055–89 *Ce que je . . . paier la lamproie.* In the course of returning the debate to its original issue — who suffered more, the man or the woman — Guillaume manages as well to broaden it, introducing by way of defense the anti-feminist view that women are more fickle and changeable than men. He thereby ensures that he will lose the debate, providing strong evidence that he does harbor misogynist thoughts even if, technically speaking, he buttresses his “published” view that the betrayed nobleman is in more pain than the bereaved lady, for her “fickleness” will ensure that her grief will soon end.
- 3112–13 *Et s'avez esté a l'escole . . . d'aler en change.* The meaning here is somewhat obscure, perhaps a confusing reference to the stereotypical anti-feminist of the late Middle Ages, the university scholar.
- 3141–67 *Lors etroy une . . . Doubtance de meffaire.* The debate shifts. Although many of the characters have had their say, Guillaume remains stubbornly unconvinced, and they are beginning to get angry.
- 3170 *Et commensa par tel maniere.* Offended by Guillaume's obstinate declaration that women are fickle and hence do not suffer long in love, the female courtiers offer a series of classical exempla to prove the persistence unto death of women in love.
- 3171–212 *Que fist Tysbé . . . a mort comparer.* The story of Pyramus and Thisbé has likely also been borrowed by Machaut from *OM* (4. 219–1169). The two grow up as neighbors in the city of Babylon, prohibited by their parents from communicating with one another. But they find a crack in the wall that divides their two houses and, one day, make plans to meet outside the city, close to the tomb of Ninus. Thisbé arrives before the young man and, as she waits for him, is frightened by a lion. She flees in haste, dropping her veil, which the beast, its jaws bloody from a recent kill, mouths before dropping. When Pyramus arrives, he finds the bloody veil, thinks that his lover has been killed because of his negligence, and stabs himself. Thisbé returns to find him dead and, wishing to live no longer, kills herself with the same sword.

- 3221–307 *Leandus li biaus . . . fiel encontre baume.* The story of Hero and Leander is also taken from *OM* (4.3150–731). In Greek mythology, Hero is the priestess of Aphrodite (Venus) in Sestos, with whom Leander, who lives across the Hellespont in Abydos, falls in love. At night he swims across the watery passage to visit her, but one night during a storm the light that Hero holds for him as a guide blows out. Leander loses his way and drowns. Discovering his body the next day, Hero, despairing, throws herself into the sea and is drowned as well.
- 3365–69 *Adont la dame . . . tout en oiant.* Here the lady returns to the debate.
- 3398–412 *Or ne sceus . . . plus a repos.* Machaut inserts a strikingly plausible explanation of how Guillaume was able to find out about the Judge's private deliberations. According to Nicholson, Machaut's later *dits* show a shift to an increasingly realist setting and tone, of which this is a good example. See Nicholson, *Love and Ethics*, pp. 15–18.
- 3414–26 *Je suis commis . . . nous avons loisir.* The Judge, like a wise man, calls upon counselors — both male and female — to accord with his deliberations. Compare Prudence's advice in Chaucer's Tale of Melibee (*CT* [B<sup>2</sup>] 2191–203). Here, unlike Melibee who demands advice from flatterers, enemies and false counselors, the lady's judge invokes advice from Reason's company — Discretion, Understanding, and Moderation — who weigh Guillaume's arguments objectively, without personal bias.
- 3441–4001 *Ce jugement avez . . . tous les poins.* In summing up the case (which is another example of the type of narrative doubling that frequently occurs in this text), Moderation and Reason outline the reasons why Guillaume should be condemned. Calin identifies four different points in their argument: Guillaume has pleaded his case badly using inappropriate evidence and false reasoning, he has spoken out against ladies and Love, he has not shown the lady proper courtesy and, finally, that it is wrong to view jealousy as worse than grief. Calin's main point is that condemning Guillaume on the basis of carelessness and his poor rhetorical skills means that Machaut's own argument put forth in *JRB* remains intact (*Poet at the Fountain*, pp. 111–13).
- 3609–14 *Dont Guillaumes est . . . pour li punir.* The point is that Guillaume offended against the dignity of the noble lady by arguing with her when she rightly upbraided him for his insults against women.
- 3649–838 *Dont ma dame . . . de sa poësté.* In addition to arguing with a lady whose views he should accept unconditionally, Guillaume is convicted for both advancing an incorrect opinion (death is the worst of all human misfortunes) and conducting himself incompetently. Guillaume, we learn, would have been made to suffer a more dire punishment had it not been for the mercy shown him by the lady, whom Guillaume, lost in his self-concern, has failed to identify properly or even inquire about. Abashed and ashamed, Guillaume now asks Reason who his benefactress is.
- 3851 *Bonneürté.* Meaning, happiness. This is the first time that the lady is referred to as *Bonneürté*. An alternative translation of the name would be Good

