

*The Book  
of  
Margery Kempe*

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## ***The Book of Margery Kempe***

### ***Introduction***

Written probably in the late 1430s, *The Book of Margery Kempe* is one of the most astonishing documents of late medieval English life. Its protagonist, who represents herself as its ultimate author, was not simply a woman but a woman thoroughly rooted in the world.<sup>1</sup> She evinces the manners and the tastes neither of the court nor of the nunnery, but the piety, the culture, the profit-oriented values, and the status-consciousness of the late medieval town. As a member of the powerful guild of the Holy Trinity in the prosperous East Anglian town of Bishops Lynn, Margery Kempe wrote from a secure position within the very world she subjects to such careful scrutiny.<sup>2</sup> Kempe examines the fundamental conflicts and tensions of that world by describing Margery's gradual and voluntary movement away from worldly prestige. Margery's disengagement from conventional female roles and duties — and consequently her daring rejection of the values of her fellow townspersons — is a response to her growing commitment to her spiritual vocation. Her attempt to gain personal, financial, and spiritual autonomy is a tale of radical reversal that touches us on many different levels. Margery does what very few are able finally to do, and the fact that she does so as a woman enhances the force of her story — she breaks away.

Her story begins conventionally enough. She is married, soon thereafter conceives her first child, goes on to bear fourteen children and presumably to assume the responsibilities of a wife and mother whose position in late medieval society is assured by the longstanding reputation of her father, John Burnham, and the lesser but nonetheless worthy repute of her husband, John

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<sup>1</sup>Throughout this Introduction I will distinguish between Kempe, the author of the *Book*, and Margery, its protagonist. See my early essay, "Margery Kempe: Social Critic," *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 22 (1992), 159–84, which was incorporated into chapter 2 of *Margery Kempe's Dissenting Fictions* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Press, 1994).

<sup>2</sup> In 1438 a Margery Kempe was admitted into the Guild of the Trinity of Lynn. See Meech, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, Introduction, p. li and Appendix III, 1, p. 358. For a discussion of the social and economic dynamics of late medieval towns, see Alice Stopford Green, *Town Life in the Fifteenth Century* (London: Macmillan, 1894. Reissued New York: Macmillan, 1907)

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Kempe. However, that conventional story is fissured early in Margery's life by a personal vision of Jesus that comes to her shortly after the birth of her first child. The *Book* records not the anxious efforts to secure worldly goods that we can find in the letters of the Pastons, but Margery's efforts to dissociate herself from the acquisitive and restrictive values of what we now recognize as middle class life. The *Book* tells a tale of conflict between Margery and key figures of the late medieval world who were invested with spiritual and secular authority — priests, bishops, and mayors — as well as with her husband and her fellow townspersons. Her personal relationship with Jesus leads her to espouse a radical social gospel that threatens the very basis for town life, for Kempe intimates that an orientation towards profit, an investment in qualities like stability and hierachal ordering, and an urge toward conformist codes of dress and behavior underlie the medieval conception of community.<sup>3</sup> What Kempe therefore presents Margery as threatening is the *concept* of community, that tacit covenant with uniformity that too often defines human relations.

As "modern" as such an account of the life of Margery Kempe sounds, Kempe grounds her work in the conventions of medieval female sacred biography.<sup>4</sup> Throughout the annals of sanctity, holy men and women were presented as breaking with or as challenging the institutions of family and society. The issue of sexuality was a particularly important one for female saints, for by their wishes to lead celibate lives, women signified their espousal of a new and less socially defined existence.<sup>5</sup> Unbound by the physical and patriarchal strictures of marriage, they could cultivate a spiritual relationship to God whose terms were frequently described by their hagiographers as freer — and, in fact, far more amatory — than any available to them as actual wives. That this freedom was carefully circumscribed and superintended by the Church is integral to the story of women's religious movements in the Middle Ages, since it is more often through the writings of the confessors or spiritual guides of such women that we know of their lives. Those lives are radical, in the sense that they are designed to challenge the tepidity of contemporary devotion, yet also conventional, since the very devotion that turns the holy person into a fit example contains the effect of that challenge when it is recorded by a male mem-

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<sup>3</sup> For further comments of Kempe's handling of the concept of community see Staley, *Margery Kempe's Dissenting Fictions*, particularly chapters 2 and 5.

<sup>4</sup> For these, see Michael Goodlich, "The Contours of Female Piety in Later Medieval Hagiography," *Church History* 50 (1981), 20–32; Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988).

<sup>5</sup> On the subject of virginity, see Elizabeth Castelli, "Virginity and Its Meaning for Women's Sexuality in Early Christianity," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2 (1986), 61–88.

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ber of the institutional church.<sup>6</sup>

Kempe meliorates the inherent radicalism of the *Book* by the ways in which she frames the experience it recounts. We do not come directly to the life of Margery, but enter it through two prefaces, the work of the scribe who supposedly recorded Margery's oral account of her memories. These prefaces serve to locate the text within the series of conventions associated with female sacred biography. By identifying the spiritual lessons Margery's career is designed to provide and by underlining the ways in which her story provides solace for those who need evidence of God's mercy and comfort, the prefaces link Margery to the community of the faithful. Furthermore, the prefaces place in the foreground the story of Margery's own spiritual growth, the quality of which is signified by the request of churchmen that she make a book out of her "feelings." Finally, the presence within the text of the *Book*'s scribes bearing witness to Margery's veracity implicitly assimilates it to sacred biography in which the lives of holy women — such as Mary of Oigniès — were verified by male scribes (see prefaces, as well as chapters 88, 89, part 2, chapter 1). The combined effect of such prefatory remarks, like the scribal testimonials within the text, creates an elaborate fiction that joins Margery to communal values by establishing a series of shared expectations. The *Book* presents itself as a token of communal regard for the spiritual example of Margery herself; if she appears to break away from the community, her break is not so radical as to place her outside it. Rather, she functions as an example of spiritual growth for those who long for increased devotion. By setting up the classic outlines of the story, the prefaces create a perspective that foreshortens the distance between reader and subject.

The manuscript of *The Book of Margery Kempe* bears eloquent testimony to Kempe's fundamental understanding of the conventions within which she situated her work. Copied, probably slightly before 1450, by someone who signed himself Salthows on the bottom portion of the final page, the manuscript contains annotations by four hands.<sup>7</sup> Since the first page of the manuscript (British Library, Additional 61823) contains the rubric, "Liber Montis Gracie. This boke is of Mountegrace," it is likely that some of the annotations are the work of monks associated with the important Carthusian priory of Mount Grace in Yorkshire. Although the four readers largely concerned themselves with correcting mistakes or emending the manuscript for clarity,

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<sup>6</sup> On the subject of male scribes and the use some women writers made of the trope of the scribe, see Staley, *Margery Kempe's Dissenting Fictions*, chapter 1.

<sup>7</sup> For full accounts of these hands and transcriptions of the annotations, see Meech, *The Book of Margery Kempe*, Introduction, pp. xxxv–xlv, as well as the scrupulous notes throughout his edition.

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there are enough remarks about the *Book's* substance to warrant our attention. Two of these annotators are especially interesting, since their comments suggest ways in which the *Book* was read and why it was preserved.

The first set of comments is made in a small neat brown hand of the fifteenth century whose ink and handwriting look similar to those of the chapter headings, if not to the hand of Salthows himself.<sup>8</sup> In general, this set of comments points out events in a way that would be meaningful to a reader with a certain degree of monkish decorum. Margery's first cry (chapter 28) is highlighted by the words, "nota de clamore," a noun that describes the "noise" of penitential grief that could be heard in monasteries after the consecration of the host.<sup>9</sup> When Margery seeks to be clothed in white (chapter 30), the writer inscribed "nota de vestura" in the margin and "nota de confessione" when Margery makes her confession to St. John (chapter 32). The writer also designates as a miracle the German priest's ability to understand Margery's English (chapter 33) and, a few pages later, notes her marriage with the Godhead. Opposite the tale of the priest, the bear, and the pear tree, which Margery tells the Archbishop of York, is the word "narracion." As terse as the comment appears, it nonetheless sets the fable apart formally as a separate tale. If, in fact, this hand is the same as that of the chapter headings, the comments suggest a rubricator who was most interested in organizing the text by making what might well seem strange familiar to a monastic reader. If Margery's unorthodox behavior, her unlicensed clothing, her private confession to a saint whom only she can see, and her idiosyncratic relationship to God and to the priesthood can be defined in recognizable terms, the *Book* can be more easily understood by a monastic reader as a record of devotion.

The set of comments in red ink, which can be dated to the early sixteenth century, bespeaks a more complicated and multi-leveled response to the text the reader had before him.<sup>10</sup> First, since this set of comments is probably the latest, this reader approached a text that had already been emended for clarity or marked for emphasis. His comments are a response both to the text itself and to the reactions of earlier readers. For example, he seems compelled to signal his

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<sup>8</sup> For comments about ink and handwriting, I would like to thank Michele Brown of the British Library, who very kindly conferred with me about the manuscript. I must, however, take full responsibility for the observations themselves, as well as for the possibility of error.

<sup>9</sup> For a description of this ceremony, which was developed particularly in Cluniac houses in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 155.

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of these comments as reinforcing the *Book's* Latinity, see Karma Lochrie, *Margery Kempe and Translations of the Flesh* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1991), pp. 119–22.

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agreement with the set of comments in brown ink by either marking or circling most of them. In the case of the fable of the priest, the bear, and the pear tree, the red hand not only circles the brown “narracion” but also draws a downward pointing caret leading to the words, “of þe preyst and þe perte,” thereby seconding the earlier reader’s sense that Margery’s *exemplum* should be set apart as a tale. He is similarly drawn to echoing the text at certain points, writing “abundance of loue,” in the right margin near the end of chapter 56 opposite “habundawns of lofe,” or, in chapter 57, writing “charitem eius” and “wel of ters” in the outer margin of the folio containing those words.

The commentator is also concerned with the coherence of the text itself. For example, chapter 16 ends with the sentence, “rede fyrst the xxi chapetre and than this chapetre aftyr that”; lest a reader not understand those instructions, the words “it begynnes thus,” along with the opening words of chapter 21, are written in red. When, in chapter 17, Kempe refers to the *Incendium Amoris*, the red hand notes “of R. hampall” — referring to Richard Rolle of Hampole, a well-known spiritual author of the fourteenth century — in the margin. When in chapter 62 the *Book* says that Margery’s priest read of a woman called Maria de Oegines, the hand writes “Maria de oegines” and below it “liber” and a few lines down echoes the reference to “The Prykke of Lofe” in the outer margin. When it describes the leper woman to whom Margery ministers in chapter 74 as beset by impatience with her sickness, the red hand remarks, “nota, A sotel and a sore temptacion. In sich a case we shold be more strange and bold a-ga[n]ste our gostly enmy.”

This reader also supplies a running gloss on the *Book* that locates it within the contexts and concerns of works of contemporary piety. In fact, most of the comments in red ink are directed toward elucidating the “affective” emphasis of the text, as his care to distinguish key texts of late medieval piety, such as the *Incendium Amoris* and *The Pricke of Love*, suggests. In chapter 35, when the *Book* describes Margery as experiencing a “flawme of fyre,” this reader not only writes “ignis divine amoris,” and draws a picture of this fire of divine love, but a few lines later notes an acceptable literary source for such feelings by writing, “so s. R. hampall.” Several times he draws a red heart in the margin near a remark about Margery’s heart, thus highlighting the verbal reference with an emblem of devotion. He also delineates the exact nature of Margery’s feelings, using such terms as “ebrietas sancta” (chapter 41), “amor impatiens” (chapter 45), “fire of love” (chapter 46), “langor amoris” (chapter 57), or “langyng love” (chapters 74, 81), all of which link Margery to the school of Richard Rolle.

Furthermore, he demonstrates his own passionate involvement with those parts of the text that concern Margery’s spiritual fervor and charity. Near the end of chapter 59, when Kempe describes Margery as privileged to feel a little of Christ’s pain, the reader writes “laudes deo” in

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the outer margin as he does at the end of chapter 70. He ends chapters 66, 75, and 84 with the words “deo gracias,” chapter 60 with three rousing red “Amens,” and part 2, chapter 2 with “Amen.” In chapter 76, where Kempe describes John Kempe’s injury, the reader writes “her husband” in the outer margin and later in the chapter notes her charity in caring for him. Near the end of chapter 77, he brackets a conversation between Christ and Margery from the point where Christ says that he must “have compassyon of thi flesch” to “answeryd owr Lord to hir,” putting the words “manheyd of cryst” in the outer margin beside the first word in the sequence. In the second part, in which there are fewer descriptions of the nature of Margery’s piety, there are correspondingly fewer responses to the text by this reader whose interests are very clearly oriented toward the symptoms or manifestations of affective devotion.

The many corrections and comments recorded in red ink seem less a privately directed response to the *Book* than one adumbrated with other readers in mind.<sup>11</sup> The reader consistently attempts to make sense of certain parts of the text, providing more up-to-date spellings and clarifying citations. His emphasis on the affective nature of Margery’s piety shapes the experience of reading for subsequent readers by shifting our attention away from potentially disruptive elements in the *Book*. The challenge to authority implicit in Margery’s experiences is downplayed by highlighting those characteristics that link Margery to the conventions of spiritual ecstasy. In so doing, he subtly imposes genre on the *Book*, occluding sections of the text—or of Margery herself—that do not fit into the pattern of acceptable female devotional experience. He is thus less interested in the plot of the *Book* than he is in the symptoms of Margery’s religious fervor. The plot, which comprises far more of the narrative than do descriptions of Margery’s feelings, records Margery’s ongoing conflicts with figures of authority as well as her ultimate freedom from their control, so that the comments in red serve to distract attention from the *Book*’s underlying radicalism. By pointing up the *Book*’s devotional elements, the reader seeks to guide subsequent readers towards a carefully controlled response, one that obviates the radical social gospel submerged in Kempe’s narrative. While this can be described as a preference for piety, it also testifies to a distaste for the potential disorderliness dramatized in

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<sup>11</sup> On this subject, see A. I. Doyle and M. B. Parkes, “The Production of Copies of the *Canterbury Tales* and the *Confessio Amantis* in the Early Fifteenth Century,” in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts, and Libraries: Essays Presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. Malcolm Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scolar Press, 1978), pp. 163–212; Seth Lerer, “Textual Criticism and Literary Theory: Chaucer and His Readers,” *Exemplaria* 2 (1990), 329–45; Lee W. Patterson, “Ambiguity and Interpretation: A Fifteenth-Century Reading of *Troilus and Criseyde*,” *Speculum* 54 (1979), 297–330; and Paul Strohm, “Chaucer’s Fifteenth-Century Audience and the Narrowing of the Chaucer Tradition,” *SAC* 4 (1982), 3–32.

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an account of a woman who abandons conventional roles to become poor and itinerant for the sake of her private vision of Jesus.

In addition to these sets of comments suggesting the urge to control responses to the text, in at least two places the scribe himself may have acted as an editor.<sup>12</sup> In the first of these, in chapter 64, he simply substitutes the word *charite* for the phrase *token of lofe*, which he brackets with marks of deletion; the sentence thus reads, “Wher is a bettyr charite than to wepyn for thi Lordys lofe?” Second, in chapter 81, Kempe describes Margery as ministering to the Virgin Mary directly after Jesus’ death: “Than the creatur thowt, whan owr Lady was comyn hom and was leyd down on a bed, than sche [mad for owr Lady a good cawdel and browt it hir to comfortyn hir, and than owr lady seyd onto hir, ‘Do it awey, dowtyr. Geve me no mete but myn owyn childe.’ The creatur] seyd agen, ‘A, blissyd Lady, ye must nedys comfortyn yowrselv and cesyn of yowr sorwyng.’” The section in brackets has been crossed through in ink that appears to be the same color as the original. It is clear that whoever crossed out the famous incident of Margery making a hot drink for the Virgin was careful to preserve grammatical sense. These instances are possibly even more significant if they were made by the same hand that I have labelled the small brown hand, for, taken together, they would provide evidence of a fifteenth-century reader, perhaps Salthows, who sought to provide a gloss or guide that rendered the *Book* more decorous. Quite possibly, the incident of the “hot caudel” bothered this reader because it seemed to impose too much fictional homeliness on the gospel story.<sup>13</sup> Where the set of comments in red ink highlights descriptions of spiritual ecstasy that are extraordinary, this reader seems eager to downplay the extraordinary by providing commonly understood terms like “clamor” or “vestura” to describe Margery’s unconventional behavior.

The comments recorded throughout the manuscript of the *Book* are important because they suggest ways in which medieval texts were seen as communal and therefore as meriting commentary that linked them to the values of the communities in which they were housed and read. In the truest sense, they were living documents, and the margins of medieval manuscripts bear witness to the perceived relevance of the written word. Thus, those aspects of the *Book* that threaten communal values fade into the background before the privileging of Margery’s emotive female piety. If the *Book*’s earliest readers sought to find a use for it that linked it to the

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<sup>12</sup> Meech does not note these instances.

<sup>13</sup> For a discussion of the literary analogue for what appears an artless detail, see Gail McMurray Gibson, *The Theater of Devotion: East Anglian Drama and Society in the Late Middle Ages* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), p. 51.

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concerns of a monastic community, their intense interest in it ought to be of use to us, the *Book's* latest set of readers. Though we can choose to read it as a pre-feminist manifesto, such a stance is as guided by our own communal values as is that of the reader who wielded red ink over the manuscript before him. How do we use this text in ways that allow us to exercise courtesy both to its author and her agency and to our own critical concerns and values?

I suggest that we begin by acknowledging an author for *The Book of Margery Kempe*. Though frequently characterized as the first autobiography in English, we might instead think of it as a fiction (the first novel?), and hence as the work of a self-conscious author, Kempe, who employed a character called Margery for as many and as varied purposes as Chaucer used Geoffrey throughout his poetry or as Langland used Will in *Piers Plowman*. Like Chaucer and Langland, Kempe's focus is a broad one. Through Margery and a story whose foundation in reality is probably both as true and as tenuous as Geoffrey's or Will's, Kempe examines key issues of late medieval England. She sets the story of Margery's spiritual growth and her growing personal autonomy unambiguously within the context of the late medieval town. In so doing, she implicitly scrutinizes the foundations of medieval urban life. By directing our attention to the ways in which Margery's behavior frequently violates communal values, she dramatizes the disparity between social myths and social realities.

The *Book*, however, has a broader focus than that of merely local conflicts. Kempe places Margery not only in towns associated with the Wycliffite heresy (Leicester, Bristol, York) but also in a period of national anxiety over the issue of religious heterodoxy. During the reign of Henry V, when most of the action takes place, there was a growing need to define nationhood in terms of uniformity.<sup>14</sup> By presenting Margery as living out a vernacular gospel, as appearing sometimes to preach that gospel, and as challenging the authority of confessors, priests, and bishops, Kempe sketches in the outlines of a nation where conformity has become an end in itself and where anyone, particularly a woman, who seeks to imitate the Christ-like life has trouble finding tolerance, much less approval. Just as she explores the materialistic and conformist nature of the England of Henry V, Kempe provides a sharp look at the ecclesiastical institutions of the day. By blurring the distinction between the ecclesiastical and secular spheres, Kempe suggests ways in which churchmen too often resemble their secular counterparts in their desire for conformity, worldly status, wealth, and power.

It is important, however, to keep in mind that Kempe's presentations of town life, of national

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<sup>14</sup> For a good introduction to this subject, see the collection of essays edited by G. L. Harriss, *Henry V: The Practice of Kingship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

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identity, and of ecclesiastical institutions are themselves fictions and may or may not reflect contemporary realities. We need to understand these presentations within the context of the *Book* itself and its account of upheaval. By choosing a female protagonist, Kempe at once underlines the revolutionary aspect of her narrative and contains it.<sup>15</sup> Woman's long association with the subjective, the experiential, and the radical allows Kempe to employ Margery as a lens through which to examine the very basis for authority in social and ecclesiastical relationships. However, woman was also relieved of any truly revolutionary threat by her relative lack of legal status. In Margery's case, her piety and her orthodoxy, recognized by significant members of the church, further prevent her from occupying a more troubling social dimension. Since it is Kempe who created Margery, we can only return to the author and her shrewd sense that she could use such a figure to explore a whole range of issues loosely gathered under the rubric of "authority," and thereby offer a picture of late medieval England that is, finally, an analysis of the rationale for the hierarchies upon which the notion of community was founded.