Fortune, and indeed the lady, with her metaphysical powers and presence, partakes of some of the qualities conventionally assigned to the goddess Fortuna in the Middle Ages, following the influential portrayal in Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*, one of the central texts of the era and an important source for Machaut. At the same time, the lady, in her humanity and good humor, undoubtedly recalls as well Bonne ("Good") de Luxembourg, daughter of Jean de Luxembourg, King of Bohemia, and Machaut's generous patroness before her death during the plague.

- 4093     *li changes*. The *DMF* defines *chainse* (n., sense a) as "longue tunique de femme, à manches, robe faite de toile de lin ou de chanvre" [a long tunic for women, with sleeves; or a dress made of linen or hemp].
- 4177–89     *de .ij. amendes . . . une balade*. This judgment, punishing the author by demanding more writing, provides a reasonable conclusion to the debate. See, for example, Chaucer's Prologue to *LGW*, where the poet must go back to his library and write more (lines F.548–77).
- 4182     *.i. lay*. Of the three assigned lyric penances, only a lay seems to have been composed, and this piece follows directly *JRN* itself in three early manuscripts of Machaut's works, but (except for E) not in the later ones that are generally regarded as more authoritative by modern scholars because the poet likely supervised their production. It may be that some years after writing the poem Machaut decided not to include the lay.

#### **LE LAY DE PLOUR**

- Iff.     *Ci commence le lay de plour*. This text, first referenced in line 4182 of *JRN*, is likely to be the *Lay de Plour*, which is included in this volume. The lay is the most complicated of all lyric forms, composed as it is of twelve stanzas of varying length and meter, with no pattern of rhyme repeated from one stanza to the next. Confusingly, the term *lai* is also used in the Middle Ages to refer to short narrative poems, e.g., the *Lais* of Marie de France.



## TEXTUAL NOTES

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**ABBREVIATIONS:** **B:** Paris, BnF fr. 1585; **C:** Paris, BnF, fr. 1586; **D:** Paris, BnF, fr. 1587; **E:** Paris, BnF, fr. 9221; **F:** Paris, BnF, fr. 22545; **G:** Paris, BnF, fr. 22546; **H:** *Oeuvres de Guillaume de Machaut*, ed. Ernest Hoepffner; **J:** Paris, Arsenal 5203; **K:** Berne, Burgerbibliothek 218; **JRB:** Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Behaingne*; **JRN:** Machaut, *Le Jugement dou Roy de Navarre*; **M:** Paris, BnF, fr. 843; **MS:** Paris, BnF, fr. 1584 [base text]; **P:** Paris, BnF, fr. 2166; **Pm:** New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 396; **R:** Paris, BnF, fr. 2230; **Vg:** Cambridge, Parker Library, Ferrell 1 (formerly Vogüé Ferrell).

The *JRN* is found together with the *JRB* in eight Machaut manuscripts that contain only the works of the poet. These are, together with their customary sigla: Vg, B, D, E, F, M, MS, Pm. The *JRB* is found without the *JRN* in an additional twelve manuscripts (a complete listing can be found in Earp, *A Guide to Research*, p. 207). For a variety of reasons, one of these is an excellent, if early, witness to the *JRB*: C.

For reasons set out at some length in the introduction, this edition takes A (here MS) as an authoritative text for Machaut's works, including the two *dits* and the *lay* included in this volume. Because of the unique authority of MS the practice has been to deviate from its readings only in clear cases of spelling error, scribal misinterpretation, and omissions or miswritings of various kinds (such as diplographies). In these cases, the reading of MS simply been corrected. In the case of the *JRB*, there are several passages of some length that have been neatly excised in MS's version of the text; this "editing" can hardly be interpreted as other than deliberate, and since there is good reason to think that Machaut himself might have been involved in the preparation of this text (of the fair copy that was its basis), these lacunae, if that is what they are, have been supplied from C. In keeping with the minimal variant policy of this series, only semantically significant variants are here noted. Spelling variations or slight changes in word order are ignored. All deviations from the readings of MS, however, are accounted for here.

### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE BEHAINGNE

- 55           *embuschiez*. MS: *embunschiez*, due to spelling error.  
61           *que*. MS: *qui*, due to spelling error.  
114           *avant*. MS: *avent*, due to spelling error.  
126           *rentiers*. MS: *renties*, due to spelling error.  
187           *durté*. MS: *dutte*, due to spelling error.  
202           *Eimy*. MS: *einmy*, due to extra nasal stroke.  
287           *solaus*. MS: *solans*, due to spelling error.  
323           *pointure*. MS: *poiture*, due to missing nasal stroke.  
382           *Que d'nature*. MS: *Quature*, due to spelling error.

- 497 *requerre*. MS: *requerir*, due to spelling error.  
 525 *annuy*. MS: *anny*, due to spelling error.  
 627 *qu'un*. MS: *cun*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 675 *regnay*. MS: *resnay*, due to spelling error.  
 688 *Einsi*. MS: *Eins*, due to spelling error.  
 742 *qu'uns*. MS: *cuns*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 852 *ç'a*. MS: *sa*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 933 *ne pooie*. So MS. M, C, B, D: *ne savoie*.  
 980–83 *Quant je li . . . ne me marvoy*. These verses are supplied from C.  
 994 *venir*. MS: *veinr*, due to spelling error.  
 1000–47 *Car nourreture . . . pasmer me couvient*. MS: omitted. These verses are supplied from C.  
 1065 *espoir*. MS: *esporr*, due to spelling error.  
 1158 *pooir*. MS: *poir*, due to spelling error.  
 1183 *dites*. MS: *ditos*, due to spelling error.  
 1187 *refais*. MS: *refaie*, due to spelling error.  
 1271 *vraiemt*. MS: *vraiemnt*, due to spelling error.  
 1380 *s'arrestoient*. MS: *arrestoient*, due to spelling error.  
 1383 *disoient*. MS: *disoiet*, due to missing nasal stroke.  
 1402 *Et l'aiue*. MS: *Etiaue*, due to spelling error.  
 1437 *aussi*. MS: *ossi*, due to spelling error.  
 1453 *aussi*. MS: *assi*, due to spelling error.  
 1483 *Jeunesse*. MS: *largesse*, due to eyeskip. Reading supplied from C.  
 1530 *c'iere*. MS: *siere*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 1538 *durement*. So MS. D, E: *doucement*.  
 1667 *aimment*. MS: *amment*, due to spelling error.  
 1682 *Qu'une*. MS: *Cune*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 1816–19 *Et qui vous . . . son guerredon pert*. MS: omitted. These verses are supplied from C.  
 1831 *haute game*. So MS. F: *fausse game*.  
 1835 *autrement*. MS: *autremnt*, due to spelling error.  
 1861–84 *N'iert ja partis . . . Qu'Amour ma dame*. MS: omitted. These verses are supplied from C.  
 1899 *n'amoit*. So MS. C, B, D, E: *avoit*.  
 1906 *recours*. MS: *recoues*, due to spelling error.  
 1908 *Car*. MS: *Ca*, due to spelling error.  
 2015 *durement*. So MS. C, E: *doucement*, but gives inferior sense.  
 2043 *Qu'eins*. MS: *Quenie*, due to spelling error.

#### LE JUGEMENT DOU ROY DE NAVARRE

- 235 *furent*. MS: *furent furent*, due to diplography.  
 386 *sejours*. MS: *secours*, due to spelling error.  
 391 *la*. So MS. F: *le* also gives good sense.  
 461 *qu'une*. MS: *cune*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 485 *lors*. So MS. F: *hors*. Either gives good sense. *Hors* would render the line's sense as "so that I went out of that prison."

- 667      *Venrez*. MS: *Verrez*, due to spelling error.  
 756      *parfaire*. So MS. F, M, B, D, E: *faire*.  
 870      *yvres*. MS: *yures*, due to spelling error.  
 874      *forfaites*. So F. MS repeats *parfaites* from previous line.  
 894      *Dont je me vorray bien garder*. Line missing in MS, which repeats line 893.  
             Line supplied from F.  
 902      *invisible*. So MS. F, M, B: *nuisible*, giving an interesting reading here. *Nuisible*  
             would render the line's sense as "your annoying thought."  
 1078     *ferez*. MS: *feirs*, due to spelling error.  
 1081     *Einsi*. MS: *Eins*, due to spelling error.  
 1149     *accompaingnié*. A: *accompaignie*, due to missing nasal stroke.  
 1214     *s'ahonte*. MS: *lahonte*, due to spelling error.  
 1227     *setisme*. MS: *sisieme*, due to miswriting.  
 1257     *oeuvres*. MS: *ouvres*, due to spelling error.  
 1265     *Après Prudence se seoit*. Line missing in MS, which repeats line 1264. Line  
             supplied from F.  
 1372     *m'agenoillai*. So F. MS: *agelongnai*, due to miswriting.  
 1421     *m'avoit*. MS: *mavoit mavoit*, due to diplography.  
 1487     *si*. MS: *ci*, due to spelling error — homonym.  
 1493     *assis*. So F. MS: *rassis*, the rhyme word of the next line. Eyeskip error.  
 1564     *tant vous*. So F. MS: omits *tant*.  
 1630     *avons*. MS: *avos*, due to missing nasal stroke.  
 1640     *on scet*. So MS. F, M, B, D, E: *ou soit*.  
 1647     *trieges*. MS: *rieges*, due to spelling error.  
 1734     *LE JUGE*. So F. MS omits heading.  
 1813     *Comment*. MS: *commene*, due to spelling error.  
 1821     *face*. MS: *facent*, due to spelling error.  
 1846     *querir*. So H, who emends *metri causa*. MS: *querre*, due to spelling error.  
 1891     *Fusicien*. MS: *Fusitien*, due to spelling error.  
 1913     *jugoit*. MS: *jugent*, due to spelling error.  
 1929     *philosophes*. MS: *philophes*, due to spelling error.  
 1983     *oy*. MS: *jos*, due to spelling error.  
 2014     *prouver*. So F, H. MS: *trouver*, repeated from line 2013 due to eyeskip error.  
 2045     *est*. MS: *en*, due to spelling error.  
 2108     *Que heiü*. So F. MS omits *heiü*.  
 2151     *fourches*. MS: *fouches*, due to spelling error.  
 2161     *Aussi*. MS: *Iussi*, due to spelling error.  
 2162     *point*. MS: *poit*, due to missing nasal stroke.  
 2170     *par*. MS: *par par*, due to diplography.  
 2173     *Que a moy*. So MS. All manuscripts except M give *Qu'ami*, which also gives  
             good sense.  
 2189     *qu'Amours*. So MS. F, M, B, D, E: *qu'amis*, which gives inferior sense.  
 2195     *Pais*. MS: *Pas*, due to spelling error.  
 2213     *prouver*. So all other manuscripts. MS: *premier*.  
 2276     *fent*. MS: *fant*, due to spelling error.  
 2330     *confonderay*. MS: *confimderay*, due to spelling error.  
 2341     *Amis*. MS: *Ainis*, due to spelling error.