To return to those earlier commentators on the manuscript of the *Book* who provided the first readings of this text, we can certainly praise them for their understanding of genre and for their astute sense of the conventions of sacred biography and devotional prose. They tell us much about Kempe's awareness of the need to situate her book in a specific context and about her awareness of the contemporary public for her book. But we can also provide new marginal comments or questions that emerge from what we are coming to understand about the shape and tensions of the late medieval world. While we should be careful about reading into the *Book* our own preoccupation with the strategies of feminist politics as they are worked out by more modern writers, we should not ignore Kempe's use of the language of gender to point up

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<sup>15</sup> The growing literature on gender and the subject of civil, religious, and domestic authority is vast and no note can do it justice. However, see, for example: David Aers, *Community, Gender, and Individual Identity: English Writing, 1360–1430* (London: Routledge, 1988); Alcuin Blamires, "The Wife of Bath and Lollardy," *Medium Ævum* 58 (1989), 224–42; Natalie Zemon Davis, "Woman on Top," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 124–51; Carolyn Dinshaw, *Chaucer's Sexual Poetics* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Louise O. Fradenburg, "The Wife of Bath's Passing Fancy," *SAC* 8 (1986), 31–58; Thomas Hahn, "Teaching the Resistant Woman: The Wife of Bath and the Academy," *Exemplaria* 4 (1992), 431–40; Elaine Tuttle Hansen, "The Wife of Bath and the Mark of Adam," *Women's Studies* 15 (1988), 399–416; Lee Patterson, *Chaucer and the Subject of History* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 280–317; Barrie Ruth Straus, "The Subversive Discourse of the Wife of Bath: Phallocentric Discourse and the Imprisonment of Criticism," *ELH* 55 (1988), 527–54; and Paul Strohm, *Hochon's Arrow: The Social Imagination of Fourteenth-Century Texts* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), chapter 7, "Treason in the Household."

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the issue of authority, both sacred and secular. It is our very willingness to discover dislocations and tensions, along with our increasingly sophisticated methods of historical and critical inquiry, that allow us to ask questions of this text that perhaps earlier readers could not begin to ask. Let us neither sanitize the *Book* and thus avoid ways in which the text offers a searching look at the sacrosanct institutions of late medieval life nor fail to take seriously those institutions and the ideals upon which they were based. Instead, let us come to it ready to recognize its richness, its built-in contradictions, its uneasy negotiations between the needs of the individual and the pulls of communal life, in short, to appreciate Kempe's genuine mastery of the arts of prose fiction. Let us, finally, recognize in Kempe a writer who employed the fiction of the holy woman (often seen merely as a "female hysterick" by modern critics) as a persona. Such a guise allowed her to inhabit a space *within* the status-conscious town of Lynn even as she made a story about her ability to extricate herself from codes of behavior that have nothing to do with the freedom of the spirit lived out by Christ and the disciples.

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## *The Book of Margery Kempe*

Here begynnyth a schort trety and a comfortabyl for synful wrecchys, wherin thei  
may have gret solas and comfort to hem and undyrstondyn the hy and unspecabyl  
mercy of ower sovereyn Savyowr Cryst Jhesu, whos name be worsched and magnyfyed  
wythowten ende, that now in ower days to us unworthy deyneth to exercysen hys nobeley  
5 and hys goodnesse. Alle the werkys of ower Saviowr ben for ower examplyl and  
instruccyon, and what grace that he werkyth in any creatur is ower profyth yf lak of  
charyté be not ower hynderawnce. And therfor, be the leve of ower mercyful Lord  
Cryst Jhesu, to the magnyfying of hys holy name, Jhesu, this lytyl trety schal trety  
10 sumdeel in parcel of hys wonderful werkys, how mercyfully, how benyngly, and how  
charytefully he meved and stered a synful caytyf unto hys love, whech synful caytyf  
many yerys was in wyl and in purpose thorw steryng of the Holy Gost to folwyn oure  
Saviour, makyng gret behestys of fastyngs wyth many other dedys of penawns. And  
15 evyr sche was turned agen abak in tym of temptacyon, lech unto the reedspyr whech  
boweth wyth every wynd and nevyr is stable les than no wynd bloweth, unto the tyme  
that ower mercyfulle Lord Cryst Jhesu havyng pety and compassyon of hys handwerke  
and hys creatur turnyd helth into sekenesse, prosperyté into adversyté, worshep into  
repref, and love into hatered. Thus alle this thyngys turnyng up so down, this creatur  
whych many yerys had gon wyl and evyr ben unstable was parfythly drawen and steryd  
20 to entren the wey of hy perfeccyon, whech parfyth wey Cryst ower Savyowr in hys  
propyr persoone examplyd. Sadly he trad it and dewly he went it beforne. Than this  
creatuer, of whom thys trety thorw the mercy of Jhesu schal schewen in party the levynge,  
towched be the hand of owyr Lord wyth grett bodyly sekenesse, wher thorw sche lost  
reson and her wyttes a long tym tyl ower Lord be grace restoryd her ageyn, as it schal  
mor openly be schewed aftyrward. Her werdly goodys, whech wer plentyuows and

2 **unspecabyl**, unspeakable. 4 **deyneth**, deigns; **nobeley**, nobleness. 7 **hynderawnce**, hinderance;  
be, by. 9 **sumdeel**, somewhat. 10 **charytefully**, charitably; **whech**, which. 12 **penawns**, penance.  
13 **lech**, like; **reedspyr**, reed stalk. 16 **worshep**, honor. 17 **repref**, reproof; **this creatur**, i.e.,  
Margery. 18 **gon wyl**, become wayward; **parfythly**, perfectly; **steryd**, stirred. 20 **trad**, trod. 21  
in party the levynge, in part the life. 23 **be, by**. 24 **werdly**, worldly.

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25 abundawnt at that day, in lytyl whyle after wer ful bareyn and bare. Than was pompe  
and pryd cast down and leyd on syde. Thei that befor had worshed her sythen ful  
scharply reprevyd her; her kynred and thei that had ben frendys wer now hyr most  
enmys. Than sche, consydering this wondyrful chawngyng, sekyng socowr undyr the  
wengys of hyr gostly modyr, Holy Cherch, went and obeyd hyr to hyr gostly fadry,  
30 accusyng hyselff of her mysdeds, and sythen ded gret bodily penawns. And in schort  
tyme ower mercyful Lord vysytyd this creatur wyth plentyuows teerys of contricyon  
day be day, in so mech that sum men seyden sche myght wepen whan sche wold and  
slawndered the werk of God. Sche was so usyd to be slawndred and repreved, to be  
35 cheden and rebuked of the world for grace and vertu wyth whech sche was indued  
thorw the strength of the Holy Gost that it was to her in a maner of solas and comfort  
whan sche sufferyd any dysese for the lofe of God and for the grace that God wrowth  
in hyr. For evyr the mor slawnder and repref that sche sufferyd, the mor sche incresyd  
40 in grace and in devocyon of holy medytacyon of hy contemplacyon and of wonderful  
spechys and dalyawns whech owr Lord spak and dalyid to hyr sowle, techyng hyr  
how sche schuld be despysed for hys lofe, how sche schuld han pacyens, settyn all  
hyr trost, alle hyr lofe, and alle hyr affeccyon in hym only. Sche knew and undyrstod  
many secret and prevy thyngys whech schuld befallen aftyrward be inspiracyon of  
the Holy Gost. And often tymes, whel sche was kept wyth swech holy spechys and  
45 dalyawns, sche schuld so wepyn and sobbyn that many men wer gretly awondyr, for  
thei wisten ful lytyl how homly ower Lord was in hyr sowle. Ne hyselff cowd nevyr  
telle the grace that sche felt, it was so hevenly, so hy aboven hyr reson and hyr bodily  
wyttys, and hyr body so febyl in tym of the presens of grace that sche myth nevyr  
expressyn it wyth her word lych as sche felt it in hyr sowle. Than had this creatur  
50 mech drede for illusyons and deceytys of hyr gostly enmys. Than went sche be the  
byddyng of the Holy Gost to many worsheful clerkys, bothe archebysshoppys and  
bysshopps, doctowrs of dyvynyte and bachelers also. Sche spak also wyth many  
ankrys and schewed hem hyr maner of levynge and swech grace as the Holy Gost of  
hys goodnesse wroot in hyr mende and in hyr sowle as her wytt wold serven hyr to  
expressyn it. And thei alle that sche schewed hyr secretys unto seyd sche was mech

**26 leyd on syde**, put aside; **worshepd**, honored; **sythen**, then. **27 kynred**, kindred. **34 cheden**, chided; **indued**, endued. **36 dysese**, anxiety; **lofe**, love. **41 trost**, trust. **42 prevy**, private. **44 awondyr**, amazed. **45 wisten**, knew; **homly**, familiar. **49 gostly**, spiritual. **52 ankrys**, anchorites; **hem**, them. **53 mende**, mind.

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55 bownde to loven ower Lord for the grace that he schewyd unto hyr and cownseld hyr to folwyn hyr mevynggys and hyr steringgys and trustly belelevyn it weren of the Holy Gost and of noon evyl spyryt. Summe of these worthy and worshepful clerkys tokyn it in perel of her sowle and as thei wold answer to God that this creatur was inspyred wyth the Holy Gost and bodyn hyr that sche schuld don hem wryten and makyn a  
60 booke of hyr felyngys and hir revelacyons. Sum proferyd hir to wrytyn hyr felyngys wyth her owen handys, and sche wold not consentyn in no wey, for sche was comawndyd in hir sowle that sche schuld not wrytyn so soone. And so it was twenty yer and mor fro that tym this creatur had fyrist felyngys and revelacyons er than sche dede any wryten. Aftyrward whan it plesyd ower Lord, he comawnded hyr and chargyd hir that sche  
65 schuld don wryten hyr felyngys and revelacyons and the forme of her levyngs that hys goodnesse myth be knowyn to alle the world. Than had the creatur no wryter that wold fulfyllyn hyr desyr ne geve credens to hir felingys unto the tym that a man dwellyng in Dewchland whech was an Englyschman in hys byrth and sythen weddyd in Dewchland and had ther bothe a wyf and a chyld, havyng good knowlach of this creatur and of hir  
70 desyr, meved I trost thorw the Holy Gost, cam into Yngland wyth hys wyfe and hys goodys and dwellyd wyth the forseyd creatur tyl he had wretyn as mech as sche wold tellyn hym for the tym that thei wer togydder. And sythen he deyd. Than was ther a prest whech this creatur had gret affeccyon to, and so sche comownd wyth hym of this mater and browt hym the boke to redyn. The booke was so evel wretyn that he cowd  
75 lytyl skyll theron, for it was neithyr good Englysch ne Dewch, ne the lettyr was not schapyn ne formyd as other letters ben. Therfor the prest leved fully ther schuld nevir man redyn it, but it wer special grace. Nevrthelesse, he behyte hir that if he cowd redyn it he wolde copyn it owt and wrytyn it betyr wyth good wylle. Than was ther so evel spekyng of this creatur and of hir wepyng that the prest durst not for cowardyse  
80 speke wyth her but seldom, ne not wold wryten as he had behestyd unto the forseyd creatur. And so he voyded and deferryd the wrytyng of this boke wel onto a fourth yer or ellys mor, notwythstandyng the creatur cryed often on hym therfor. At the last he seyd onto hir that he cowd not redyn it, wherfor he wold not do it. He wold not, he

**56 mevynggys**, movings; **steringgys**, stirrings; **trustly**, with faith, trustingly. **63 er than sche ded any wryten**, before she committed any to writing. **65 levyngs**, manner of living. **66 myth**, might. **67 credens**, credence. **68 Dewchland**, Germany. **73 comownd**, talked the matter over. **74 evel wretyn**, badly written. **74–75 cowd lytyl skyll theron**, hardly understand it. **76 leved**, believed. **77 behyte**, promised. **80 behestyd**, promised.

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seyd, put hym in perel therof. Than he cownseld hir to gon to a good man whech had  
85 ben mech conversawnt wyth hym that wrot fyrst the booke, supposyng that he schuld  
cun best rede the booke, for he had sum tym red letters of the other mannys wrytyng  
sent fro beyonden the see whyl he was in Dewchland. And so sche went to that man,  
preyng hym to wrytyn this booke and nevyr to bewreyn it as long as sche leved,  
grawntyng hym a grett summe of good for hys labowr. And this good man wrot abowt  
90 a leef, and yet it was lytyl to the purpose, for he cowd not wel fare therwyth the boke  
was so evel sett and so unreasonably wretyn. Than the prest was vexyd in his consciens,  
for he had behestyd hyr to wrytyn this boke, yyf he mygth com to the redyng therof,  
and dede not hys part as wel as he mygth a do, and preyd this creatur to getyn ageyn  
95 the booke yf sche myth goodly. Than sche gat ageyn the book and browt it to the  
preste wyth rygh glad cher, preyng hym to do hys good wyl, and sche schuld prey to  
God for hym and purchasyn hym grace to reden it and wrytyn it also. The preste,  
trustyng in hire prayers, began to redyn this booke, and it was mych mor esy, as hym  
thowt, than it was beforntym. And so he red it ovyr befor this creatur every word,  
100 sche sumtym helpyng where ony difficulté was. Thys boke is not wretyn in ordyr,  
every thynge aftyr other as it wer don, but lych as the mater cam to the creatur in mend  
whan it schuld be wretyn, for it was so long er it was wretyn that sche had forgetyn the  
tyme and the ordyr whan thyngys befellyn. And therfor sche dede no thing wryten but  
105 that sche knew rygh wel for very trewth. Whan the prest began fyrst to wryten on this  
booke, hys eyn myssyd so that he mygth not se to make hys lettvr ne mygth not se to  
mend hys penne. Alle other thynge he mygth se wel anow. He sett a peyr of spectacles  
on hys nose, and than wast wel wers than it was befor. He compleyned to the creatur  
of hys dysese. Sche seyd hys enmy had envye at hys good dede and wold lett hym yf  
he mygth and bad hym do as wel as God wold geve hym grace and not levyn. Whan  
he cam ageyn to hys booke, he myth se as wel, hym thowt, as evyr he dede befor be  
110 day lyth and be candel lygth bothe. And for this cause, whan he had wretyn a qwayr,  
he addyd a leef therto, and than wrot he this proym to expressyn mor openly than doth  
the next folwyng, whech was wretyn er than this. Anno domini 1436.

**85–86 schuld cun best rede the booke**, should best be able to read the book. **88 bewreyn**,  
betray, speak ill of, divulge. **91 evel sett**, badly set. **92 behestyd**, promised. **93 a do**, have  
done. **100 mend**, memory. **104 eyn myssyd**, eyes failed. **106 creatur**, i.e., Margery. **107 lett**,  
hinder. **108 levyn**, leave off. **110 lyth**, light; **qwayr**, quire. **111 proym**, preface.

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A schort trety of a creature sett in grett pompe and pride of the world, whech sythen was drawyn to ower Lord be gret poverté, sekenes, schamis, and gret reprevys  
115 in many divers contres and places, of whech tribulacyons sum schal ben schewed aftyr, not in ordyr as it fellyn but as the creatur cowd han mend of hem whan it wer wretyn, for it was twenty yer and mor fro tym this creatur had forsake the world and besyly clef onto ower Lord or this boke was wretyn, notwythstondyng this creatur had greet cownsel for to don wryten hir tribulacyons and hir felingys, and a Whyte Frer proferyd hir to wryten frely yf sche wold. And sche was warnyd in hyr sprit that sche schuld not wryte so sone. And many yerys aftyr sche was bodyn in hyr sprit for to wrytyn. And than yet it was wretyn fyrist be a man whech cowd neithyr wel wryten Englysch ne Duch. So it was unable for to be red but only be specyal grace, for ther was so mech obloquie and slawndyr of this creatur that ther wold fewe men beleve  
120 this creatur. And so at the last a preste was sor mevyd for to wrytin this trety, and he cowd not wel redyn it of a four yere togedyr. And sythen be the request of this creatur and compellyng of hys owyn consciens he asayd agayn for to rede it, and it was mech mor esy than it was afortyme. And so he gan to wryten in the yer of owr Lord a 1436,  
125 on the day next aftyr Mary Maudelyn aftyr the informacyon of this creatur.

1

130 Whan this creatur was twenty yer of age or sumdele mor, sche was maryed to a worschepful burgeys and was wyth chylde wythin schort tyme, as kynde wolde. And, aftyr that sche had conceyved, sche was labowrd wyth grett accessys tyl the chyld was born, and than, what for labowr sche had in chyldyng and for sekenesse goyng beforne, sche dyspered of hyr lyfe, wenyng sche myght not levyn. And than sche sent for hyr gostly fadyr, for sche had a thyng in consciens whech sche had nevir schewyd beforne that tyme in alle hyr lyfe. For sche was evyr lettyd be hyr enmy, the devel, evyrmor seyng to hyr whyl sche was in good heele hir nedyd no confessyon but don  
135

114 **sythen**, afterwards; **schamis**, shames; **reprevys**, reproofs. 116 **han mend**, had memory.  
118 **clef**, cleaved; **or**, before. 121 **bodyn**, bidden. 124 **obloquie**, abuse, calumny. 127 **asayd**, tried.  
129 **Mary Maudelyn**, Mary Magdalene. July 22 is the day of Mary Magdalene. 130  
130 **sumdele**, somewhat. 131 **worschepful**, honorable; **kynde**, nature. 132 **accessys**, attacks of  
illness. 134 **dyspered**, despaired; **wenyng**, thinking. 136 **lettyd**, hindered. 137 **heeple**, health.

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penawns be hirself aloone, and all schuld be forgovyn, for God is mercyful inow. And therfor this creatur oftyn tymes dede greet penawns in fastyng bred and watyr and  
140 other dedys of almes wyth devout preyers, saf sche wold not schewyn it in confessyon. And, whan sche was any tym seke or dysesyd, the devyl seyd in her mende that sche schuld be dampnyd, for sche was not schrevyn of that defawt. Wherfor, aftyr that hir chyld was born, sche, not trostyng hir lyfe, sent for hir gostly fadyr, as iseyd beforne, in ful wyl to be schrevyn of alle hir lyfetym as ner as sche cowde. And, whan sche cam  
145 to the poynt for to seyn that thing whech sche had so long conselyd, hir confessowr was a lytyl to hastye and gan scharpliy to undyrnemyn hir er than sche had fully seyd hir entent, and so sche wold no mor seyn for nowt he myght do. And anoon, for dred sche had of dampnacyon on the to syde and hys scharpli reprevyng on that other syde,  
150 this creatur went owt of hir mende and was wondyrlye vexid and labowryd wyth spryritys half yer eight wekys and odde days. And in this tyme sche sey, as hir thowt, develys opyn her mowthys al inflaumyd wyth brennyng lowys of fyr as thei schuld a swalwyd hyr in, sumtyme rampyng at hyr, sumtyme thretyng her, sumtym pullyng hyr and halyng hir bothe nyght and day duryng the forseyd tyme. And also the develys cryed upon hir wyth greet thretyngys and bodyn hir sche schuld forsake hir Crystendam,  
155 hir feyth, and denyin hir God, hys modyr, and alle the seyntys in hevyn, hyr goode werkys and alle good vertues, hir fadyr, hyr modyr, and alle hire frendys. And so sche dede. Sche slawndred hir husband, hir frendys and her owyn self; sche spak many a reprevows worde and many a schrewyd worde; sche knew no vertu ne goodnesse; sche desyryd all wykkydnesse; lych as the spyrytys temptyd hir to sey and do so sche  
160 seyd and dede. Sche wold a fordon hirself many a tym at her steryngys and a ben damnyd wyth hem in helle. And into wytnesse therof sche bot hir owen hand so vyolently that it was seen al hir lyfe aftyr. And also sche roof hir skyn on hir body agen hir hert wyth hir nayles spetowsly, for sche had noon other instrumentys, and

138 **inow**, enough. 139 **penawns**, penance. 140 **dedys**, deeds; **saf**, except. 141 **seke**, sick; **mende**, mind. 142 **schrevyn**, shrien; **defawt**, lack, sin. 143 **iseyd**, was said. 145 **conselyd**, concealed. 146 **undyrnemyn**, reprove. 148 **to**, toward, i.e., toward-side. 150 **sey**, saw. 151 **her**, their; **lowys**, flames. 152 **rampyng**, ramping, adopting a threatening stance; **thretyng**, threatening. 153 **halyng**, haling. 154 **thretyngys**, threats; **bodyn**, bade. 155 **denyin**, deny. 157 **dede**, did. 158 **schrewyd**, mean-tempered. 160 **a fordon hirself**, have committed suicide; **steryngys**, anxieties. See note. 161 **bot**, bit. 162 **roof**, rent, tore. 163 **agen**, against; **spetowsly**, grievously.

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wers sche wold a don saf sche was bowndyn and kept wyth strength bothe day and  
165 nygth that sche mygth not have hir wylle. And, whan sche had long ben labowrd in  
thes and many other temptacyons that men wend sche schuld nevyr a skapyd ne levyd,  
than on a tym, as sche lay aloone and hir kepars wer fro hir, owyr mercyful Lord Crist  
Jhesu, evyr to be trostyd, worshypd be hys name, nevyr forsakyngh hys servawnt in  
tyme of nede, aperyd to hys creatur, whych had forsakyn hym, in lyknesse of a man,  
170 most semly, most bewtyuows, and most amyable that evyr mygth be seen wyth mannys  
eye, clad in a mantyl of purpil sylke, sytting upon hir beddys syde, lokyng upon hir  
wyth so blyssyd a chere that sche was strengthyd in alle hir sprytyts, seyd to hir thes  
wordys: “Dowtyr, why hast thou forsakyn me, and I forsoke nevyr the?” And anoon,  
175 as he had seyd thes wordys, sche saw veryly how the eyr openyd as brygth as ony  
levyn, and he stey up into the eyr, not rygth hastyli and qwykly, but fayr and esly that  
sche mygth wel beholdyn hym in the eyr tyl it was closyd ageyn. And anoon the  
creature was stabelyd in hir wyttys and in hir reson as wel as evyr sche was beforne,  
and preyd hir husband as so soon as he cam to hir that sche mygth have the keys of the  
180 botery to takyn hir mete and drynke as sche had don beforne. Hyr maydens and hir  
kepars cownseld hym he schulde delyvyr hir no keys, for thei seyd sche wold but geve  
away swech good as ther was, for sche wanst not what sche seyde as thei wende.  
Nevyrthelesse, hir husband, evyr havyng tendyrnes and compassyon of hir, comawndyd  
thei schulde delyvyr to hyr the keyys. And sche toke hyr mete and drynke as hir  
bodyly strength wold servyn hir and knew hir frendys and hir meny and all other that  
185 cam to hir to se how owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst had wroot hys grace in hir, so blyssyd  
mot he be that evyr is ner in tribulacyon. Whan men wenyn he wer for fro hem, he is  
ful nere be hys grace. Sythen this creatur dede alle other ocupacyons as fel for hir to  
do wysly and sadly inow, saf sche knew not veryli the drawt of owyr Lord.

2

And, whan this creatur was thus gracyowsly comen ageyn to hir mende, sche thowt

**164 a don saf**, have done except. **166 wend**, thought; **a skapyd ne levyd**, have escaped nor relinquished. **169 aperyd**, appeared. **175 levyn**, lightning; stey, rose; **eyr**, air; **esly**, easily. **177 stabelyd**, settled. **179 botery**, buttery. **181 wende**, thought. **184 meny**, servants. **186 Whan men wenyn . . . fro hem**, When men think he is far from them. **187 fel**, befell. **188 drawt**, spiritual ecstasy.

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190 sche was bowndyn to God and that sche wold ben his servawnt. Nevyrthelesse, sche  
wold not leevyn hir pride ne hir pompows aray that sche had usyd befortym, neithyr  
for hyr husband ne for noon other mannys cownsel. And yet sche wyst ful wel that  
men seyden hir ful mech velany, for sche weryd gold pypys on hir hevyd and hir  
195 hodys wyth the typettys were daggyd. Hir clokys also wer daggyd and leyd wyth  
dyvers colowrs between the daggys that it schuld be the mor staryng to mennys sygth  
and hirself the mor ben worshepd. And, whan hir husband wold speke to hir for to  
levyn hir pride, sche answeryd schrewydly and schortly and seyd that sche was comyn  
of worthy kenred, hym semyd nevir forto a weddyd hir, for hir fadry was sumtyme  
meyr of the town N and sythyn he was alderman of the hey Gylde of the Trinyté in N  
200 And therfor sche wold savyn the worschyp of hir kynred whatsoevyr ony man seyd.  
Sche had ful greet envye at hir neybours that thei schuld ben arayd so wel as sche.  
Alle hir desyr was for to be worshepd of the pepul. Sche wold not be war be onys  
chastysyng ne be content wyth the goodys that God had sent hire, as hir husband was,  
but evyr desyryd mor and mor. And than, for pure coveytise and for to maynten hir  
205 pride, sche gan to brewyn and was on of the grettest brewers in the town N a three yer  
or four tyl sche lost mech good, for sche had nevir ure therto. For, thow sche had  
nevir so good servawntys and cunnyng in brewyng, yet it wold nevir prevyn wyth  
hem. For, whan the ale was as fayr standyng undyr berm as any man mygh se, sodenly  
the berm wold fallyn down that alle the ale was lost every brewyng aftyr other, that hir  
210 servawntys weryn aschamyd and wold not dwellyn wyth hir. Than this creatur thowt  
how God had punched hir befortyme and sche cowd not be war, and now eftsons be  
lesyng of hir goodys, and than sche left and brewyd no mor. And than sche askyd hir  
husbond mercy for sche wold not folwyn hys cownsel afortyme, and sche seyd that  
hir pride and synne was cause of alle her punschyng and sche wold amend that sche

**191 befortym**, before that time. **192 wyst**, knew. **193 gold pypys on hir hevyd**, gold pipes as part of a fashionable headdress. **194 hodys**, hoods; **typettys**, tippets; **daggyd**, ornamented with points and incisions. **195 staryng**, conspicuous. **197 levyn**, leave off. **198 kenred**, kindred; **hym semyd nevir forto a weddyd hir**, i.e., he did not seem like the sort of person to have married her. **199 town N**, see note, line 462; **hey Gylde of the Trinyté**, the Guild of the Trinity was the most powerful of the town of Lynn's parish fraternities. **200 savyn the worschyp**, preserve the honor. **201 arayd**, arrayed. **205 brewyn**, brew (ale). **206 ure**, experience. **207 prevyn**, be successful. **208 fayr standyng undyr berm**, fair standing under the barm, the yeast formed on brewing liquors. **211 punched**, punished; **war**, wary; **eftsons**, again.

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215 had trespassyd wyth good wyl. But yet sche left not the world al hol, for now sche  
bethowt hir of a newe huswyfré. Sche had an horsmille. Sche gat hire tweyn good hors  
and a man to gryndyn mennys corne and thus sche trostyd to getyn hir levyng. This  
provysion duryd not longe, for in schort tyme aftyr on Corpus Cristi Evyn fel this  
merveyl. Thys man, beyng in good heele of body and hys tweyn hors craske and lykand  
220 that wel haddyn drawyn in the mylle befortyme, as now he toke on of this hors and put  
hym in the mylle as he had don befor, and this hors wold drawe no drawt in the mylle  
for nothing the man mygth do. The man was sory and asayd wyth al hys wyttys how  
he schuld don this hors drawyn. Sumtyme he led hym be the heed, sumtyme he beet  
hym, and sumtyme he chershdyd hym, and alle avayled not, for he wold rather gon  
225 bakward than forward. Than this man sett a scharp peyr sporys on hys helys and rood  
on the hors bak for to don hym drawyn, and it was nevyr the bettyr. Whan this man  
saw it wold be in no wey, than he sett up this hors ageyn in the stabyl and gafe hym  
mete, and he ete weel and freschly. And sythen he toke the other hors and put hym in  
the mylle. And lech as hys felaw dede so dede he, for he wold not drawe for anything  
230 that the man mygth do. And than this man forsoke hys servyse and wold no lengar  
abyden wyth the fornseyd creatur. Anoon as it was noysed abowt the town of N that  
ther wold neythyd man ne best don servyse to the seyd creatur, than summe seyden  
sche was acursyd; sum seyden God toke opyn venjawns upon hir; sum seyd on; and  
sum seyd another. And sum wyse men, whos mend was mor growndyd in the lofe of  
235 owyr Lord, seyd it was the hey mercy of our Lord Jhesu Cryst clepyd and kallyd hir fro  
the pride and vanyté of the wretthyd world. And than this creatur, seyng alle this  
adversytes comyng on every syde, thowt it weryn the skourges of owyr Lord that wold  
chastyse hir for hir synne. Than sche askyd God mercy and forsoke hir pride, hir  
coveytise, and desyr that sche had of the worshepys of the world, and dede grett  
240 bodily penawnce, and gan to entyr the wey of evrlestyngh lyfe, as schal be seyd aftyr.

**216 huswyfré**, household occupation; **horsmille**, horse mill; **tweyn**, two. **219 craske**, fat,  
lusty; **lykand**, in good condition. **221 drawe no drawt**, draw no load. **223 don this hors  
drawyn**, make or cause this horse to draw. **231 noysed**, noised, rumored. **233 venjawns**,  
vegeance; **seyd on**, said one (thing). **235 clepyd**, summoned; **kallyd**, called. **236 wretthyd**,  
wretched.

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3

On a nygth, as this creatur lay in hir bedde wyth hir husband, sche herd a sounf of melodye so swet and delectable, hir thowt, as sche had ben in paradyse. And therwyth sche styrt owt of hir bedde and seyd, “Alas, that evyr I dede synne, it is ful mery in hevyn.” Thys melody was so swete that it passyd alle the melodye that evyr myght be  
245 herd in this world wythowtyn ony comparyson, and caused this creatur whan sche herd ony myrrh or melodye aftyrward for to have ful plentyuows and habundawnt teerys of hy devocyon wyth greet sobbyngys and syhyngys aftyr the blysse of heven, not dredyng the schamys and the spytys of the wretchyd world. And evyr aftyr this drawt sche had in hir mende the myrrh and the melodye that was in heven, so mech  
250 that sche cowd not wyl restreyn hymself fro the spekyng therof. For, wher sche was in ony cumpayne, sche wold sey oftyntyme, “It is ful mery in hevyn.” And thei that knew hir governawnce beforntyme and now herd hir spekyn so mech of the blysse of hevyn seyd unto hir, “Why speke ye so of the myrrh that is in hevyn; ye know it not, and ye have not be ther no mor than we,” and wer wroth wyth hir for sche wold not  
255 her no speke of wordly thyngys as thei dedyn and as sche dede beforntyme. And aftyr this tyme sche had nevir desyr to komown fleschly wyth hyre husbonde, for the dette of matrimony was so abhominabyl to hir that sche had levar, hir thowt, etyn or drynkyn the wose, the mukke in the chanel, than to consentyn to any fleschly comownyng saf only for obedyens. And so sche seyd to hir husband, “I may not deny yow my body,  
260 but the lofe of myn hert and myn affeccyon is drawyn fro alle erdryl creaturyrs and sett only in God.” He wold have hys wylle, and sche obeyd wyth greet wepyng and sorwyng for that sche myght not levyn chast. And oftyntymys this creatur levyd chast, cownseld hir husband to levyn chast, and seyd that thei oftyntymes, sche wyst wel, had dysplesyd  
265 God be her inordynat lofe and the gret delectacyon that thei haddyn eythyr of hem in usyng of other, and now it wer good that thei schuld be her bothins wylle and consentyng of hem bothyn punschyn and chastysyn hemself wylfully be absteynyng fro her lust of her bodys. Hir husband seyd it wer good to don so, but he myght not yett, he schuld

246 **habunawnt**, abundant. 247 **syhyngys**, sighings. 248 **spytys**, scorns. 249 **drawt**, ecstasy.  
252 **governawnce**, manner of life. 256 to **komown fleschly**, to have intercourse. 256–57 **dette of matrimony**, debt of matrimony (a conventional way of speaking of marital relations). 257 **levar**, rather. 258 **wose**, ooze; **comownyng**, intercourse. 263 **wyst**, knew. 265–66 **be her bothins wylle and consentyng of hem bothyn**, by both their wills and (by) mutual consent.

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whan God wold. And so he usyd her as he had do befor, he wold not spar. And evyr sche preyd to God that sche mygth levyn chast, and three or four yer aftyr, whan it  
270 plesyd ower Lord, he made a vow of chastyté, as schal be wretn aftyr be the leve of Jhesu. And also, aftyr this creatur herd this hevenly melody, sche dede gret bodyly penawnce. Sche was schrevyn sumtyme twyes or thryes on the day, and in specyal of that synne whech sche so long had conselyd and curyd, as it is wretn in the gynnnyng of the boke. Sche gaf hir to gret fastyng and to gret wakyng. Sche roos at two or three  
275 of the clok and went to cherch and was ther in hir prayers onto tyme of noon and also al the aftynoon. And than was sche slawnderyd and reprevyd of mech pepul for sche kept so streyt a levyng. Than sche gat hir an hayr of a kylne swech as men dryen on malt and leyd it in hir kyrtyle as sotyllych and prevylich as sche mygth that hir husband schuld not aspye it, ne no mor he dede, and yet sche lay be hym every nygth in his  
280 bedde, and weryd the hayr every day, and bar chylderyn in the tyme. Than sche had three yer of gret labowr wyth temptacyons whech sche bar as mekely as sche cowde, thankynge ower Lord of alle hys geftys, and was as mery whan sche was reprevyd, skornyd, or japyd for ower Lordys lofe, and mych mor mery than sche was befortyme in the worshepys of the world. For sche wanst rygth wel sche had synned gretly agens  
285 God and was worthy mor schame and sorwe than ony man cowd don to hir, and dyspite of the werld was the rygth way to hevynward sythen Cryst hymself ches that way. Alle hys apostlys, martyres, confessorys, and virgynes and alle that evyr comyn to hevyn passed be the wey of tribulacyon, and sche desyrd nothyng so mech as hevyn. Than was sche glad in hir consciens whan sche beleavyd that sche was entryng  
290 the wey whech wold leden hir to the place that sche most desyred. And this creatur had contrycion and gret compuncyon wyth plentyuows teerys and many boystows sobbyngys for hir synnes and for hir unkyndnesse ageyns hir maker. Sche bethowt hir fro hir chyldhod for hir unkyndnes as ower Lord wold put it in hir mende ful many a tyme. And than, sche beheldyng hir owyn wykkednes, sche mygth but sorwyn and  
295 wepyn and evyr preyn for mercy and forgevenes. Hir wepyng was so plentyuows and so contwnyng that mech pepul wend that sche mygth wepyn and levyn whan sche wold,

272 **schrevyn**, shriven. 273 **conselyd and curyd**, concealed and covered. 277–78 **an hayr of ... dryen on malt**, a haircloth from a kiln such as men used for drying of malt. 278 **kyrtyle**, woman's gown; **prevylich**, secretly. 283 **japyd**, joked. 286 **dyspite**, contempt; **ches**, chose. 291 **compuncyon**, remorse, penitence; **boystows**, violent. 292 **bethowt**, bethought. 296 **contwnyng**, continuing; **wepyn and levyn whan sche wold**, weep and leave off whenever she wanted to.

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and therfor many men seyd sche was a fals ypcryte and wept for the world for  
socowr and for wordly good. And than ful many forsokyn hir that loyed hir befor  
300 whyl sche was in the world and wold not knowyn hir, and evyr sche thankyd God of  
alle, nothyng desyryng but mercy and forgefnes of synne.

4

The fyrist two yer whan this creatur was thus drawyn to owyr Lord, sche had gret  
qwiete of spyrt as for ony temptacyons. Sche myght wel dure to fastyn, it grevd hir  
not. Sche hatyd the joys of the world. Sche felt no rebellyon in hyr flesch. Sche was  
strong, as hir thowt, that sche dred no devylle in helle, for sche dede so gret bodily  
305 penawnce. Sche thowt that sche loyed God mor than he hir. Sche was smet wyth the  
dedly wound of veynglory and felt it not, for sche desyryd many tymes that the cruci-  
fix schuld losyn hys handys fro the crosse and halsyn hir in tokyn of lofe. Ower  
mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu, seyng this creaturys presumpcyon, sent hir, as is wre-  
befor, three yer of greet temptacyon, of the whech on of the hardest I purpos to wrytyn  
310 for exampyl of hem that com aftyr that thei schuld not trostyn on her owyn self ne  
have no joy in hemself as this creatur had, for no drede owyr gostly enmy slepyth not,  
but he ful besly sergyth owr complexions and owyr dysposycionys, and wher that he  
fundyth us most freel ther be owyr Lordys sufferawns he leyth hys snar, whech may  
no man skape be hys owyn power. And so he leyd beforne this creatur the snar of  
315 letchery, whan sche wend that all fleschly lust had al hol ben qwenchyd in hir. And so  
long sche was temptyd wyth the syn of letchory for owt that sche cowd do. And yet  
sche was oftyn schrevyn, sche weryd the hayr, and dede gret bodily penawns, and  
wept many a bytter teer and preyd ful oftyn to owyr Lord that he schuld preserve hir  
320 and kepe hir that sche schuld not fallyn into temptacyon, for sche thowt sche had levar  
ben deed than consentyn therto. And in al this tyme sche had no lust to comown wyth  
hir husband, but it was very peynful and horrifyl unto hir. In the secund yer of hir

297–98 **wept for the world for socowr and for wordly good**, wept for the world in order to gain comfort and worldly goods. 302 **dure**, endure. 306–07 **the crucifix**, i.e., the figure on the cross, or Christ. 307 **halsyn**, embrace. 311 **for no drede**, for doubtless. 312 **sergyth**, searches. 313 **freel**, frail; **sufferawns**, sufferance; **snar**, snare. 314 **skape**, escape. 315 **wend**, thought. 317 **hayr**, hairshirt. 319 **levar**, rather.

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temptacyons yt fel so that a man whech sche lovyd wel seyd onto hir on Seynt Margarety<sup>s</sup> Evyn befor evynsong that for anythyng he wold ly be hir and have hys lust of hys body, and sche schuld not wythstond hym, for, yf he myght not have hys wyl that tyme, he seyd, he schuld ellys have it another tyme, sche schuld not chese. And he dede it for to preve hir what sche wold do, but sche wend that he had ment ful ernest as that tyme and seyd but lytly therto. So they partyd asondyr as than and wentyn bothen for to here evensong, for her cherch was of Seynt Margaret. This woman was so labowrd wyth the manrys wordys that sche myght not heryn hir evynsong, ne sey 325  
hir Pater Noster, er thynkyn ony other good thowt, but was mor labowrd than evyr sche was befor. The devyl put in hir mende that God had forsakyn hir, and ellys schuld sche not so ben temptyd. She levyd the devely<sup>s</sup> suasyons and gan to consentyn for because sche cowde thynkyn no good thowt. Therfor wend sche that God had forsake hir. And, whan evensong was do, sche went to the man befor seyd that he 330  
schuld have hys lust, as sche wend that he had desyred, but he made swech symulacyon that sche cowd not knowe hys entent, and so thei partyd asondyr for that nygth. This 335  
creatuer was so labowrd and vexyd al that nygth that sche wyst nevyr what sche myght do. Sche lay be hir husbond, and for to comown wyth hym it was so abhomynabyl onto hir that sche myght not duren it, and yet was it leful onto hir in leful tyme yf sche had wold. But evyr sche was labowrd wyth the other man for to syn wyth hym inasmech 340  
as he had spoke to hir. At the last thorw inoportunyté of temptacyon and lakkynge of dyscrecyon sche was ovyrcomyn, and consentyd in hir mend, and went to the man to wetyn yf he wold than consentyn to hire. And he seyd he ne wold for al the good in this world; he had levar ben hewyn as smal as flesch to the pott. Sche went away al 345  
schamyd and confusyd in hirself, seyng hys stabylnes and hir owyn unstabylnes. Than thowt sche of the grace that God had govyn hire befortyme, how sche had two yer of gret qwyet in sowle, repentinaus of hir synne wyth many bytter teerys of compuncyon,

**322–23 Seynt Margarety<sup>s</sup> Evyn**, St. Margaret, whose feast day was July 20, was the virgin martyr tortured and killed for her espousal of Christian chastity by Olybrius, ruler of Antioch. When at home, Margery worshipped in the church of St. Margaret's in Lynn, one of the town's main churches. It was attached to a priory of Benedictines. **325 chese**, choose. **326 preve**, prove (to). **329 labowrd**, labored, afflicted. **330 Pater Noster**, Our Father, the Lord's Prayer. **332 levyd**, believed; **suasyons**, persuasions. **334 do**, done. **335 symulacyon**, simulation. **339 leful**, lawful, permissible. **340 was labowrd**, was afflicted. **341 inoportunyté**, inopportunity. **343 wetyn**, know. **344 levar**, rather; **hewyn**, hewn.

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and parfyt wyl nevyr to turne ageyn to hir synne, but rather to be deed hir thowt. And now sche saw how sche had consentyd in hir wyl for to don synne. Than fel sche half  
350 in dyspeyr. Sche thowt sche wold a ben in helle for the sorw that sche had. Sche thowt sche was worthy no mercy for hir consentyng was so wylfully do ne nevyr worthy to  
don hym servyse for sche was so fals unto hym. Nevrthelesse sche was schrevyn  
many tymes and oftyn, and dede hir penawns whatsoevyr hir confessowr wold injoyne  
hir to do, and was governd aftyr the rewelys of the Chirch. That grace God gafe this  
355 creature, blyssyd mot he be, but he wythdrowe not hir temptacyon but rather incresyd  
it as hir thowt. And therfore wend sche that he had forsakyn hir and durst not trostyn  
to hys mercy, but was labowrd wyth horrbyl temptacyons of letherye and of dyspeyr  
ny al the next yer folwyng, save owyr Lord of hys mercy, as sche seyd hirself, gaf hir  
ech day for the most party too owerys of compunccyon for hir synnys wyth many  
360 byttryr teerys. And sythen sche was labowrd wyth temptacyons of dyspeyr as sche was  
befor and was as for fro felyng of grace as thei that nevyr felt noon. And that mygth  
sche not beryn, and therfor alwey sche dyspeyrd. Safe for the tyme that sche felt  
grace, hir labowrs wer so wondyrful that sche cowd evel far wyth hem but evyr mornyn  
and sorwyn as thow God had forsakyn hir.