- 2349 *honnourablement*. MS: *honnourablemmt*, due to spelling error.
- 2371 *nullement*. MS: *nullemet*, due to missing nasal stroke.
- 2381 *s'avisa*. So MS, B, D. All other manuscripts give *savanca*, which also gives good sense.
- 2448 *S'estent*. MS: *se sent*, due to spelling error.
- 2465 *Et en*. MS: *Est en*, due to spelling error.
- 2476 *S'elle*. MS: *Celle*, due to spelling error — homonym.
- 2573 *par voie*. MS: *pa voie*, due to spelling error.
- 2628 *le*. So MS. All other manuscripts, *me*, which renders the line's sense as "listen to me."
- 2674 *martire*. So MS, E. All other manuscripts give *matire*, which also gives good sense.
- 2688 *Dont je vous di que la pointue*. MS repeats this line.
- 2695 *vueil*. MS: *voult*. The grammar of the sentence requires a noun form.
- 2700 *loiaument*. MS: *loiament*, due to spelling error.
- 2785 *Quanqu'elle*. MS: *Quenquelle*, due to spelling error.
- 2924–25 *L'ACTEUR*. MS: omits heading here, which is supplied from F, per H.
- 2932 *Chastelainne*. MS: *chastolainne*, due to spelling error.
- 2982 *Apparent*. MS: *appernt*, due to spelling error.
- 3045 *retrouvez*. So MS. F, B, D, E: *recouvrez*.
- 3172 *nus*. MS: *mus*, due to spelling error.
- 3214 *aidier*. MS: *aididier*, due to spelling error.
- 3215 *nostre*. So MS. All other manuscripts give *vostre*. Either reading gives good sense.
- 3249 *tourbla*. So MS. All other manuscripts give *senfla*, which gives good sense and yields a richer rhyme.
- 3315 *couchié*. So MS. F, M, D, E: *touchié*, which gives inferior but possible sense.
- 3386 *de retraire*. So H. MS: *le contraire*, which gives poor sense. F, M, B, D, E: *le retraire*, which also gives poor sense.
- 3389 *nostre*. So MS, B. All other manuscripts give *vostre*. Either reading gives good sense.
- 3420 *notre*. So MS. All other manuscripts give *vostre*.
- 3426 *Tandis com*. MS: *toudis*.
- 3435 *s'il vient*. MS: *il bien*, due to spelling error.
- 3475 *Juges*. MS: *Jugiez*, due to spelling error.
- 3590 *poins fort me*. So F. MS: *poins ci me*, which as H points out, gives inferior sense.
- 3749 *bien le savez*. So MS. All other manuscripts give *vous le*, which gives equally good sense.
- 3887, 3889 *Elle*. MS and all manuscripts give *Il*. These masculine pronouns to the lady must be miswritings.
- 3891 *nul tort*. So all manuscripts except MS. MS: *accort*, probably due to a miswriting.
- 3913 *des dames*. So all manuscripts except MS. MS: which was *des des* due to diplography.
- 3914 *honneur*. MS: *bonneur*, due to spelling error.
- 3948 *la voie*. MS: *la vie*, due to spelling error.

- 3984        *dou prouver*. So all manuscripts except MS. MS: *dou premier*, a miswriting.
- 4058        *estoient*. MS: *estioient*, due to spelling error.
- 4089        *Beniveillance*. MS: *bniveillance*, due to spelling error.
- 4121        *chaucié*. MS: *chauciet*, due to spelling error.
- 4124        *sont*. MS: *son*, due to spelling error.
- 4127        *espuisier*. MS: *espursier*, due to spelling error.
- 4134        *oeuvre*. MS: *ouevre*, due to spelling error.
- 4155        *apperent*. MS: *apparet*, due to spelling error.
- 4185        *a un*. MS: *aa un*, due to spelling error.





## NOTES TO THE MUSIC BY URI SMILANSKY

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**ABBREVIATIONS:** see Textual Notes.

As detailed in the introduction (p. 36), the following comments do not contain a list of variants, but discuss the problems presented by the readings in **MS A** (henceforth MS) and the way they were solved in this edition. A complete list of music variants can be found in Volume 10: *The Lays*.

### THE *LAY DE PLOUR*

The *Lay de Plour* (*Lay of Weeping*) is intimately connected with the *Navarre*, at the end of which the narrator promises to compose exactly such a lay as part of his punishment. (For the relationship between the two works and the particular issues raised by its positioning in the various manuscripts see the introduction to this volume, pp. 27–33.) Current thinking (based on its position and notational style in C) places this work in the early 1350s.<sup>1</sup> C, which presents this song in the music section where each lay is accompanied by an opening miniature, begins the *Lay* with an image of a man and woman debating (C102 according to Earp's system).<sup>2</sup> While more complex interpretations of the program of lay-illuminations in C have been suggested,<sup>3</sup> this might be a simple link of association, affiliating this work with the two judgment (or debate) poems. J, the only manuscript to place the *Lay* immediately after the *JRB*, uniquely opens with an illumination (J4) depicting the main theme of the work — a woman dressed in black sitting in front of a coffin covered in black drapery.<sup>4</sup> No other manuscript couples this song with a miniature.

The *Lay* follows Machaut's preferred lay structure of twelve strophes; the last reproduces the text structure, rhyme scheme, and music (transposed a fifth higher) of the first. In comparison with the lay incorporated into the *Remede*, this text is shorter and has a simpler line-structure. Its rhyme scheme, however, is more complex, and the *Lay* is notated in note-shapes more typical of the up to date *Ars nova* style than the *Remede* lay, which in its use of longer note-values conforms better to the more archaic notational

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<sup>1</sup> See Earp, *Machaut: A Guide to Research*, pp. 365–66, where other opinions also appear.

<sup>2</sup> To view image C102, see <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8449043q/f380.item>.