5

365 Than on a Fryday befor Crystmes Day, as this creature, knelyng in a chapel of  
Seynt John wythinne a cherch of Seynt Margrete in N, wept wondir sore, askyng  
mercy and forgyfnes of hir synnes and hir trespass, owyr mercyful Lord Cryst Jhesu,  
blessyd mot he be, ravysched hir spyrt and seyd onto hir: “Dowtyr, why wepyst  
370 thou so sor? I am comyn to the, Jhesu Cryst, that deyd on the crosse sufferyng byttryr  
peynes and passyons for the. I, the same God, forgefe the thi synnes to the utterest  
poyn. And thou schalt nevyr com in helle ne in purgatorye, but, whan thou schalt  
passyn owt of this world, wythin the twynkelyng of an eye thou schalt have the blysse

**350–52 Sche thowt . . . was so fals unto hym,** She thought she was deserving of no mercy, for her consenting was so willfully done, not worthy of doing him (i.e., God) service, for she was so false unto him. **352 schrevyn,** shriven. **354 rewelys,** rules. **356 durst,** dared. **357 letherye,** lechery. **359 party,** part. **363 wer so wondyrful . . . far wyth hem,** were so wonderful (astonishing) that she could hardly deal (fare) with them.

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of hevyn for I am the same God that have browt thi synnes to thi mend and mad the to  
be schreve therof. And I grawnt the contrysyon into thi lyves ende. Therfor I bydde  
375 the and comawnd the, boldly clepe me Jhesus, thi love, for I am thi love and schal be  
thi love wythowtyn ende. And, dowtyr, thu hast an hayr upon thi bakke. I wyl thu do  
it away, and I schal give the an hayr in thin hert that schal lyke me mych bettyr than  
alle the hayres in the world. Also, my derworthy dowtyr, thu must forsake that thou  
380 lovyst best in this world, and that is etyng of flesch. And instede of that flesch thou  
schalt etyn my flesch and my blod, that is the very body of Crist in the sacrament of  
the awter. Thys is my wyl, dowtyr, that thou receyve my body every Sonday, and I  
schal flowe so mych grace in the that alle the world schal mervelyn therof. Thou  
schalt ben etyn and knawyn of the pepul of the world as any raton knawyth the  
stokfysch. Drede the nowt, dowtyr, for thou schalt have the vyctory of al thin enmys.  
385 I schal geve the grace inow to answer every clerke in the love of God. I swer to the be  
my mageste that I schal nevir forsakyn the in wel ne in wo. I schal helpyn the and  
kepyn the that ther schal nevir devyl in helle parte the fro me, ne awngel in hevyn, ne  
man in erthe, for develys in helle mow not, ne awngelys in hevyn wyl not, ne man in  
390 erthe schal not. And dowtyr, I wyl thou leve thi bydding of many bedys and thynk  
swych thowtys as I wyl putt in thi mend. I schal gevyn the leve to byddyn tyl sex of the  
cloke to sey what thou wyld. Than schalt thou ly styll and speke to me be thowt, and  
I schal gefe to the hey medytacyon and very contemplacyon. And I byd the gon to the  
ankyr at the Frer Prechowrys, and schew hym my prevyteys and my cownselys whech  
I schewe to the, and werk aftyr hys cownsel, for my sprit schal speke in hym to the.”  
395 Than this creatur went forth to the ankyr, as sche was comawndyd, and schewyd hym  
the revelacyons swech as wer schewyd to hir. Than the ankyr wyth gret reverns and  
wepyng, thankyng God, seyd, “Dowtyr, ye sowkyn evyn on Crysts brest, and ye han

373–74 **that have . . . schreve therof**, who has brought your sins to your memory and made you to be shiven thereof. 374 **contrysyon**, contrition. 375 **clepe**, call. 376 **hayr**, hair (cloth). 378 **derworthy**, precious; **that**, what. 380–81 **sacrament of the awter**, Eucharist. 383 **knawyn**, gnawed. 383–84 **raton knawyth the stokfysch**, rat gnaws the stockfish. 385 **inow**, enough; **be**, by. 386 **wel**, well-being, good fortune; **wo**, woe. 388 **mow**, might. 389 **leve**, leave off; **bydding of many bedys**, bidding of many beads (saying of many prayers). 391 **be thowt**, by thought. 392 **hey**, high. 393 **ankyr**, anchorite; **Frer Prechowrys**, Dominican Priory at Lynn; **prevyteys**, secrets. 397 **ye sowkyn . . . Crysts brest**, you suck even on Christ’s breast (The nutritive or “female” attributes of Christ were conventional figures in late medieval devotional literature. See Bynum [1987], pp. 270–76.).

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an ernest peny of hevyn. I charge yow receyveth swech thowtys whan God wyl geve hem as mekely and as devoutly as ye kan and comyth to me and tellyth me what thei  
400 be, and I schal, wyth the leve of ower Lord Jhesu Cryst, telle yow whether thei ben of the Holy Gost or ellys of yowr enmy the devyl."

6

Another day this creatur schuld geve hir to medytacyon, as sche was bodyn befor, and sche lay styll, nowt knowyng what sche mygth best thynke. Than sche seyd to ower Lord Jhesu Crist, "Jhesu, what schal I thynke?" Ower Lord Jhesu answeryd to 405 hir mende, "Dowtyr, thynke on my modyr, for sche is cause of alle the grace that thou hast." And than anoon sche saw Seynt Anne gret wyth chylde, and than sche preyd Seynt Anne to be hir mayden and hir servawnt. And anon ower Lady was born, and than sche besyde hir to take the chyld to hir and kepe it tyl it wer twelve yer of age 410 wyth good mete and drynke, wyth fayr whyte clothys and whyte kerchys. And than sche seyd to the blyssed chyld, "Lady, ye schal be the modyr of God." The blyssed chyld answeryd and seyd, "I wold I wer worthy to be the handmayden of hir that schuld conceive the sone of God." The creatur seyd, "I pray yow, Lady, yyf that grace falle yow, forsake not my servyse." The blysful chyld passyd awey for a certeyn tyme, the creatur being styll in contemplacyon, and sythen cam ageyn and seyd,  
415 "Dowtyr, now am I bekome the modyr of God." And than the creatur fel down on hir kneys wyth gret reverens and gret wepyng and seyd, "I am not worthy, Lady, to do yow servyse." "Yys, dowtyr," sche seyde, "folwe thow me, thi servyse lykyth me wel." Than went sche forth wyth owyr Lady and wyth Josep, beryng wyth hir a potel of payment and spycys thereto. Than went thei forth to Elysabeth, Seynt John Baptystys  
420 modir, and, whan thei mettyn togyder, eythyr of hem worshepyd other, and so thei wonyd togedyr wyth gret grace and gladnesse twelve wokys. And than Seynt John

**398 ernest peny of hevyn**, earnest penny (pledge-penny) of heaven. **402 geve hir**, devoted herself; **bodyn**, bidden. **406 sche saw Seynt Anne gret wyth chylde**, she saw Saint Anne great with child, i.e., pregnant with the Virgin. For the importance of extra-Biblical fictions relating to the private lives of Saint Anne and the Virgin in late medieval spirituality, see Ashley and Sheingorn. **408 besyde**, busied. **409 kerchys**, kerchiefs. **418–19 potel of payment and spycys**, two quart vessel of sweetened and spiced wine. **421 wonyd**, dwelled.

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was bor, and owyr Lady toke hym up fro the erthe wyth al maner reverens and gaf hym to hys moder, seyng of hym that he schuld be an holy man, and blyssed hym.  
425 Sythen thei toke her leve eythyr of other wyth compassyf terys. And than the creatur fel down on kneys to Seynt Elysabeth and preyd hir sche wold prey for hir to owyr Lady that sche mygth do hir servyse and plesawns. "Dowtyr, me semyth," seyd Elysabeth, "Thu dost ryght wel thi never." And than went the creatur forth wyth owyr Lady to Bedlem and purchasyd hir herborwe every nyght wyth gret reverens, and  
430 owyr Lady was receyved wyth glad cher. Also sche beggyd owyr Lady fayr whyte clothys and kerchys for to swathyn in hir sone whan he wer born, and, whan Jhesu was born sche ordeyned beddyng for owyr Lady to lyg in wyth hir blyssed sone. And sythen sche beggyd mete for owyr Lady and hir blyssyd chyld. Aftyrward sche swathyd  
435 hym wyth bytter teerys of compassyon, havyng mend of the scharp deth that he schuld suffyr for the lofe of synful men, seyng to hym, "Lord, I schal fare fayr wyth yow; I schal not byndyn yow soor. I pray yow beth not dysplesyd wyth me."

7

And aftyr on the Twelfth Day, whan three kyngys comyn wyth her gyftys and worschepyd owyr Lord Jhesu Crist being in hys moderys lappe, this creatur, owyr Ladys handmayden, beheldyng al the processe in contemplacyon, wept wondyr sor. And, whan sche saw that thei wold take her leve to gon hom agen into her cuntré, sche  
440 mygth not suffyre that they schuld go fro the presens of owyr Lord, and for wondyr that thei wold gon awey sche cryed wondyr sore. And soon aftyr cam an awngel and bad owyr Lady and Josep gon fro the cuntré ob Bedlem into Egypt. Than went this creatur forth wyth owyr Lady, day be day purveyng hir herborw wyth gret reverns  
445 wyth many swet thowtys and hy medytacyons and also hy contemplacyons, sumtyme duryng in wepyng two owyres and oftyn lengar in the mend of owyr Lordys Passyon wythowtyn sesyng, sumtyme for hir owyn synne, sumtyme for the synne of the pepyl,

**422 toke hym up fro the erthe**, took him up from the earth (where he lay after birth). **424 compassyf**, compassionate. **427 never**, duty. **428 Bedlem**, Bethlehem; **purchasyd hir herborwe**, purchased her lodging. **429 beggyd owyr Lady**, begged for our Lady. **431 lyg**, lie. **434–35 I schal not byndyn yow soor**, I shall not bind you (swaddle you) tightly. **442 ob**, of (see note). **443 purveyng hir herborw**, purveying her lodging. **445 duryng**, enduring. **446 sesyng**, ceasing.

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sumtyme for the sowlys in purgatory, sumtyme for hem that arn in poverté er in any dysese, for sche desyred to comfort hem alle. Sumtyme sche wept ful plenteuowsly and ful boystowsly for desyr of the blys of hevyn and for sche was so long dyfferryd therfro. Than this creatur coveyted gretly to be delyveryd owt of this wretchedy world. Ower Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to hir mende sche schuld abyden and languren in lofe. “For I have ordeyned the to knele befor the Trynyté for to prey for al the world, for many hundryd thowsand sowlys schal be savyd be thi prayers. And therfor, dowtyr, aske what thou wylt, and I schal grawnt the thyn askyng.” This creatur seyd, “Lord, I aske mercy and preservyng fro evyrlestyng dampnacyon for me and for all the world, chastyse us her how thou wylt and in purgatory, and kepe us fro dampnacyon for thin hy mercy.

8

Another tyme, as this creatur lay in hir prayer, the Modyr of Mercy, aperyng to hir, seyd, “A, dowtyr, blyssyd may thou be, thi sete is mad in hevyn befor my sonys kne and whom thou wylt han wyth the.” Than askyd hyr blyssed sone, “Dowtyr, whom wylt thou han felaw wyth the?” “My derworthy Lord, I aske my gostly fadry Maystyr N.” “Why askyst mor hym than thyn owyn fadry er thin husband?” “For I may nevyr qwyte hym the goodnesse that he hath don to me and the gracyows labowrys that he hath had abowt me in heryng of my confessyon.” “I grawnt the thi desyr of hym, and yet schal thi fadry ben savyd, and thi husband also, and alle thi chylderyn.” Than this creatur seyd, “Lord, sythen thou hast forgovyn me my synne, I make the myn executor of alle the god werkys that thou werkyst in me. In prayng, in thynkyng, in wepyng, in pylgrimage goyng, in fastyng, er in any good word spekyng, it is fully my wyl that thou geve Maystyr N halfyndel to encres of hys meryte as yf he dede hem hys owyn self. And the other halvendel, Lord, sprede on thi frendys and thi enmys and on my frendys and myn enmys, for I wyl have but thiself for my mede.” “Dowtyr, I schal be a trew executor to the and fulfyllyn all thi wylle, and for thi gret charyté that thou hast

449–50 **for sche was so long dyfferryd therfro**, for she was so long deferred therefrom. 451 **languren**, languish. 456 **chastyse us her how thou wylt**, chastise us here however you will. 461 **felaw**, fellow, companion. 463 **qwyte**, requite. 466–67 **executor**, executor (of her spiritual estate). 469 **halfyndel**, half. 470 **halvendel**, half. 471 **mede**, reward.

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to comfortyn thin even cristен thu schalt have dubbyl reward in hevyn."

9

Another tyme, as this creatur prayd to God that sche myt levyn chast be leve of hir  
475 husbond, Cryst seyd to hir mende, "Thow must fastyn the Fryday bothen fro mete and  
drynke, and thow schalt have thi desyr er Whitsonday, for I schal sodeynly sle thin  
husbonde." Than on the Wednysday in Estern woke, aftyr hyr husbond wold have had  
knowlach of hir as he was wone befor, and whan he gan neygh hir, sche seyd, "Jhesus,  
help me," and he had no power to towche hir at that tyme in that wyse, ne nevyr aftyr  
480 wyth no fleschly knowyng. It befel on a Fryday befor Whytson Evyn, as this creatur  
was in a cherch of Seynt Margarete at N heryng hir messe, sche herd a gret noyse and  
a dredful. Sche was sore astoyned, sor dredyng the voys of the pepyl, whech seyd God  
schuld take venjawns upon hir. Sche knelyd upon hir kneys, heldyng down hir hed  
and hir boke in hir hand, prayng owyr Lord Crist Jhesu for grace and for mercy.  
485 Sodeynly fel down fro the heyst party of the cherch vowte fro undyr the fote of the  
sparre on hir hed and on hir bakke a ston whech weyd three pownd and a schort ende  
of a tre weyng six pownd that hir thowt hir bakke brakke asundyr, and sche ferd as  
sche had be deed a lytyl whyle. Soone aftyr sche cryed, "Jhesu mercy," and anoon hir  
490 peyn was gon. A good man whech hygh John of Wyreham, seyng this wondyr cas  
and suposyng that sche ben gretly dysesyd, cam and pullyd hir be the sleve and seyd  
"Dame, how far ye?" The creatur al hol and sownd thankyd hym of hys cher and hys  
charyté, mech merveylyng and gretly awonderyd that sche felt no peyn and had felt so  
mech a lytyl befor. Ne twelve wekys aftyr sche felt no peyne. Than the spiryt of God

**473 even cristен**, fellow Christians; **dubbyl**, double. **476 er Whitsonday**, before Whitsunday, the Feast of Pentecost; **sle**, kill. **477 Estern woke**, Easter week. **478 knowlach**, knowledge; **was wone befor**, was accustomed to before; **gan neygh hir**, came near her. **479 wyse**, way. **480 Whytson Evyn**, Whitsunday Eve. Whitsunday is the Feast of Pentecost. **482 astoyned**, bewildered; **voys**, voice. **483 venjawns**, vengeance. **485 party**, part; **vowte**, vault. **485–86 the fote of the sparre**, the foot of the rafter. **486 weyd**, weighed. **487–88 sche ferd as . . . a lytyl whyle**, for a little while she fared (acted) as though she had been dead. **489 whech hygh**, who was called; **wondyr cas**, wonderful case. **490 gretly dysesyd**, greatly distressed. **491 hol**, whole; **cher**, demeanor.

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seyd to hir sowle, “Helde this for a gret myracle, and, yyf the pepyl wyl not levyn this,  
495 I schal werkyn meche mor.” A worschepful doctowr of dyvynité wych hygth Maystyr Aleyn, a Whyte Frer, heryng of this wondyrful werk, inqwired of this creature alle the forme of this processe. He, desyryng the werk of God to be magnyfyed, gat hym the same ston that fel upon hir bakke and way it, and sythen he gat hym the treys ende that fel upon hir hed whech oon of the kepars of the cherch had leyd in the fyre to bren it.  
500 And this worshepful doctowr seyd it was a gret myracle and ower Lord was heyl to be magnyfyed for the preservyng of this creatur agen the malyce of hir enmy, and teld it mech pepyl, and mych pepyl magnyfyed mech God in this creatur. And also mech pepyl wold not levyn it, but rathyr levyd it was a tokyn of wreth and venjawns than thei wold levyn it was any token of mercy er quemfulnes.

10

505 Sone aftyr this creatur was mevyd in hir sowle to go vysyten certeyn places for gostly helth inasmech as sche was cured, and mygth not wythowtyn consentyng of hir husband. Sche reqwired hir husband to grawntyn hir leve, and, he, fully trostyng it was the wyl of God, sone consentyng, thei went togedyr to swech place as sche was mevyd. And than owyr Lord Cryst Jhesu seyd to hir, “My servawntys desyryng gretly  
510 to se the.” Than was sche wolcomyd and mech mad of in dyvers placys. Wherfor sche had gret dred of veynglory and mech was aferde. Owyr mercyful Lord Cryst Jhesu, worshed be hys name, seyd to hir, “Drede the not, dowtyr, I schal take veynglory fro the. For thei that worshes the thei worshes me; thei that despisen the thei despisen me, and I schal chastisen hem therfor. I am in the, and thou in me. And thei that  
515 heryn the thei heryn the voys of God. Dowtyr, ther is no so synful man in erth levyng, yf he wyl forsake hys synne and don aftyr thi counsel, swech grace as thu behestyst hym I wyl confermyn for thi lofe.” Than hir husband and sche went forth to Yorke and to other dyvers placys.

494 **levyn**, believe. 495–96 **Maystyr Aleyn**, the Carmelite friar, Alan of Lynn. 498 **way**, weighted; **treys**, tree’s. 503 **venjawns**, vengeance. 504 **quemfulnes**, favor. 506 **gostly**, spiritual; **mygth not**, might not. 515 **voys**, voice; **levyng**, living. 516 **behestyst**, promise.

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11

It befel upon a Fryday on Mydsomyr Evyn in rygth hot wedyr, as this creatur was  
520 komyng fro Yorkeward beryng a botel wyth bere in hir hand and hir husbond a cake in  
hys bosom, he askyd hys wyfe this qwestyon, “Margery, if her come a man wyth a  
swerd and wold smyte of myn hed les than I schulde comown kendly wyth yow as I  
have do befor, seyth me trewth of yowr consciens — for ye sey ye wyl not lye —  
whether wold ye suffyr myn hed to be smet of er ellys suffyr me to medele wyth yow  
525 agen as I dede sumtyme?” “Alas, ser,” sche seyd, “why meve ye this mater and have  
we ben chast this eight wekys?” “For I wyl wete the trewth of yowr hert.” And than  
sche seyd wyth gret sorwe, “Forsothe I had levar se yow be slain than we schuld turne  
agen to owyr unclennesse.” And he seyd agen, “Ye arn no good wyfe.” And than sche  
askyd hir husbond what was the cawse that he had not medelyd wyth hir eight wekys  
530 befor, sythen sche lay wyth hym every nygth in hys bedde. And he seyd he was so  
made aferde whan he wold a towchyd hir that he durst no mor don. “Now, good ser,  
amend yow and aske God mercy, for I teld yow ner three yer sythen that ye schuld be  
slain sodeynly, and now is this the thryd yer, and yet I hope I schal han my desyr.  
Good sere, I pray yow grawnt me that I schal askyn, and I schal pray for yow that ye  
535 schul be savyd thorw the mercy of owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst, and ye schul have mor  
mede in hevyn than yyf ye weryd an hayr or an haburgon. I pray yow, suffer me to  
make a vow of chastyté in what bysshopys hand that God wele.” “Nay,” he seyd, “that  
wyd I not grawnt yow, for now may I usyn yow wythoutyn dedly synne and than  
mygth I not so.” Than sche seyd agen, “Yyf it be the wyl of the Holy Gost to fulfyllyn  
540 that I have seyd I pray God ye mote consent thereto; and, yf it be not the wyl of the  
Holy Gost, I pray God ye nevir consent thereto.” Than went thei forth to  
Brydlyngtonward in rygth hoot wedyr, the fornseyd creatur havyng gret sorwe and gret

**520 bere**, beer; **cake**, cake, loaf. **521 her**, there. **522 smyte of**, smite off; **les than**, unless; **comown kendly**, lit., common naturally, i.e., have intercourse with. See note. **524 medele**, meddle, have intercourse with. **525 why meve ye this mater**, why do you bring up this matter. **526 For I wyl wete**, For I will know. **527 levar**, rather. **536 mede**, meed, reward; **hayr**, haircloth; **haburgon**, jacket of mail (next to your skin). **537 wele**, wills. **537–39 “Nay,” he seyd . . . not so.**, “Nay,” he said, “that will I not grant you, for now I may use you without mortal sin and then I might not.” (By taking a vow of wedded chastity, John and Margery would sacramentally eliminate the physical element of their marriage.) **541–42 to Brydlyngtonward**, toward Bridlington; **fornseyd**, aforesaid.

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dred for hyr chastité. And, as thei cam be a cros, hyr husband sett hym down undyr the cros, clepyng hys wyfe unto hym and seyng this wordys onto hir, “Margery,  
545 grawnt me my desyr, and I schal grawnt yow your desyr. My fyrst desyr is that we schal lyn styll togedyr in o bed as we han do befor; the secunde that ye schal pay my dettys er ye go to Jherusalem; and the thrydde that ye schal etyn and drynkyn wyth me on the Fryday as ye wer wont to don.” “Nay ser,” sche seyd, “to breke the Fryday I wyl nevyr grawnt yow whyl I leve.” “Wel,” he seyd, “than schal I medyl yow ageyn.”  
550 Sche prayd hym that he wold geve hir leve to make hyr praerys, and he grawntyd it goodlych. Than sche knelyd down besyden a cros in the feld and preyd in this maner wyth gret habundaws of teerys, “Lord God, thu knowyst al thyng; thou knowyst what sorwe I have had to be chast in my body to the al this three yer, and now myght I han my wylle and I dar not for lofe of the. For, yyf I wold brekyn that maner of  
555 fastyng whech thou comawndyst me to kepyn on the Fryday wythowtyn mete or drynk, I schuld now han my desyr. But, blyssyd Lord, thou knowyst I wyl not contraryen thi wyl, and mekyl now is my sorwe les than I fynde comfort in the. Now, blyssed Jhesu, make thi wyl knowyn to me unworthy that I may folwyn therafyr and fulfyllyn it wyth al my myghtys.” And than owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst wyth gret swetnesse  
560 spak to this creatur, comawndyng hir to gon agen to hir husband and prayn hym to grawntyn hir that sche desyred. “And he schal han that he desyreth. For, my derworthy dowtyr, this was the cawse that I bad the fastyn for thu schuldyst the sonar opteyn and getyn thi desyr, and now it is grawntyd the. I wyl no lengar thou fast, therfor I byd the in the name of Jhesu ete and drynk as thyn husband doth.” Than this creatur thankyd  
565 owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst of hys grace and hys goodnes, sythen ros up and went to hir husband, seyng unto hym, “Sere, yf it lyke yow, ye schal grawnt me my desyr, and ye schal have your desyr. Grawntyth me that ye schal not komyn in my bed, and I grawnt yow to qwyte your dettys er I go to Jerusalem. And makthy my body fre to God so that ye nevyr make no chalengyng in me to askyn no dett of matrimony aftyr this day  
570 whyl ye levyn, and I schal etyn and drynkyn on the Fryday at your byddyng.” Than seyd hir husband agen to hir, “As fre mot your body ben to God as it hath ben to me.” Thys creatur thankyd God gretly, enjoying that sche had hir desyr, preyng hir husband that thei schuld sey three Pater Noster in the worshep of the Trinatyé for the gret grace

**544 clepyng**, calling. **547 dettys**, debts. **549 leve**, live. **550 leve**, leave. **551 goodlych**, well.  
**557 contraryen**, go against; **mekyl**, great; **les**, unless. **562 opteyn**, obtain. **568 qwyte**, requite, pay back.

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that he had grawntyd hem. And so they ded, knelyng undyr a cros, and sythen thei  
575 etyn and dronkyn togedyr in gret gladnes of spyryt. This was on a Fryday on Mydsomyr  
Evyn. Than went they forth to Brydlyntonward and also to many other contrés and  
spokyn wyth Goddys servawntys, bothen ankrys and reclusys and many other of owyr  
Lordys loverys, wyth many worthy clerkys, doctorys of dyvynytye, and bachelors also  
580 in many dyvers placys. And this creatur to dyvers of hem schewyd hir felyngys and hyr  
contemplacyons, as sche was comawndyd for to don, to wetyn yf any dysseyt  
were in hir felyngys.

12

Thys creatur was sent of owyr Lord to divers placys of relygyon, and among on  
sche cam to a place of monkys wher sche was rygh wolcom for owyr Lordys lofe,  
save ther was a monk whech bar gret offyce in that place despysed hir and set hir at  
nowt. Nevyrthelesse sche was sett at mete wyth the abbot, and many tymes of the  
585 mete sche seyd many good wordys as God wold hem puttyn in hir mende, the same  
monke whech had so dyspysed hir beyng present and many other to heryn what sche  
wold sey. And thorw hir dalyawns hys affeccyon gan gretly enclyne to hirward and gan  
to have gret savour in hir wordys. So that aftyrward the forseyd monk cam to hir  
590 and seyde, sche beyng in cherch and he also as that tyme, “Damsel, I her seyn God  
spekyth onto the. I pray the telle me whethyr I schal be savyd or nowt and in what  
synnes I have most dysplesyd God, for I wyl not levyn the but thow con telle me my  
synne.” The creatur seyd to the monke, “Goth to your Messe, and yyf I may wepe for  
595 yow I hope to han grace for yow.” He folwyd hir cownsel and went to hys messe.  
Sche wept wondyrly for hys synnes. Whan messe was endyd, the creatur seyd to owyr  
Lord Cryst Jhesu, “Blyssed Lord, what answer schal I geve to this man?” “My derworthy

574 **sythen**, afterward. 577 **ankrys**, anchorites; **reclusys**, recluses. 579 **dyvers**, different.  
580 **wetyn**, know; **dysseyt**, deceit. 583 **monkys**, monks. 584 **save**, except; **bar gret offyce**,  
had great office (duties). 584–85 **set hir at nowt**, disparaged her. 585 **at mete**, at the midday  
meal; **of**, during. 588 **dalyawns**, daliance; **gan gretly enclyne to hirward**, began greatly to  
incline toward her. 589 **savour**, savour, delight. 592 **levyn**, believe.

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dowtyr, sey in the name of Jhesu that he hath synned in lethtery, in dyspeyr, and in wordly goodys kepyng.” “A, gracyows Lord, this is hard for me to sey. He schal do me mech schame yyf I telle hym any lesyng.” “Drede the not but speke boldly in my name in the name of Jhesu, for thei arn no leesyngys.” And than sche seyd agen to owyr Lord Jhesu Crist, “Good Lord, schal he be savyd?” “Ya,” seyd owyr Lord Jhesu, “yf he wyl forsakyn hys synne and don aftyr thi cownsel. Charge hym that he forsake hys synne and be schreve therof and also hys offyce that he hath wythowtynforth.” Than cam the monk agen, “Margery, telle me my synnes.” Sche seyd, “I pray yow, ser, askyth not therraftyr, for I undyrtake for yowr sowle ye schal ben savyd, yyf ye wyl do aftyr my cownsel.” “Forsothe I wyl not levyn yow but yyf ye telle me my synne.” “Syr, I undyrstond that ye han synned in lechery, in dyspeyr, and in kepyng of wordly good.” Than stod the monke styll sumdel abaschyd, and sythen he seyd, “Whether have I synned wyth wifes er wyth sengyl women?” “Ser, wyth wifes.” Than seyd he, “Schal I be savyd?” “Ya, syr, yf ye wyl do aftyr my cownsel. Sorwyth for yowr synne, and I schal help yow to sorwyn; beth schrevyn therof and forsake it wylfully. Levyth the offyce that ye han wythowtynforth, and God schal geve yow grace for my lofe.” The monke toke hir be the hand and led hir into a fayr hows of offyce, made hir a gret dyner, and sythen gaf hyr gold to prey for hym. And so sche toke hir leve at that tyme. Another tyme whan the creatur cam ageyn to the same place, the fornseyd monke had forsakyn hys offyce at hir cownsel, and was turnyd fro hys synne, and was mad suppriowr of the place, a wel governyd man and wel dysposyd, thankyd be God, and made this creatur gret cher and hly blyssed God that evyr he saw hir.

13

On a tyme, as this creatur was at Cawntyryber in the cherch among the monkys, sche was gretly despysed and reprevyd for cawse sche wept so fast bothyn of the monkys and prestys and of seculer men ner al a day bothe afornoon and aftynoon,

**597–98 in lethtery . . . kepyng**, in lechery, in despair, and in the keeping (hoarding) of worldly goods. (These are the three classic vices of lust, pride — of which despair is a type — and avarice.) **599 lesyng**, lie. **600 leesyngys**, lies. **603 schreve**, shriven; **wythowtynforth**, without, outside. **610 Sorwyth**, Sorrow (be sorry). **617 suppriowr**, sub-prior.

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also in so mech that hyr husband went away fro hir as he had not a knowyn hir and left  
hir aloon among hem, cheys hir as sche cowde, for other comfort had sche noon of  
625 hym as that day. So an **eld** monk, whech had ben tresowrer wyth the Qwen whyl he  
was in seculer clothynge, a riche man, and gretly dred of mech pepyl, toke hir be the  
hand, seying unto hir, “What kanst thou seyn of God?” “Ser” sche seyth, “I wyl bothe  
speke of hym and heryn of hym,” rehersyng the monk a story of scriptur. The munke  
seyd, “I wold thou wer closyd in an hows of ston that ther schuld no man speke wyth  
630 the.” “A, ser,” sche seyd, “Ye schuld meynteyn Goddys servawntys, and ye arn the  
fyrst that heldyn agens hem. Owyr Lord amend yow.” Than a yong monke seyde to  
this creatur, “Eythyr thou hast the Holy Gost or ellys thou hast a devyl wythin the,  
for that thu spekyst her to us it is Holy Wrytte, and that hast thou not of thiself.” Than  
seyd this creatur, “I pray yow, ser, geve me leve to tellyn yow a tale.” Than the pepyl  
635 seyd to the monke, “Late hir sey what sche wyl.” And than sche seyd, “ther was onys  
a man that had synned gretly agens God, and, whan he was schrevyn, hys confessowr  
injoined hym in party of penawnce that he schuld o yer hyer men to chyde hym and  
reprevyn hym for hys synnes and he schuld geven hem sylver for her labowr. And on  
a day he cam among many gret men as now ben her, God save yow alle, and stod  
640 among hem as I do now among yow, despysyng hym as ye do me, the man lawhyng er  
smylyng and havyng good game at here wordys. The grettest maystyr of hem seyd to  
the man, ‘Why lawhyst thu, brothel, and art thou gretly despysed?’ ‘A, ser, I have a  
gret cause to lawh, for I have many days put sylver owt of my purse and hyred men to  
645 chyde me for remyssyon of my synne, and this day I may kepe my sylver in my purs,  
I thank yow alle.’ Rygh so I sey to yow, worsheful serys, whyl I was at hom in myn  
owyn contré day be day wyth gret wepyng and mornynge, I sorwyd for I had no schame,  
skorne, and despyte as I was worthy. I thank yow alle, serys, heylly what forenoon and  
aftynoon I have had resonably this day, blyssed be God therof.” Than sche went owt  
of the monastery, thei folwyng and crying upon hir, “Thow schalt be brent, fals

623 **as**, as if. 624 **aloon**, alone; **cheys hir as sche cowde**, lit., choose her as she could, i.e., make her own way. 625 **eld**, old; **an old monk, whech had ben tresowrer wyth the Qwen**, probably John Kynton, chancellor of Queen Joanna, wife of Henry V. 626 **dred**, feared by. 628 **heryn**, praise. 630 **meynteyn**, maintain. 637 **in party**, as part; **that he schuld o yer hyer men**, that he should for one year hire men. 640 **lawhyng**, laughing. 642 **lawhyst thu**, do you laugh; **brothel**, wretch. 649 **brent**, burnt.

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650 lollare. Her is a cartful of thornys redy for the and a tonne to bren the wyth.” And the  
creatuer stod wythowtyn the gatys at Cawntyrberry, for it was in the evenyng, mech  
pepyl wonderyng on hir. Than seyd the pepyl, “Tak and bren hir.” And the creatuer  
stod stylle, tremelyng and whakyng ful sor in hir flesch wythowtyn ony erdryl com-  
fort, and wyst not wher hyr husband was become. Than prayd sche in hir hert to owyr  
655 Lord, thynkyng on this maner, “Hedyr cam I, Lord, for thi lofe. Blyssed Lord, help me  
and have mercy on me.” And anon, aftyr sche had mad hir prayerys in hir hert to owyr  
Lord, ther komyn tweyn fayr yong men and seyd to hir, “Damsel, art thou non eretyke  
ne no loller?” And sche seyd, “No, serys, I am neythr eretyke ne loller.” Than thei  
askyd hir wher was hir in. Sche seyd sche wyst nevyr in what strete, nevrthelesse it  
660 schuld be at a Dewchmannys hows. Than this tweyn yong men browgt hir hom to hir  
ostel and made hir gret cher, preyng hir to pray for hem, and ther fond sche hyr husband.  
And mech pepyl in N had seyd evyl of hir whyl sche was owte and slawndryd hir in  
many thyngys that sche schuld a do whyl sche was in the contré. Than aftyr this sche  
was in gret rest of sowle a gret whyle and had hy contemplacyon day be day and many  
665 holy spech and dalyawns of owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst bothe afornoon and aftynoon,  
wyth many swet terys of hy devocyon so plentyuowsly and contynualy that it was  
mervayle that hir eyne enduryd er how hir hert mygth lestyn that it was not consumyd  
wyth ardour of lofe, whych was kyndelyd wyth the holy dalyawns of owyr Lord  
whan he seyd to hir many tymes, “Derworthy dowtyr, lofe thou me wyth al thin hert,  
670 for I love the wyth al myn hert and wyth al the mygth of my Godhed, for thou wer a  
chosyn sowle wythout begynnnyng in my syghte and a peler of Holy Cherch. My  
mercyful eyne arn evyr upon the. It wer unpossibyl to the to suffyr the scornys and  
despytes that thou schalt have ne were only my grace supportyng the.”

**650 lollare**, Lollard, a follower of the beliefs of John Wyclif, the late fourteenth-century theologian, whose ideas were judged heretical. These included renunciation of the cult of images and saints, of the doctrine of transubstantiation, and of the church's involvement with temporal goods or offices. For the relevance of Wycliffite thought to the *Book*, see Staley (1994); **tonne**, tun, large barrel. **653 tremelyng and whakyng**, trembling and quaking; **erdly**, earthly. **657 tweyn**, two; **eretyke**, heretic. **658 loller**, Lollard. **659 in**, inn. **660 Dewchmannys**, German man's. **661 ostel**, hostel. **667 eyne**, eyes; **lestyn**, last, survive. **671 peler**, pillar. **673 ne were . . . grace**, were not my grace alone.

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14

Than thys creatur thowt it was ful mery to be reprevyd for Goddys lofe; it was to hir  
675 gret solas and cowmfort whan sche was chedyn and fletyn for the lofe of Jhesu for  
reprevyng of synne, for spekyng of vertu, for comownyng in scriptur whech sche  
lernyd in sermownys and be comownyng wyth clerkys. Sche ymagyned in hirself  
what deth sche mygth deyn for Crystys sake. Hyr thowt sche wold a be slain for  
Goddys lofe, but dred for the poynt of deth, and therfor sche ymagyned hirself the  
680 most soft deth, as hir thowt, for dred of inpacyens, that was to be bowndyn hyr hed  
and hir fet to a stokke and hir hed to be smet of wyth a scharp ex for Goddys lofe.  
Than seyd owyr Lord in hir mende, “I thank the, dowtyr, that thou woldyst for my  
lofe, for, as oftyn as thou thynkyst so, thou schalt have the same mede in hevyn as  
thow thu suffredyst the same deth. And yet schal no man sle the, ne fyer bren the, ne  
685 watyr drynch the, ne wynd deryn the, for I may not forgetyn the how thou art wretn  
in myn handys and my fete; it lykyn me wel the peynes that I have sufferyd for the. I  
schal nevr ben wroth wyth the, but I schal lovyn the wythowtyn ende. Thow al the  
worlde be agens the, drede the not, for thei cun no skyl of the. I swer to thi mend, and  
it wer possybyl me to suffyr peyn ageyn as I have do beforne, me wer levar to suffyr as  
690 mech peyn as evyr I dede for thi sowle alon rathyrr than thou schuldyst partyn fro me  
wythowtyn ende. And therfor, dowtyr, rygth as thou seyst the prest take the chyld at  
the funston and dyppe it in the watyr and wasch it fro oryginal synne, rygth so schal I  
wasch the in my precyows blod fro alle thi synne. And, thou I wythdrawe sumtyme  
695 the felyng of grace fro the, eythyr of spech er of wepyng, drede the not therof, for I am  
an hyd God in the that thu schuldyst have no veylglory and that thu schuldyst knowyn  
wele thou mayst not han terys ne swych dalyawns but whan God wyl send hem the,  
for it arn the fre gyftys of God wythowtyn thi meryte and he may geve hem whom he  
wyl and don the no wrong. And therfor take hem mekely and thankyngly whan I wyl  
700 send hem, and suffyr pacyently whan I wythdrawe hem, and seke besyly tyl thou  
mayst getyn hem, for terys of compuncyon, devocyon, and compassyon arn the

**675 chedyn and fletyn**, chided and scolded. **676 comownyng in**, talking about. **680 for dred of inpacyens**, for fear of (her) lack of endurance. **681 stokke**, piece of timber; **ex, ax; lofe**, love. **682–83 that thou woldyst for my lofe**, what you would do for my love. **685 deryn**, harm. **687 wroth**, angry. **688 cun no skyl of the**, will be able to have no knowledge of you. **692 funston**, baptismal font. **695 hyd**, hidden. **697 it arn**, these are.

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heyest and sekerest gyftys that I geve in erde. And what schuld I don mor for the les than  
I toke thi sowle owt of thi body and put it in hevyn, and that wyl I not yet. Nevrtheles  
whersoevyr God is hevyn is, and God is in thi sowle and many an awngel is abowte  
thi sowle to kepe it bothe nygth and day. For, whan thow gost to chyrch, I go wyth the;  
705      whan thu syttest at thi mete, I sytte wyth the; whan thow gost to thi bed, I go wyth the;  
and, whan thu gost owt of towne, I go wyth the. Dowtyr, ther was nevr chyld so  
buxom to the fadry as I wyl be to the to help the and kepe the. I far sumtyme wyth my  
grace to the as I do wyth the sunne. Sumtyme thow wetyst wel the sunne schynyth al  
abrod that many man may se it, and sumtyme it is hyd undyr a clowde that men may  
710      not se it, and yet is the sunne nevr the lesse in hys hete ne in hys brytnesse. And rygh  
so far I be the and be my chosyn sowlys. Thowgh it be so that thu wepe not alwey at  
thi lyst, my grace is nevrthelesse in the. Therfor I preve that thow art a very dowtyr  
to me and a modyr also, a syster, a wyfe, and a spowse, wytnessyng the gospel wher  
715      owyr Lord seyth to hys dyscyples, ‘He that doth the wyl of my Fadry in hevyn he is  
bothyn modyr, brothyr, and syster unto me.’ Whan thow stodyst to plese me, than art  
thu a very dowtyr; whan thu wepyst and mornyst for my peyn and for my passyon,  
than art thow a very modyr to have compassyon of hyr chyld; whan thow wepyst for  
other mennys synnes and for adversytés, than art thow a very syster; and, whan thow  
720      sorwyst for thow art so long fro the blysse of hevyn, than art thu a very spowse and a  
wyfe, for it longyth to the wyfe to be wyth hir husband and no very joy to han tyl sche  
come to hys presens.”

15

Thys creature, whan owyr Lord had forgovyn hir hir synne as is wrete beforne, had a  
desyr to se tho placys wher he was born and wher he sufferyd hys passyon and wher  
he deyd, wyth other holy placys wher he was in hys lyve and also aftyr hys surrexyon.  
725      As sche was in these desyres, owyr Lord bad hir in hir mend two yer er than sche went  
that sche schuld gon to Rome, to Jherusalem, and to Seynt Jamys, for sche wold fayn

701 **sekerest**, most certain; **les**, unless. 705 **mete**, meal. 707 **buxom**, gentle; **far**, fare. 710 **hete**, heat. 711–12 **at thi lyst**, at your wish. 714–15 ‘**He that doth . . . unto me**,’ Mark 3:35. 725 **er than**, before. 726 **Seynt Jamys**, the shrine of St. James at Compostella in Spain.

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a gon but sche had no good to go wyth and than sche seyd to owyr Lord, “Wher schal I han good to go wyth to thes holy placys?” Ower Lord seyd agen to hir, “I schal send the frendys anowe in dyvers contreys of Ynglond to help the. And, dowtyr, I schal go wyth the in every contré and ordeyn for the; I schal ledyn the thyder and brynge the ageyn in safté, and noon Englischman schal deyn in the schyp that thou art in. I schal kepe the fro alle wykked mennys power. And, dowtyr, I sey to the I wyl that thu were clothys of whyte and non other colowr, for thu schal ben arayd aftyr my wyl.” “A, der Lord, yf I go arayd on other maner than other chast women don, I drede that the pepyl wyl slawndyr me. Thei wyl sey I am an ypocryt and wondryn upon me.” “Ya, dowtyr, the mor wondryng that thou hast for my lofe, the mor thu plesyst me.” Than this creatur durst non otherwyse do than sche was comawndyd in hir sowle. And so sche went forth wyth hir husbond into the cuntré, for he was evyr a good man and an esy man to hir. Thow that he sumtyme for veyn dred lete hir alone for a tyme, yet he resortyd evyrmor ageyn to hir, and had compassyon of hir, and spak for hir as he durst for dred of the pepyl. But alle other that went wyth hir forsykyn hir, and ful falsly thei accusyd hir thorw temptacyon of the devyl of thynghs that sche was nevyr gulty in. And so dede o man whech sche trostyd gretly on and proferyd hymself to gon wyth hir into the contré, wherthorw sche was rygth glad, trostyng he wold wel supportyn hir and helpyn hir whan sche had nede, for he had ben dwellyng long tyme wyth an ankyr, commensowr in dyvinyté and an holy man, and that ankyr was this womans confessowr. And so hys servawnt toke leve be hys owyn steryng to gon wyth this creatur into the contré, and hir owyn mayden went wyth hir also long as thei ferd wel and no man seyd nothyng ageyns hem. But, as sone as the pepyl thorw entysyng of owyr gostly enmy and be the sufferawns of owyr Lord spak ageyn this creatur for sche wept so sor, and seyd sche was a fals ypocryte and falsly deceyved the pepyl, and thretyd hir to be brent. Than the forseyd man was holdyn so holy a man and that sche trustyd so mech upon uttyrly reprevyd hir, and fowely despysed hir, and wold no farther gon wyth hir. Hir mayden, seyng dysese on every syde, wex boystows agens 755 hir maystres. Sche wold not obeyn ne folwyn hir cownsel. Sche let hir gon alone in

727 **good**, i.e., money. 731 **deyn**, die. 732–33 **I wyl that thou were clothys of whyte**, I will that you wear clothes of white (a sign of virginity). 733 **aryad**, arrayed. 735 **wondryn**, wonder. 739 **veyn dred**, vain dread. 743 **proferyd**, proffered. 746 **commensowr in dyvinyté**, doctor of divinity. 747 **steryng**, stirring, guidance. 748 **ferd**, fared. 752 **thretyd**, threatened. 754 **dysese**, trouble; **boystows**, unmannerly.