<sup>3</sup> See Huot, *From Song to Book*, pp. 263–70.

<sup>4</sup> To view image J4, see <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b550058905/f95.item>.

habits of the *Ars antiqua*. Like most lays, it has a wide vocal range: this time spanning the interval of a twelfth.

Music manuscripts:

- C** 187r–189r in music section  
**Vg** 87v–89v after *JRN*  
**B** 87v–89v (new 104v–106v) after *JRN* **K**  
**A** 410v–412v in music section  
**E** 57r–58r after *JRN*

Text only manuscripts:

- M** 48v–49v after *JRN*  
and 221v–222v in Lay section  
42r–42v fragment, after *JRB*  
**J** 45r–46r after *JRB*

*Text structure:* Letters indicate single rhyme endings. Numbers indicate the syllable count of the line in question. Apostrophes indicate an unstressed appendage syllable not included in the syllable count.

1. a b b a | a b b a || a b b a | a b b a ||  
7 7' 7 7 7 7' 7 7 7 7' 7 7 7 7' 7 7 7
2. c c d | c c d || c c d | c c d ||  
8 8 4' 8 8 4' 8 8 4' 8 8 4'
3. e e f g | e e f g || e e f g | e e f g ||  
7' 7' 7 4 7' 7' 7 4 7' 7' 7 4 7' 7' 7 4
4. h h i | h h i || h h i | h h i ||  
5' 5' 5 5' 5 5' 5 5 5' 5 5' 5
5. j j k k j j k k j || j j k k j j k k j ||  
7 7' 4 7 4 7 4 7 4 7 7 4 7 4 7 4 7 4
6. l l m m n | l l m m n || l l m m n | l l m m n |  
10' 10' 4 4 3 10' 10' 4 4 3 10' 10' 4 4 3 10' 10' 4 4 3
7. o o o o p | o o o o p || o o o o p | o o o o p ||  
5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 5 7 5 5 5 5 7 5
8. q r r s s q q q r r s s s q || q r r s s q q q r r s s s q ||  
7 3 4 4 7 4 3 4 4 7 4 3 4 4 7 4 3 4 4 7 4 3 4 4
9. t t t u | t t t u || t t t u | t t t u ||  
3' 3' 7' 5' 3' 3' 7' 5' 3' 3' 7' 5' 3' 3' 7' 5'
10. v v v w | v v v w || v v v w | v v v w ||  
7' 5' 7' 7 7' 5' 7' 7 7' 5' 7' 7 7' 5' 7' 7 7

11. x x x x y | x x x x y || x x x x y | x x x x y ||  
 4 5 3 3 5 4 5 3 3 5 4 5 3 3 5 4 5 3 3 5

12. a b b a | a b b a || a b b a | a b b a ||  
 7 7' 7 7 7 7' 7 7 7' 7 7 7 7' 7 7' 7 7

*Comments on the readings in MS*

- m. 1–2 There is no dot after first brevis, but it is clear from spacing and repetition (m. 18–19).
- m. 3–4 While the given underlay also works, underlay lines show the original intention here (elision of ‘-me’ and ‘a’, and placement of ‘ou-’).
- m. 8 ‘-bli-’ was added faintly by a different hand. Its underlay is not entirely clear.
- m. 11 A fa-sign (flat) added perhaps by a corrector’s hand.
- m. 20–21 The second text ‘m’ a’ is written at the beginning of a new line rather than at the end of the old one, which creates alignment problems between the two lines of text.
- m. 128 The second text ‘-te’ ends a line rather than begin the next. Adjusted according to the first text underlay.
- m. 165 The second text ‘-port’ was wrongly copied at the beginning of the next line, disrupting the alignment of the texts. Corrected according to the first text.
- m. 176–77 There are some erasures here.
- m. 186 There are more erasures or other damage here.
- m. 211–13 No dot appears here. One can stay closer to the notational rules and add an extra measure here:

Vi - ai - re pa - li et  
 La mort pri que la me

But the previous line and rhythmic structure of this section suggests not to.

- m. 225 There is some small erasure or damage here.
- m. 250 The fa-sign may be the work of a different hand.
- m. 258 There is some erasure or damage affecting also the text above.
- m. 281 A rest (or dot) is missing after the brevis, but the spacing and the repetition make it clear an imperfection was not intended here.
- m. 298–301 The underlay is not entirely clear. Adjusted according to the first strophe.





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