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many good townys and wold not gon wyth hir. And evyr hir husband was redy whan alle other fayled and went wyth hir wher owyr Lord wold sende hir, alwey trostynge that al was for the best and schuld comyn to good ende whan God wold. And at this tyme he led hir to spekyn wyth the Bysshōp of Lynkcoln, whech hygth Philyp, and  
760 abod three wekys er thei myght speke wyth hym, for he was not at hom at hys paleys. Whan the Bysshōp was comyn hom and herd seyn how swēch a woman had abedyn hym so long to speke wyth hym, anon he sent for hir in gret hast to wetyn hir wylle. And than sche cam to hys presens and salutyd hym, and he derly wolcomyd hir and  
765 seyd he had long desyred to speke wyth hir and he was rygth glad of hir comyng. And so sche prayd hym that sche myght speke wyth hym in cownsel and schewyn hym the secretyss of hir sowle, and he lymyt hir a tyme convenient therto. Whan the tyme cam, sche schewyd hym hyr medytacyons, and hy contemplacyons, and other secret thyngys bothe of qwyk and of ded as owyr Lord schewyd to hir sowle. He was rygth glad to heryn hem, and suffryd hir benyngly to sey what hir lysted, and commendyd gretly hir  
770 felyngys and hir contemplacyons, seyyng thei wer hy maters and ful devout maters and enspyred of the Holy Gost, cownseling hir sadly that hir felyngys schuld be wretyn. And sche seyd that it was not Goddys wyl that thei schuld be wretyn so soon, ne thei wer wretyn twenty yer aftyr and mor. And than sche seyd ferthermor, “My Lord, yf it lyke yow, I am comawndyd in my sowle that ye schal gyve me the mantyl  
775 and the ryng and clothyn me al in whygth clothys. And, yf ye clothyn me in erth, owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst schal clothyn yow in hevyn, as I undyrstond be revelacyon.” Than the Bysshōp seyd to hir, “I wyl fulffullen yowr desyr yyf yowr husband wyl consentyn therto.” “Than sche seyd to the Bysshōp, “I prey yow late myn husband come to yowr presens, and ye schal heryn what he wyl sey.” And so hyr husband cam before the  
780 Bysshōp, and the Bysshōp askyd hym, “John, is it yowr wyl that yowr wyf schal take the mantyl and the ryng and levyn chast, and ye bothen?” “Ya, my Lord,” he seyd, ” and in tokyn that we bothen vowyn to leve chast her I offyr myn handys into yowyr,” and he put hys handys betwen the Bysshoppys handys. And the Bysshōp dede no mor

759 **Bysshōp of Lynkcoln . . . Philyp**, Philip Repingdon, Bishop of Lincoln from 1405 to 1419, when he resigned his see. 761 **abedyn**, abided. 762 **wetyn**, know. 766 **lymyt**, limited, set. 767 **hy**, devout. 768 **qwyk**, quick, alive. 769 **hir lysted**, she liked. 771 **sadly**, soberly, wisely. 774–75 **the mantyl . . . in whygth**, the ceremony by which Margery would officially be granted the clothing of married chastity. 775 **in erth**, on earth.

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to us at that day, save he mad us rygth good cher and seyd we wer rygth wolcome.  
785 Another day this creatur cam to mete at the request of the Bysshopp. And sche saw hym  
gevyn wyth hys handys, er he set hym to mete, to thirteen powyr men thirteen pens  
and thirteen lovys wyth other mete. And so he dede every day. This creatur was steryd  
to hy devocyon wyth this sygth and gaf God preysyng and worshepyng that he gaf the  
Bysshopp grace to don thes good dedys wyth plentyuows wepyng, in so mych that alle  
790 the Bysshoppys meny wer gretly merveylyng what hyr eyled. And sythen sche was set  
to mete wyth many worthy clerkys and prestys and swyers of the Bysshoppys, and the  
Bysshopp hymself sent hir ful gentilly of hys owyn mees. The clerkys askyd this creatur  
many hard qwestyons, the wych sche be the grace of Jhesu resolvyd, so that hir answerys  
lykyd the Bysshopp rygth wel and the clerkys had ful gret mervayl of hir that sche  
795 answeryd so redyly and pregnawntly. Whan the Bysshopp had etyn, he sent for this  
creatuer into hys chawmbyr, seying to hir, "Margery, ye and your husband spak to me  
for to gyfe yow the mantyl and the ryng, for whech cause I have take my cownsel, and  
my cownsel wyl not gyf me to professe yow in so synguler a clothyng wythowtyn  
bettir avysement. And ye sey be the grace of God ye wyl go to Jerusalem. Therfor  
800 prayth to God that it may abyden tyl ye come fro Jerusalem that ye be bettir prevyd  
and knowyn." On the next day this creatur went to chirch and prayd to God wyth alle  
hyr sprytyts that sche mygth han knowlach how sche schuld ben governd in this mater  
and what answer sche mygth gife to the Bysshopp. Owyr Lord Jhesu Crist answeryd to  
hir mend in this maner, "Dowtyr, sey the Bysshopp that he dredyth mor the schamys of  
805 the world than the parfyte lofe of God. Sey hym, I schuld as wel han excusyd hym yyf  
he had fulfyllyd thi wyl as I dede the chyldren of Israel whan I bad hem borwe the  
goodys of the pepyl of Egypt and gon awey therwyth. Therfor, dowtyr, sey hym, thow  
he wyl not don it now, it schal be don another tyme whan God wyl." And so sche dede  
hir massage to the Bysshopp of Lyncolne as sche had in comawndment. Than he preyd  
810 hyre to gon to the Archbusshop of Cawntyrbury, Arundel, and preyn hym to grawntyn  
leve to me, Bysshopp of Lincoln, for to gevyn hir the mentyl and the ryng inasmech as

**784 us, us, we.** These are the only times Kempe uses first person pronouns in the *Book*. **786 er**, before; **mete**, the midday meal; **powyr**, poor. **787 lovys**, loaves. **790 meny**, household; **hyr eyled**, ailed her. **791 swyers**, squires. **792 gentilly**, graciously; **mees**, mess. **795 pregnawntly**, pregnantly, significantly, insightfully. **800 abyden**, abide, wait; **prevyd**, proved, tested. **804 sey the Bysshopp**, tell the Bishop. **810 Archbusshop of Cawntyrbury, Arundel**, Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1397, 1399–1414.

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sche was not of hys dyocye. This cawse he feyned thorw counsel of hys clerkys, for thei loyld not this creatur. Sche seyd, “Ser, I wyl go to my Lord of Cawntyrbury wyth rygth good wyl for other cawsys and materys whech I have to schewe to hys reverens.

815 As for this cawse I schal not gon, for God wyl not I aske hym therafyr.” Than sche toke hir leve of the Bysshop of Lyncolne, and he gaf hir twenty-six schelyngys and eight pence to byen hyr clothyg wyth and for to prey for hym.

16

Than went this creatur forth to London wyth hir husband unto Lambhyth, ther the Erchebisshop lay at that tyme. And, as thei comyn into the halle at aftynoon, ther wer many of the Erchebysshoppys clerkys and other rekles men bothe swyers and yemen whech sworyn many gret othis and spokyn many rekles wordys, and this creatur boldly undyrname hem and seyd thei schuld ben dampnyd but thei left her sweryng and other synnes that thei usyd. And wyth that cam forth a woman of the same town in a pylche and al forschod this creatur, bannyd hir, and seyd ful cursydly to hir in this maner, “I wold thu wer in Smythfeld, and I wold beryn a fagot to bren the wyth; it is pety that thou levyst.” This creatur stod styll and answeryd not, and hir husband suffred wyth gret peyn and was ful sory to heryn hys wyfe so rebukyd. Than the Erchbusshop sent for this creatur into hys gardeyn. Whan sche cam to hys presens, sche salutyd hym as sche cowd, prayng hym of hys gracyows lordshyp to grawnt hir auctoryté of chesyng 820 hyr confessowr and to be howselyd every Sonday, yyf God wold dysposen hir therto, undyr hys lettyr and hys seal thorw al hys provynce. And he grawnt it her ful benyngly

825

830

**812 dyocese**, diocese. As an East Anglian, Margery is technically under the rule of the Bishop of Norwich; Lincoln is north of King's Lynn; **feyned**, fained, pretended. **816 schelyngys**, shillings. **817 clothyg**, clothing. **818 Lambhyth**, Lambeth, in London, the seat of the Archbishop of Canterbury. **820 rekles**, reckless; **swyers**, squires; **yemen**, yeomen. **821 othis**, oaths. **822 undyrname**, rebuked; **dampnyd**, damned; **sweryng**, swearing. **823 pylche**, pilch, an outer garment of skin trimmed with the fur. **824 forschod**, reviled; **bannyd**, banned. **825 Smythfeld**, Smithfield, in London where the first two Lollards were burnt, William Sawtre in 1401 and John Badby in 1410. **826 levyst**, livest. **829 auctoryté**, authority; **chesyng**, choosing. **830 howselyd**, houseled, be given the Eucharist. This is more frequent than was ordinary in the late Middle Ages when most people received the Sacrament once a year. **831 provynce**, province.

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all hir desyr wythowtyn any sylver er gold, ne he wold latyn hys clerkys takyn anythyng  
for wrytyn ne for seelyng of the lettyr. Whan this creatur fond this grace in hys sygth,  
sche was wel comfortyd and strengthyd in hir sowle, and so sche schewyd this  
835 worsheful lord hir maner of levynge and swech grace as God wroot in hyr mende and  
in hir sowle to wetyn what he wold sey therto yyf he fond any defawte eythyr in hyre  
contemplacyon er in hir wepyng. And sche teld hym also the cawse of hyr wepyng  
and the maner of dalyawns that owyr Lord dalyid to hyr sowle. And he fond no defawt  
therin but aprevyd hir maner of levynge and was rygth glad that owyr mercyful Lord  
840 Cryst Jhesu schewyd swech grace in owyr days, blyssed mot he be. Than this creatur  
boldly spak to hym for the correccyon of hys meny, seying wyth reverens, “My Lord,  
owyr alderes Lord almyty God hath not gon yow yowyr benefys and gret goodys of  
the world to maynten wyth hys tretowrys and hem that slen hym every day be gret  
othys sweryng. Ye schal answer for hem les than ye correctyn hem or ellys put hem  
845 owt of yowr servyse.” Ful benyngly and mekely he suffred hir to sey hir entent and  
gaf a fayr answer, hir supposyng it schuld ben the bettyr. And so her dalyawns  
contynuyd tyl sterrys apperyd in the fyrmament. Than sche toke hir leve and hyr  
husbond also. Sythen thei comyn agen to London, and many worthy men desyred to  
heryn hir dalyawns and hir comunycacyon, for hir communycacion was so mech in  
850 the lofe of God that the herars wer oftyntyme steryd therthorw to wepyn ryt sadly.  
And so sche had ther rygth gret cher, and hir husbond becausse of hir, as long as thei  
wold abyden in the cyté. Aftyrward thei comyn ageyn to Lenne, and than went this  
creatyr to the ankyr at the Frer Prechowrys in Lenne and teld hym what cher sche had  
had and how sche had sped whyl sche was in the contré. And he was rygth glad of hir  
855 comyng hom and held it was gret myracle hir comyng and hir goyng to and fro. And  
he seyd to hir, “I have herd mych evyl langwage of yow syth ye went owt, and I have  
ben sor cownsel to leve yow and no mor to medyl wyth yow, and ther is behyte me  
gret frenschepys wyth condycyon yf I leve yow. And I awsweryd for yow thus: ‘yyf  
ye wer in the same plyte that ye wer whan we partyd asundyr, I durst wel say ye wer  
860 a good woman, a lovere of God, and hyly inspyred wyth the Holy Gost. ‘And I wyl not

836 **defawte**, lack. 839 **aprevyd**, approved. 841 **meny**, household. 842 **alderes Lord**, Lord of us all; **gon**, given. 843 **tretowrys**, traitors; **hem**, those. 844 **les than**, unless. 845 **benyngly**, benignly. 852 **Lenne**, Lynn, Margery’s town. 853 **Frer Prechowrys**, Dominican priory. 856 **owt**, out. 857 **ther is behyte**, there is promised. 858 **frenschepys**, friendships; **wyth condycyon**, upon condition.

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forsake hyr for no lady in this reme for to speke wyth the lady and levyn hir, for rathyr I schuld leve the lady and speke wyth hir, yyf I myght not don bothen, than I schuld don the contrarye.”” Rede fyrst the twenty-first chapetre and than this chapetre aftyr that.

17

On a day long befor this tyme, whyl thys creatur was beryng chylder and sche was  
865 newly delyveryd of a chyld, owyr Lord Cryst Jhesu seyd to hir sche schuld no mor  
chyldren beryn, and therfor he bad hyr gon to Norwych. And sche seyd, “A, der Lord,  
how schal I gon? I am bothe feynt and feble.” “Drede the not, I schal make the strong  
inow. I byd the gon to the vykary of Seynt Stefenys and sey that I gret hym wel and  
that he is an hey chossyn sowle of myn, and telle hym he plesyth me mech wyth hys  
870 prechynge and schew hym thy prevytés and myn cownseleys swech as I schewe the.”  
Than sche toke hyr wey to Norwychward and cam into hys cherch on a Thursday a  
lytyl befor noon. And the vykary went up and down wyth another prest whech was  
hys gostly fadyr that levyd whan this boke was mad. And this creatur was clad in blak  
clothyng that tyme. Sche salutyd the vykary, preyng hym that sche myght speke wyth  
875 hym an owyr or ellys tweyn owyrs at aftyrnone whan he had etyn in the lofe of God.  
He, lyfting up hys handys and blyssyng hym, seyd, “Benedicité. What cowd a woman  
ocupyn an owyr er tweyn owyrs in the lofe of owyr Lord? I schal nevyr ete mete tyl I  
wete what ye kan sey of owyr Lord God the tyme of on owyr.” Than he sett hym  
880 down in the chirche. Sche, sytting a lytyl besyde, schewyd hym all the wordys whech  
God had revelyd to hyr in hyr sowle. Sythen sche schewyd hym al hyr maner of  
levyng fro hyr chyldhod as ny as it wolde come to hir mende: how unkynd sche had  
ben ageyn owyr Lord Jhesu Crist, how prowde and veyne sche had ben in hir aport,  
how obstynat ageyns the lawes of God, and how envyows ageyn hir evyn cristen,  
885 sythen, whan it plesyd owyr Lord Crist Jhesu, how sche was chastysed wyth many  
tribulacyons and horrabyl temptacyons, and aftyrward how sche was fed and comfortyd  
wyth holy medytacyons and specyal in the mende of owyr Lordys Passyon. And,  
whyl sche dalyed in the Passyon of owyr Lord Jhesu Crist, sche herd so hedows a

**861 reme**, realm. **866 Norwych**, Norwich, some twenty miles southeast of Lynn. **868 vykary of Seynt Stefenys**, Richard Caister, vicar of St. Stephens in Norwich. **870 prevytés**, secrets. **880 revelyd**, revealed. **882 aport**, deportment, bearing. **883 evyn cristen**, fellow Christians. **887 hedows**, hideous.

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melodye that sche mygth not ber it. Than this creatur fel down as yf she had lost hir  
bodyly strength and lay styll a gret whyle, desyryng to put it away, and sche mygth  
890 not. Than knew sche wel be hir feyth that ther was gret joye in hevyn, wher the lest  
poynt of blys wythowtyn any comparyson passeth al the joye that evyr myt be thowt  
er felt in this lyfe. Sche was gretly strengthyd in hir feyth and mor bold to tellyn the  
vykary her felyngys whech sche had be revelacyons bothen of qwyk and of ded and of  
hys owyn self. Sche told hym how sumtyme the Fadyr of hevyn dalyd to hir sowle as  
895 pleynly and as veryly as o frend spekyth to another be bodily spech; sumtyme the  
Secunde Persone in Trintyté; sumtyme alle thre Personys in Trintyté and o substawns  
in Godhede dalyid to hir sowle and informyd hir in hir feyth and in hys lofe how sche  
schuld lofe hym, worshepyn hym, and dredyn hym, so excellently that sche herd nevyr  
boke, neyther Hyltons boke, ne *Stimulus Amorys*, ne *Incendium Amoris*,  
900 ne non other that evyr sche herd redyn that spak so hyly of lofe of God but that sche  
felt as hyly in werkynge in hir sowle yf sche cowd or ellys mygth a schewyd as sche  
felt. Sumtyme owyr Lady spak to hir mend. Sumtyme Seynt Petyr, sumtyme Seynt  
Powyl, sumtym Seynt Kateryn, er what seynt in hevyn sche had devocyon to aperyd  
905 to hir sowle and tawt hir how sche schuld lovyn owyr Lord and how sche schuld  
plesyn hym. Her dalyawns was so swet, so holy, and so devout that this creatur myt  
not oftyntymes beryn it but fel down and wrestyd wyth hir body and mad wondyrful  
cher and contenawns wyth boystows sobbyngys and gret plenté of terys, sumtyme  
seyng “Jhesu, mercy,” sumtyme “I dey.” And therfor mech pepyl slawndryd hir, not  
910 levyng it was the werke of God but that sum evyl sprit vexid hir in hir body er ellys  
that sche had sum bodyly sekenesse. Notwythstondyng the rumowr and grutchyng of  
the pepyl agen hir, this holy man, vykary of Seynt Stefenys chyrch of Norwych, whom  
God hath exaltd and thorw mervelyows werkys schewyd and prevyd for holy, evyr  
held wyth hir and supportyd hir agen hir enmys into hys powyr aftyr the tyme that  
915 sche be the byddyng of God had schewyd hym hir maner of governawns and levyng,  
for he trustly beleavyd that sche was wel lernyd in the lawe of God and indued wyth

892 **er, or.** 893 **qwyk**, quick, alive. 895 **veryly**, truly. 896 **Secunde Persone in Trintyté**, i.e., Jesus. 899 **Hyltons boke**, Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*; **Bridis boke**, *Liber Revelationum Celestium S. Birgitte*; **Stimulus Amorys**, a fourteenth-century mystical text falsely attributed to St. Bonaventure; **Incendium Amoris**, a fourteenth-century mystical work by the English hermit Richard Rolle. 902 **mend**, mind. 903 **Seynt Kateryn**, St. Katherine of Alexandria, legendary fourth-century virgin martyr. 910 **grutchyng**, grudging, complaining. 915 **trustly**, trustfully.

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grace of the Holy Gost, to whom it longyth to enspry wher he wyl. And, thow hys  
voys be herd, it is not wynt of the werld fro when it comyth er whedyr it goth. Thys  
holy vykary aftyr this tyme was confessowr to this creatur alwey whan sche cam to  
Norwych and howsyld hir wyt hys owyn handys. And, whan sche was on a tyme  
920 moneschyd to aper befor certeyn offycerys of the bysshop to answer to certeyn artyculys  
whech schuld be put ageyn hir be the steryng of envyows pepyl, the good vykary,  
preferryng the lofe of God befor any schame of the world, went wyt hir to her hir  
examynacyon and delyveryd hir fro the malys of hyr enmys. And than was it revelyd to  
this creatur that the good vykary schuld levyn sevyn yer aftyr and than he schuld  
925 passyn hens wyt gret grace, and he dede as sche had.

18

Thys creatur was chargyd and comawndyd in hir sowle that sche schuld go to a  
Whyte Frer in the same cyté of Norwych whech hyte Wyllyam Sowthfeld, a good  
man and an holy levar, to schewyn hym the grace that God wroot in hir as sche had  
don to the good vykary beforne. Sche dede as sche was comawndyd, and cam to the  
930 frere on a fornoon, and was wyt hym in a chapel a long tyme, and schewyd hym hir  
meditacyons and swech as God wroot in hir sowle to wetyn yf sche wer dyscveyed be  
any illusyons or not. Thys good man, the White Frer, evyr whyl sche told hir felyngys,  
heldyng up hys handys, seyd, “Jhesu, mercy and gremercy. Syster,” he seyd, “dredyth  
935 ye not of yowr maner of levynge, for it is the Holy Gost werkyngh plentyuowsly hys  
grace in yowr sowle. Thankyth hym heylly of hys goodnes, for we alle be bowndyn to  
thankyn hym for yow that now in owyr days wel inspir hys grace in yow to the help  
and comfort of us alle whech arn supportyd be yowr preyers and be swech other as ye  
ben. And we arn preservyd fro many myschevys and dysesys whech we schuld sufferyn  
940 and worthily for owyr trespasses ne wer swech good creaturys among us. Blyssed be  
almyty God for hys goodnes. And therfor, syster, I cownsel yow that ye dyspose yow

916 **enspry**, inspire. 919 **howsyld**, houseled, administered the Eucharist to. 920 **moneschyd**,  
admonished; **artyculys**, articles. 923 **malys**, malice. 925 **hens**, hence. 927 **Whyte Frer...** Wyllyam  
Sowthfeld, Carmelite friar (d. 1414) known for his devotion; **whech hyte**, who was named. 928  
**levar**, living person. 933 **gremercy**, gramercy (an exclamation). 933–34 **dredyth ye not**, dread  
ye not. 935 **heyly**, highly.

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to receyvyn the gyftys of God as lowly and mekely as ye kan and put non obstakyl ne objeccyon agen the goodnes of the Holy Gost, for he may gevyn hys gyftys wher he wyl, and of unworthy he makyth worthy, of synful he makyth rygful. Hys mercy is evyr redy unto us, les than the fawt be in owryself, for he dwellyth not in a body soget to syn. He fleteth al fals feynynge and falshede; he askyth of us a lowe, a meke, and a contryte hert wyth a good wyl. Owyr Lord seyth hymself, ‘My spryit schal restyn upon a meke man, a contryte man, and dredyng my wordys.’ Syster, I trost to owyr Lord ye han these condicyonys eythyr in your wyl or in your affeccyon er ellys in bothyn, and I helde not that owyr Lord suffryth hem to be dyscseyved endlesly that settyn al here trost in hym and nothyng sekyn ne desyryng but hym only, as I hope that ye don. And therfor belevyth fully that owyr Lord lovyth yow and werkyth hys grace in yow I prey God incres it and continu it to hys evyrestyng worshep for hys mercy.’  
The beforne seyd creatur was mech comfortyd bothe in body and in sowle be this good manrys wordys and gretly strengthyd in hir feyth. And than sche was bodyn be owyr Lord for to gon to an ankres in the same cyté whych hyte Dame Jelyan. And so sche dede and schewyd hir the grace that God put in hir sowle of compuncyon, contricyon, swetnesse and devocyon, compassyon wyth holy meditacyon and hy contemplacyon, and ful many holy spechys and dalyawns that owyr Lord spak to hir sowle, and many wondirful revelacyons whech sche schewyd to the ankres to wetyn yf ther wer any deceyte in hem, for the ankres was expert in swech thyngys and good cownsel cowd gevyn. The ankres, heryng the mervelyows goodnes of owyr Lord, hly thankyd God wyth al hir hert for hys visitacyon, cownseling this creatur to be obedient to the wyl of owyr Lord God and fulfullyn wyth al hir mygthys whatevr he put in hir sowle yf it wer not ageyn the worshep of God and profyte of hir evyn cristen, for, yf it wer, than it wer nowt the mevyng of a good spryte but rathyr of an evyl sprit. The Holy Gost mevyth nevir a thing ageyn charité, and, yf he dede, he wer contraryows to hys owyn self, for he is al charité. Also he mevyth a sowle to al chastnesse, for chast levars be clepyd the temple of the Holy Gost, and the Holy Gost makyth a sowle stabyl and stedfast in the rygh feyth and the rygh beleve. And a dubbyl man in sowle is evyr unstabyl and unstedfast in al hys weys. He that is evyrmor dowtyng is lyke to the flood of the see, the whech is mevyd and born abowte wyth the wynd, and that man is

944 **fawt**, fault; **soget**, subject. 954 **bodyn**, bidden. 955 **ankres . . . Dame Jelyan**, Julian of Norwich, anchorite mystic and author of the *Revelations of Divine Love*. 966 **contraryows**, contrarious, at cross purposes. 967 **levars**, living people. 969 **dubbyl**, double. 970 **dowtyng**, doubting.

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not lyche to receyven the gyftys of God. What creatur that hath thes tokenys he muste stedfastlych belebyn that the Holy Gost dwellyth in hys sowle. And mech mor, whan God visyteth a creatur wyth terys of contrisyon, devosyon, er compassyon, he may 975 and owyth to levyn that the Holy Gost is in hys sowle. Seynt Powyl seyth that the Holy Gost askyth for us wyth mornynggys and wepyngys unspekable, that is to seyn, he makyth us to askyn and preyn wthy mornynggys and wepyngys so plentyuowsly that the terys may not be nowmeryd. Ther may non evyl sprit gevyn thes tokenys, for Jerom seyth that terys turmentyn mor the devylle than don the peynes of helle. God 980 and the devyl ben evyrmor contraryows, and thei schal nevir dwellyn togedyr in on place, and the devyl hath no powyr in a mannys sowle. Holy Wryt seyth that the sowle of a rytful man is the sete of God, and so I trust, syster, that ye ben. I prey God grawnt yow perseverawns. Settyth al your trust in God and feryth not the langage of the world, for the mor despyte, schame, and repref that ye have in the world the mor is 985 your meryte in the sygth of God. Pacyens is necessary unto yow for in that schal ye kepyn your sowle." Mych was the holy dalyawns that the ankres and this creatur haddyn be comownyng in the lofe of owyr Lord Jhesu Crist many days that thei were togedyr. Thys creatur schewyd hyr maner of levyng to many a worthy clerke, to 990 worsheful doctorys of divinyté, bothe religiows men and other of seculer abyte, and thei seyden that God wrowt gret grace wthy hir and bodyn sche schuld not ben aferde, ther was no disseyte in hir maner of levyng. Thei cownseld hir to be perseverawnt, for here most dred was that sche schuld turnyn and not kepyn hir perfeccyon. Sche had so 995 many enmys and so mech slawndyr that hem semyd sche myte not beryn it wythowtyn gret grace and a mygty feyth. Other whech had no knowlach of hir maner of governawns, save only be sygth owtforth er ellys be jangelyng of other personys, perverting the dom of trewth, seyd ful evyl of hir and causyd hir to have mech enmyté and mech dysese, mor than sche schuld have ellys had, had her evyl langage ne ben. Nevrthelesse the ankyr of the Frer Prechowrys in Lenn, whech was principal gostly 1000 fadur to this creatur as is wretyn beforne, toke it on charge of hys sowle that hir felyngys wer good and sekyn and that ther was no disseyt in hem. And he be the spiryt of prophecye told hir, whan sche schuld gon to Jerusalemward, sche schuld have mech

**972 lyche**, likely. **975 owyth to levyn**, should (or ought) to believe. **976 mornynggys**, mournings. **978 nowmeryd**, numbered. **979 turmentyn**, torment. **983 feryth**, fear. **989 abyte**, habit, clothing. **991 perseverawnt**, perseverant. **995 owtforth**, outwardly. **996 dom**, judgment. **997 her**, their. **1000 sekyn**, true, spiritually safe.

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tribulacyon wyth hir mayden and how owyr Lord schuld asayn hir scharply and prevyn  
hir ful streytl. Than seyd sche ageyn, “A, good ser, what schal I than do whan I am  
fer fro hom and in strawnge cuntreys and my mayden be agens me? Than is my bodily  
1005 comfort ago, and gostly comfort of any confessowr as ye beth wot I not wher to have.”  
“Dowtyr, drede ye nowt, for owyr Lord schal comfort yow hys owyn self, hoose  
comfort passyth alle otheris, and, whan al your frendys han forsakyn yow owyr Lord  
schal makyn a brokyn bak man to lede yow forth wher ye wyl be.” And so it befel as  
the ankyr had prophecyed in every poynt, and, as I trust, schal be wretn more pleynly  
1010 aftyrward. Than this creatur in a maner compleynyng seyd to the ankyr, “Good ser,  
what schal I do? He that is my confessowr in your absens is rygth scharp unto me. He  
wyl not levyn my felyngys; he setthyth nowt by hem; he heldyth hem but tryfelys and  
japys. And that is a gret peyn unto me, for I lofe hym wele and I wold fawyn folwyn  
hys cownsel.” The ankyr, aweryng agen to hir, seyd, “It is no wondyr, dowtyr, yf he  
1015 kan nowt belevyn in your felyngys so sone. He knowyth wel ye han ben a synful  
woman, and therfor he wenyth that God wold not ben homly wyth yow in so schort  
tyme. Aftyr your conversyon I wold not for al this world ben so scharp to yow as he  
is. God for your mertye hath ordeynd hym to be your scorge and faryth wyth yow as  
a smyth wyth a fyle that makyth the yron to be bryte and cler to the sygth whech  
1020 beforne aperyd rusty, dyrke, evyl colowryd. The mor scharp that he is to yow the mor  
clerly schinith your sowle in the sygth of God, and God hath ordeyned me to be your  
norych and your comfort. Beth ye lowe and meke and thanke God bothe of on and of  
other.” On a tyme beforne this creatur went to hir praerys for to wetyn what answer  
1025 sche schuld gevyn to the wedow. Sche was comawndyd in hir spyrtyt to byddyn the  
wedow levyn hir confessowr that was that tyme, yf sche wold plesyn God, and gon to  
the ankyr at the Frer Prechowrys in Lenn and schewyn hym hir lyfe. Whan this creatur  
dede this massage, the wedow wold not levyn hir wordys ne hir gostly fadys neythr,  
les than God wold gevyn hir the same grace that he gaf this creatur, and sche chargyd  
this creatur that sche schuld no mor comyn in hir place. And for this creatur teld hir  
1030 that sche had to fele lofe of affecyon to hir gostly fadys, therfor the wedow seyde it  
had ben good to this creatur that hir lofe and hir affecyon wer set as hir was. Than

**1002 asayn**, assay, try. **1004–05 Than is my bodily . . . wher to have**, Then is my bodily  
comfort gone, and spiritual comfort from any confessor such as you I will not know where to  
find. **1006 hoose**, whose. **1012–13 tryfelys and japys**, trifles and jokes. **1013 fawyn**, fain.  
**1016 homly**, homely, familiar. **1022 norych**, nurse. **1025 levyn**, leave. **1027 levyn**, believe.

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owyr Lord bad this creatur don wryten a lettyr and send it hir. A maystyr of dyvynité wrot a lettyr at the request of this creatur and sent to the wedow wyth these clawsys that folwyn. On clause was that the wedow schuld nevyr han the grace that this creatur had. Another was thow this creatur come nevyr in hir howse it plesyd God ryt wel. 1035 Owyr Lord seyd eftsonys to this creatur, “It wer bettyr to hir than al this world and hir lofe wer sett as thyn is. And I byd the gon to hir gostly fadyr and telle hym, for he wyl not belebyn thi wordys, thei schal be departyd asundyr er than he be war, and thei that ben not of hir counsel schal knowyn it er than he, whethyr he wyl or not. Lo, dowtyr, 1040 her mayst thow se how hard it is to departyn a man fro hys owyn wyl.” And all this processe was fulfyllyd in trewth as the creatur had seyd beforne twelve yer aftyrward. Than this creatur suffryd mech tribulacyon and gret hevynesse for sche seyd these wordys as owyr Lord bad hir sey. And evyr sche encresyd in the lofe of God and was mor bold than sche was beforne.

**19**

1045 Befforn this creatur went to Jerusalem, owyr Lord sent hir to a worshipful lady that sche schuld spekyn wyth hir in counsel and do hys eraend unto hir. The lady wold not speke wyth hir les than hir gostly fadyr wer present, and sche seyd sche was wel plesyd. And than whan the ladys gostly fadyr was comyn thei wentyn into a chapel al thre togedyr, and than this creatur seyd wyth gret reverens and many teerys, “Madam, 1050 owyr Lord Jhesu Crist bad me telle yow that your husband is in purgatory and that ye schal ben savyd but it schal be long er ye come to hevyn.” And than the lady was dysplesyd and seyd hir husband was a good man; sche levyd not that he was in purgatory. Hir gostly fadyr held wyth this creatur and seyd it myght rygh wel ben so as sche seyd and confermyd hir wordys wyth many holy talys. And than this lady sent 1055 hir dowtyr wyth other meny wyth hir to the ankyr whech was princypal confessour to this creatur that he schuld forsakyn hir and ellys he schuld lesyn hir frenshep. The ankyr seyd to the massangerys that he wold not forsakyn this creatur for no man in erthe, for to swech creaturyas as wold inqwiryn of hym hir maner of governawns and how he held of hir he seyd sche was Goddys owyn servawnt and also he seyd sche

**1036 eftsonys**, again. **1038 departyd**, parted; **war**, aware. **1040 departyn**, separate. **1043 encresyd**, increased. **1046 eraend**, errand. **1054 talys**, tales.

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1060 was the tabernakyl of God. And the ankyr seyd unto hir owyn persone for to strengthyn  
hir in hir feyth, “Thow God toke fro yow al teerys and dalyawns, belevyth nevrtheles  
that God lovyth yow and that ye schal be ryt sekjr of hevyn for that ye have had  
befortyme, for teerys wyth lofe is the grettest geft that God may gevyn in erth and al  
men that lovyn God owyn to thankyn hym for yow.” Also ther was a wedow preyd  
1065 this creatur to preyn for hir husbond and wete yf he had ony nede of help. And, as this  
creatuer preyd for hym, sche was answeryd that hys sowle schuld be thirty yer in purga-  
tory les than he had bettyr frendys in erthe. Thus sche told the wedow and seyd,  
“Yyf ye wyl don almes for hym three pownd er four in messys and almesgevyng to  
powyr folke, ye schal hly plesyn God and don the sowle gret esse.” The wedow toke  
1070 lytyl hede at hir wordys and let it pasyn forth. Than this creatur went to the ankyr and  
teld hym how sche had felt, and he seyd the felyng was of God and the dede in the self  
was good, thow the sowle had no nede therof, and cownseld it schuld be fulfylled.  
Than this creatur told this mater to hir gostly fadyr that he schuld speke to the wedow,  
and so it was long tyme that this creatur herd no mo of this mater. Aftyward owyr  
1075 Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to this creatur, “that thyng I bad schuld a be don for the sowle  
it is not don. Aske now thi gostly fadyr.” And so sche dede, and he seyd it was not  
don. Sche seyd agen, “My Lord Jhesu Crist told me so rygh now.”

**20**

On a day as this creatur was heryng hir messe, a yong man and a good prest heldyng  
up the sacrament in hys handys ovyr hys hed, the sacrament schok and flekeryd to and  
1080 fro as a dowe flekeryth wyth hir wengys. And, whan he held up the chalys wyth the  
precyows sacrament, the chalys mevyd to and fro as it schuld a fallyn owt of hys  
handys. Whan the sacre was don, this creatur had gret merveyle of the steryng and  
mevyng of the blyssed sacrament, desyring to se mor sacreys and lokyng yf it wold  
don so agen. Than seyd owyr Lord Jhesu Crist to the creatur, “Thow schalt no mor sen

**1061 Thow**, Though. **1062 sekjr**, certain. **1064 owyn**, ought. **1065 wete**, learn. **1067 les**  
**than he had bettyr frendys in erthe**, unless he had better friends on earth. **1069 esse**, ease.  
**1070 hede**, heed. **1079 schok and flekeryd**, shook and flickered. **1080 dowe**, dove. **1081**  
**chalys**, chalice. **1082 sacre**, consecration of the sacrament. **1083 sacreys**, consecrations.

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1085 it in this maner, therfor thank God that thou hast seyn. My dowtyr, Bryde, say me nevyr in this wyse." Than seyd this creatur in hir thowt, "Lord, what betokenyth this?" "It betokenyth venjawnce." "A, good Lord, what venjawnce?" Than seyd owyr Lord agen to hir, "Ther schal be an erdene, tel it whom thou wylt in the name of Jhesu. For I telle the forsothe rygth as I spak to Seynt Bryde ryte so I speke to the, dowtyr, and I  
1090 telle the trewly it is trewe every word that is wretny in Brides boke, and be the it schal be knowyn for very trewth. And thou schalt faryn wel, dowtyr, in spyte of alle thyn enmrys; the mor envy thei han to the for my grace, the bettyr schal I lofe the. I wer not rygthful God but I prevyd the, for I knowe the bettyr than thou dost thiself, what that evyr men seyn of the. Thou seyst I have gret paciens in the syn of the pepyl, and thou  
1095 seyst soth, but, yf thou sey the synne of the pepyl as I do, thou schuldyst have mech more mervayle in my pacyens and mech mor sorwe in the synne of the pepyl than thou hast." Than the creatur seyd, "Alas, derworthy Lord, what schal I do for the pepyl?" Owyr Lord aweryd, "It is inow to the to don as thou dost." Than sche preyed, "Mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu, in the is al mercy and grace and goodnes. Have  
1100 mercy, pyté, and compassyon of hem. Schew thi mercy and thy goodnes upon hem, help hem, send hem very contricyon, and late hem nevyr deyn in her synne." Owyr mercyful Lord seyde, "I may no mor, dowtyr, of my rytfulnesse do for hem than I do. I send hem prechygng and techyng, pestylens and bataylys, hungryr and famynyng, losse of her goodys wyth gret sekenesse, and many other tribulacyons, and thei wyl not levyn  
1105 my wordys ne thei wyl not knowe my vysitacyon. And therfor I schal sey to hem that I made my servawntys to prey for yow and ye despysyd her werkys and her levyng."

21

In the tyme that this creatur had revelacyons, owyr Lord seyd to hir, "Dowtyr, thou art wyth childe." Sche seyd agen, "A, Lord, how schal I than do for kepyng of my chylde?" Owir Lord seyd, "Dowtyr, drede the not, I schal ordeyn for an kepar."

**1085 Bryde**, St. Bridget of Sweden (ca. 1303–73), whose reknown in England was particularly high, owing to the influence of the Briggittine Order; **say**, saw. **1086 wyse**, manner; **betokenyth**, means. **1087 venjawnce**, vengeance. **1088 erdene**, earthquake. **1097 derworthy**, honored. **1098 pepyl**, people. **1100 pyté**, pity. **1101 deyn**, die. **1103 pestylens**, pestilence; **bataylys**, battles; **famynyng**, famine.

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1110 “Lord, I am not worthy to heryn the spekyn and thus to comown wyth myn husband.  
Nerthelesse it is to me gret peyn and gret dysese.” “Therfor is it no synne to the,  
dowtyr, for it is to the rathyr mede and meryte, and thow schalt have nevrthelesse  
grace, for I wyl that thow bryng me forth mor frwte.” Than seyd the creatur, “Lord  
Jhesu, this maner of levyngh longy whole to thy holy maydens.” “Ya, dowtyr, trow thow  
1115 rygth wel that I lofe wifes also, and specyal tho wyfys whech woldyn levyn chast, yyf  
thei mygtyn have her wyl, and don her besynes to plesyn me as thow dost, for, thow  
the state of maydenhode be mor parfyte and mor holy than the state of wedewhode,  
and the state of wedewhode mor parfyte than the state of wedlake, yet dowtyr I lofe  
the as wel as any mayden in the world. Ther may no man let me to lofe whom I wele  
1120 and as mech as I wyl, for lofe, dowtyr, qwenchith al synne. And therfor aske of me the  
gyftys of lofe. Ther is no gyft so holy as is the gyft of lofe, ne nothing to be so mech  
desyred as lofe, for lofe may purchasyn what it can desyren. And therfor, dowtyr,  
thow mayst no bettyr plesyn God than contynuly to thinkyn on hys lofe.” Than this  
creatyr askyd owyr Lord Jhesu how sche schuld best lovyn hym. And owyr Lord  
1125 seyd, “have mende of thi wykydnesse and thynk on my goodnes.” Sche seyd ageyn, “I  
am the most unworthi creatur that evyr thow schewedyst grace unto in erth.” “A,  
dowtyr,” seyd owyr Lord, “fere the nowt, I take non hede what a man hath ben, but I  
take hede what he wyl ben. Dowtyr, thow hast despysed thiself, therfor thow schalt  
nevyr be despysed of God. Have mend, dowtyr, what Mary Mawdelyn was, Mary  
1130 Eypcyan, Seynt Powyl, and many other seyntys that arn now in hevyn, for of unwor-  
thy I make worthy, and of synful I make rytful. And so have I mad the worthy to me,  
onys lovyd and evyrmor lovyd wyth me. Ther is no seynt in hevyn that thow wylt  
speke wyth but he schal com to the. Whom that God lovith thei lovyn. Whan thu  
plesyst God, thow plesyst hys modyr and al the seyntys in hevyn. Dowtyr, I take  
1135 wytnesse of my modyr, of alle the awngelys in hevyn, and of alle the seyntys in hevyn  
that I love the wyth all myn hert and I may not forberyn thi lofe.” Owyr Lord seyd  
than to hys blysful modyr, “Blyssed Modyr, telle ye my dowtyr of the gretnesse of  
love I have unto hir.” Than this creatur lay stytte al in wepyng and sobbyng as hir hert  
schuld a brostyn for the swetnesse of spech that owyr Lord spak onto hir sowle. Aswythe

1113 **frwte**, fruit. 1114 **longy whole**, belongs; **holy maydens**, i.e., to virgins. 1116 **besynes**, busi-  
ness. 1118 **wedlake**, wedlock. 1119 **let me to**, hinder me from. 1129 **Mary Mawdelyn**, Mary  
Magdalene. 1129–30 **Mary Eypcyan**, Mary the Egyptian. 1130 **Seynt Powyl**, Saint Paul.  
1136 **forberyn**, forego. 1139 **schuld a brostyn**, should have burst; **Aswythe**, quickly.

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1140 aftyr the Qwen of Mercy, Goddys modyr, dalyed to the sowle of this creatur, seying,  
“My derworthy dowtyr, I bryng the sekyr tedyngys, wytnessyng my swet sone Jhesu  
wyth alle awngelys and alle seyntys in hevyn whech lovyn the ful hily. Dowtyr, I am thy  
modyr, thi lady, and thy maystres for to teche the in al wyse how thu schalt plese God  
best.” Sche tawt this creatur and informyd hir so wondyrfully that sche was abaschyd  
1145 to speke it or telle it to any, the maters wer so hy and so holy, saf only to the ankyr  
whech was hir princypal confessowr, for he cowde most Skyl in swech thynghys. And  
he chargyd this creatur be vertu of obediens to tellyn hym what that evyr sche felt, and  
so sche dede.

22

As this creatur lay in contemplacyon, sor wepyng in hir spiryt, sche seyde to owyr  
1150 Lord Jhesu Cryst, “A, Lord, maydonys dawsyn now meryly in hevyn. Schal not I  
don so? For becawse I am no mayden, lak of maydenhed is to me now gret sorwe; me  
thynkyth I wolde I had ben slain whan I was takyn fro the funtston that I schuld nevir  
a dysplesyd the, and than schuldyst thou, blyssed Lorde, an had my maydenhed  
wythowtyn ende. A, der God, I have not loyed the alle the days of my lyve, and that  
1155 sor rewyth me; I have ronnyn awey fro the, and thou hast ronnyn aftyr me; I wold  
fallyn in dyspeyr, and thu woldyst not suffer me.” “A, dowtyr, how oftyntymes have  
I teld the that thy synnes arn forgove the and that we ben onyd togedyr wythowtyn  
ende? Thu art to me a synguler lofe, dowtyr, and therfor I behote the thu schalt have a  
synguler grace in hevyn, dowtyr, and I behest the I schal come to thin ende at thi  
1160 deyng wyth my blyssed modyr and myn holy awngelys and twelve apostelys, Seynt  
Kateryne, Seynt Margarete, Seynt Mary Mawdelyn, and many other seyntys that ben  
in hevyn, whech gevyn gret worshep to me for the grace that I geve to the, God, thi  
Lord Jhesu. Thow that drede no grevows peynes in thi deyng, for thu schalt have thy  
desyre, that is to have mor mynde of my Passyon than on thin owyn peyne. Thu schalt  
1165 not dredyn the devyl of helle for he hath no powyr in the. He dredyth the mor than

**1141 sekyr**, sure, certain. **1142 hily**, highly. **1143 maystres**, mistress; **wyse**, manner. **1146 he**  
**cowde most skyl in**, he was most learned in. **1150 dawsyn**, dance. **1152 funtston**, baptismal  
font. **1154–55 and that sor rewyth me**, and that I sorely regret. **1155 ronnyn**, run. **1156**  
**suffer me**, allow me. **1157 onyd**, united, joined. **1159 behest**, promise. **1163 thart**, need.

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thow dost hym. He is wroth wyth the, for thu turmentyst hym mor wyth thi wepyng than doth al the fyer in helle; thu wynnyst many sowlys fro hym wyth thi wepyng. And I have behyghth the that thu schuldyst noon other purgatory han than slawndyr and speche of the world, for I have chastysed the myself as I wolde be many gret  
1170 dredys and turmentriis that thu hast had wyth evyl sprytyts bothin slepyng and wakynge many yerys. And therfor I schal preservyn the at thin ende thorw my mercy that thei schal no powyr have ovyr the neythyr in body ne in sowle; it is gret grace and myracle that thu hast thy bodily wyttys for the vexacyon that thu hast had wyth hem afortyme.  
1175 I have also, dowtyr, chastised the wyth the drede of my godhede, and many tymes have I feryd the wyth gret tempestys of wyndys that thu wendyst venjawns schuld a fallyn on the for synne. I have prevyd the be many tribulacyons, many gret hevynes, and many grevows sekenes in so mech that thu hast ben anoynted for deed, and al  
1180 thorw my grace hast thou skapyd. Therfor drede the nowt, dowtyr, for wyth myn owyn handys, whech wer nayled to the crosse, I schal take thi sowle fro thi body wyth gret myrthe and melodye, wyth swet smellys and good odowrys, and offyr it to my Fadur in hevyn, ther thu schalt se hym face to face, wonyng wyth hym wythowtyn ende. Dowtyr, thu schalt be ryte wolcome to my Fadur and to my modyr and to alle my seyntys in hevyn, for thu hast govyn hem drynkyn ful many tymes wyth teerys of thyn eyne.  
1185 Alle myn holy seyntys schal enjoyen of thi comyng hom. Thu schalt be fulfyllyd of al maner lofe that thu coveytyst. Than schalt thou blysse the tyme that thu wer wrowte and the body that the hath bowte. He schal joyen in the and thu in hym wythowtyn ende. Dowtyr, I behote the the same grace that I behynte Seynt Kateryne, Seynt Margarete, Seynt Barbara, and Seynt Powle, in so mech that what creatur in erth unto the day of dom aske the any bone and belevyth that God lovyth the he schal have hys bone and er  
1190 ellys a bettyr thyng. Therfor and thei that beleven that God lovyth the thei schal ben blyssed wythowtyn ende. The sowlys in purgatory schal joyn in thi comyng hom, for thei knowyn wel that God lovyth the specyalys. And men in erth schal joyn in God for the, for he schal werkyn meche grace for the and makyn al the world to knowyn that God

**1168 behyghth**, promised; **schuldyst**, should. **1175 feryd**, frightened. **1176 hevynes**, sorrows.

**1177 sekenes**, sicknesses; **anoynted**, anointed, i.e., given last rites. **1178 skapyd**, escaped.

**1181 wonyng**, dwelling. **1183 govyn hem drynkyn**, given them drink. **1185 wrowte**, made.

**1186 the body that the hath bowte**, the body that has bought (redeemed) you (Jesus through his Passion). **1188 Seynt Barbara**, St. Barbara, virgin martyr; **dom**, doom, judgment. **1189 bone**, boon, favor. **1190 and**, if. **1191 joyn**, rejoice.

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lovyth the. Thu hast be despysed for my lofe, and therfor thu schalt be worshepyd for  
1195 my lofe. Dowtyr, whan thu art in hevyn, thu schalt mown askyn what thu wylt, and I  
schal grawnte the al thi desyr. I have telde the befortyme that thu art a synguler lover,  
and therfor thu schalt have a synguler love in hevyn, a synguler reward, and a synguler  
worshep. And, forasmuch as thu art a mayden in thi sowle, I schal take the be the on  
hand in hevyn and my modyr be the other hand, and so schalt thu dawnsyn in hevyn  
1200 wyth other holy maydens and virgynes, for I may clebyn the dere abowte and myn  
owyn derworthy derlyng. I schal sey to the, myn owyn blyssed spowse, ‘Welcome to  
me wyth al maner of joye and gladnes, her to dwellyn wyth me and nevyr to departyn fro  
me wythoutyn ende, but evyr to dwellyn wyth me in joy and blysse, whech non eye may  
se, ne eer heryn, ne tunge telle, ne non hert thynkyn, that I have ordeynd for the and for  
1205 alle my servawntys the whech desyry to lofe me and plesyn me as thu dost.’”

23

Ther cam onys a vykary to this creatur, preyng hir to prey for hym and wetyn  
whedyr he schuld mor plese God to levyn hys cure and hys benefyce or to kepe it  
styll, for hym thowt he profyted not among hys parysshonys. The creatur beyng in  
hir preyers havyng mende of this mater, Crist seyde unto hir spryrite, “Bydde the vykary  
1210 kebyn styll hys cure and hys benefyce and don hys diligence in prechyngh and techyngh  
of hem hys owyn persone and sumtyme procuryn other to teche hem my lawys and  
my comawndmentys so that ther be no defawte in hys parte, and, yyf thei do nevyr the  
bettyn, hys mede schal nevyr be the lesse.” And so sche dede hir massage as sche was  
comawndyd, and the vykary kept styll hys cur.

1215 As this creatur was in a cherch of Seynt Margarete in the qwer wher a cors was  
present, and he that was husband of the same cors whyl sche levyd was ther in good  
hele for to offeryn hir messe peny aftyr the custom of the place, owyr Lord seyd to the  
forseyd creatur, “Lo, dowtyr the sowle of this cors is in purgatory, and he that was hir

**1195** *thu schalt mown askyn*, you shall be able to ask. **1196** *telde*, told. **1200** *clebyn*, call;  
**dere abowte**, dearly bought, dearly redeemed. **1206** *vykary*, vicar. **1207** *cure*, curacy, care of  
souls; **benefyce**, benefice, ecclesiastical living. **1208** *parysshonys*, parishioners. **1213** *mas-*  
*sage*, message. **1215** *qwer*, choir; **cors**, corpse. **1217** *hele*, health; **messe peny**, mass penny.  
**1218** *cors*, body.

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husbond is now in good hele, and yet he schal ben ded in schort tyme.” And so it befel  
1220 as sche felt be revelacyon. Also, as this creatur lay in the qwer in hir preyers, a prest  
cam to hir and preyde hir to prey for a woman whech lay in poynt of deth. As this creatur  
gan to prey for hir, owyr Lord seyd to hir, “Dowtyr, it is gret nede to prey for hir, for  
sche hath ben a wykkyd woman and sche schal be ded.” And sche seyd agen “Lord, as  
thu lovyst me, save hir sowle fro dampnacyon,” and than sche wept wyth plentyuows  
1225 teerys for that sowle. And owyr Lord grawntyd hir mercy for the sowle, comawndyng  
hir to prey for hir. Thys creaturys gostly fadry cam to hir, mevyng hir to prey for a  
woman whech lay in poynt of deth to mannys sygthe. And anon owyr Lord seyd sche  
schuld levyn and faryn wel, and so sche dede. A good man whech was a gret frend to  
this creatur and an helply to the powyr pepyl was strongly seke many wekys togedyr.  
1230 And mech mone was mad for hym, for men wend he schuld nevyr a levyd, hys peyn  
was so wondyrful in alle hys joyntys and in al hys body. Owyr Lord Jhesu seyd to hir  
spirite, “Dowtyr, be not abaschyd for this man, he schal levyn and faryn rygth wel.”  
And so he levyd many yerys aftyr in good helth and prosperité. Another good man  
1235 whech was a lyster lay seke also, and, whan this creature preyd for hym, it was answeryd  
to hir mende that he schulde languryn a whyle and sythen he schuld ben ded wyth that  
same sekenesse. And so he was in schort tyme aftyr. Also a worsheful woman and,  
as men levyd, an holy woman wech was a specyal frende to this creatur was ryte seke,  
and mech pepyl wend sche schuld a be ded. Than, this creatur preyng for hyr, owyr  
1240 Lord seyd, “Sche schal not deyn this ten yer for ye schal aftyr this makyn ful mery  
togedyr and han ful good comunycacyon as ye han had befor.” And so it was in trewh;  
this holy woman levyd many yerys aftyr. Many mo swech revelacions this creatur  
had in felyng; hem alle for to wryten it schuld be lettyng peraventur of mor profyte.  
Thes be wretn for to schewyn the homlynes and the goodlynes of owyr mercyful  
Lord Crist Jhesu and for no commendacyon of the creatur. Thes felyngys and swech  
1245 other many mo than be wretn, bothe of levynge and of deyng, of summe to be savyd,  
of summe to be dammyd, weryn to this creatur gret peyn and ponyschyng. Sche had  
levar a sufferyd any bodyly penawns than thes felyngys and sche mygth a put hem  
away for the dred that sche had of illusyons and deceytys of hir gostly enmys. Sche

**1229 an helply to the powyr**, helpful to the poor. **1230 mone**, moan. **1231 joyntys**, joints.  
**1234 lyster**, dyer. **1235 languryn**, languish, linger. **1242 hem alle for to . . . of mor profyte**,  
to write them all should perhaps hinder that which is more profitable. **1244 commendacyon**,  
commendation, praise. **1246 ponyschyng**, punishment. **1247 levar a**, rather have.

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had sumtyme so gret trubbel wyth swech felyngys whan it fel not trewe to hir  
1250 undyrstandyng, that hir confessowr feryd that sche schuld a fallyn in dyspeyr therwyth.  
And than aftyr hir turbele and hir gret fere it schuld ben schewyd unto hir sowle how  
the felyngys schuld ben undyrstondyn.

24

The prest whech wrot this boke for to prevyn this creaturys felyngys many tymes  
and dyvers tymes he askyd hir qwestyons and demawndys of thyngys that wer for to  
1255 komyn, unsekyr and uncerteyn as that tyme to any creatur what schuld be the ende,  
preyng hir, thei sche wer loth and not wylly to do swech thyngys, for to prey to God  
therfor and wetyn, whan owyr Lord wold visiten hir wyth devocyon, what schuld be  
the ende, and trewly wythowtyn any feynyng tellyn hym how sche felt, and ellys wold  
1260 he not gladlych a wretyn the boke. And so this creatur, sumdel for drede that he wold  
ellys not a folwyd hir entent for to wryten this boke, compellyd, dede as he preyd hir  
and telde hym hir felyngys what schuld befallyn in swech materys as he askyd hir yyf  
hir felyngys wer trewth. And thus he prevyd hem for very trewth. And yet he wold not  
alwey gevyn credens to hir wordys, and that hyndryd hym in this maner that folwyth.  
It befel on a tyme that ther cam a yong man to this prest, whech yong man the preste  
1265 nevyr sey beforne, compleynyng to the preste of poverté and diseise whech he was  
fallyn in be infortunyté, expleyntyng the cawse of infortunyté, seying also he had  
takyn holy orderys for to be a preste. For a lytil hastynes, hymself defendyng as he  
mygth not chesyn les than he wold a be ded thorw pursute of hys enmys, he smet a  
man or ellys tweyn, wherthorw, as he seyde, wer ded or ellys lyche for to be ded. And  
1270 so he was fallyn into irregularité and mygth not executyn hys orderys wythowtyn  
dispensacyon of the cowrt of Rome, and for this cawse he fled fro hys frendys and  
durst not comyn in hys contré for drede to be takyn for her deth. The forseyd preste,  
gevyng credens to the yong manrys wordys, inasmech as he was an amyabyl persone,

1249 **trubbel**, trouble. 1249–50 **it fel not . . . undyrstandyng**, it did not seem credible to her understanding. 1251 **turbele**, trouble. 1253 **prevyn**, test, ascertain. 1255 **komyn**, come; **unsekyr**, uncertain. 1256 **thei**, though; **loth**, loath, hesitant; **wylly**, willing. 1260 **ellys not a**, otherwise not have. 1263 **gevyn credens**, give credence, believe; **hyndryd**, hindered. 1266 **expleyntyng**, explaining. 1268 **smet**, smote, struck. 1269 **tweyn**, two. 1273 **credens**, credence; **amyabyl**, amiable.

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fayr feturyd, wel faveryd in cher and in cuntenawns, sad in hys langage and dalyawns,  
1275 prestly in hys gestur and vestur, havyng compassyon of hys disese, purposyng to  
getyn hym frendys into hys relevyng and comfort, went to a worsheful burgeys in  
Lenn, a meyrs pere and a mercyful man, whech lay in gret seknes and long tyme had  
don, compleynyng to hym and to hys wyfe, a ful good woman, of the myschef of this  
yong man, trustyng to have fayr almes as he oftyntyme had for other that he askyd for.  
1280 It happyd the creatur of whom this boke is wretyn to ben ther present and herd how the  
preste compleyned for the yong man and how the preste preyed hym. And sche was  
sor mevyd in hir spiryt ageyns that yong man, and seyd thei haddyn many powyr  
neybowrys whech thei knewyn wel anow hadyn gret nede to ben holbyn and relevyd,  
and it was mor almes to helpyn hem that thei knewyn wel for wel dysposyd folke and  
1285 her owyn neybowrys than other strawngerys whech thei knew not, for many spekyn  
and schewyn ful fayr owtward to the sygth of the pepyl, God knowyth what thei arn in  
her sowlys. The good man and hys wyfe thowtyn that sche seyd rygth wel, and therfor  
thei woldyn grawntyn hym non almes. At that tyme the preste was evyl plesyd wyth  
this creatur, and, whan he mett wyth hir alone, he rehersyd how sche had lettyd hym  
1290 that he mygth non almes getyn for the yong man whech was a wel dysposyd man as  
hym thowt and commendyd mech hys governawns. The creatur seyd, “Sere, God  
knowyth what hys governawns is, for, that I wot of, I sey hym nevyr and yet I have  
undyrstondyng what hys governawns schuld be, and therfor, ser, yf ye wyl do be my  
cownsel and aftyr that I fele, latyth hym chesyn and helpyn hymselfe as wel as he can  
1295 and medyl ye not wyth hym, for he schal dysceyve yow at the last.” The yong man  
resortyd alwey to the preste, flateryng hym and seyng that he hath good frendys in  
other placys whech schuld helpyn hym yyf thei wisten wher he wer, and that in schort  
tyme, and also thei woldyn thankyn tho personys that had supportyd hym in hys dysese.  
The preste, trustyng it schuld be as this yong man told hym, lent hym sylver wyth  
1300 good wyl to helpyn hym wyth. The yong man preyed the preste to have hym excused  
if he sey hym not of too days er thre, for he schuld gon a lytyl wey and comyn ageyn  
in schort tyme and bryng hym agen hys sylver rygth wel and trewly. The preste,

**1274 faveryd**, favored; **cuntenawns**, countenance; **sad**, wise. **1275 gestur**, gesture; **vestur**,  
clothing; **purposyng**, intending. **1276 into hys relevyng and comfort**, for his relief and com-  
fort. **1277 meyrs pere**, mayor's peer. **1278 myschef**, misfortune. **1283 anow**, enough; **holbyn**,  
helped; **relevyd**, relieved. **1284 it was mor almes**, it was more charitable. **1289 lettyd**, hin-  
dered. **1295 medyl**, meddle.

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havyng confidens in hys promysse, was wel content, grawntyng hym good lofe and leve unto the day whech he had promysed to come ageyn. Whan he was gon, the  
1305 forseyde creatur havyng undyrstondyng be felyng in hir sowle as owyr Lord wold schewyn that he was an untrewe man and no mor wold come ageyn, sche for to preve whethyr hir felyng was trewe or fals askyd the preste whethyr the yong man was that he had preyed so mech. The preste seyd he walkyd a lytil way and trustyd that he wold come ageyn. Sche seyd sche supposyd that he wold no mor se hym, ne no mor  
1310 he dede nevyr aftyr. And than he repentyd hym that he had not don aftyr hir cownsel. In schort tyme aftyr this was passyd, comyth another fals schrewe, an elde man, to the same preste and proferyd hym a portose, a good lytyl boke, for to selle. The preste went to the forseyd creatur, preying hir to preye for hym and wetyn whedyr God wolde he schulde by the boke er not, and, whyl sche preyd, he cheryd the man as wel  
1315 as he cowde, and sythen he cam ageyn to this creatur and askyd how sche felt. “Syr,” sche seyth, “byith no boke of hym, for he is not to trustyn upon, and that schal ye wel knowyn yyf ye medyl wyth hym.” Than the preste preyde the man that he mygt se this boke. The man seyde he hath it not upon hym. The preste askyd how he cam therby. He seyd he was executor to a preste whech was of hys kynred, and he chargyd hym to  
1320 sellyn it and dysposyn it for hym. “Fadyr,” seyde the preste becawse of reverens, “why profyr ye me this boke rathar than other men or other prestys whan ther arn many mo thryftyare, richare prestys in this cherch than I am, and I wel wot ye had nevyr no knowlach of me before this tyme?” “Forsothe, syr,” he seyd, “no mor I had, nevrtheles I have good wyl wyth yowr persone, and also it was hys wyl that awt it  
1325 befor that, yef I knew any yong preste that me thowt sad and wel dysposyd, that he schuld han this boke before any other man and for lesse prys than any other man that he myt prey for hym. And these cawsys mevyn me to come to yow rather than to another man.” The preste askyd wher was hys dwellyng. “Ser,” he seyd, “but fyve myle fro this place in Penteney Abbey.” “Ther have I ben,” seyd the preste, “and I have not sey yow.” “No ser,” seyd he ageyn, “I have be ther but lytyl whyle and now have I ther a lyvery, thankyd be God.” The preste preyd hym that he myght have a  
1330

1307 **whethyr**, whither, from whence. 1311 **schrewe**, scoundrel. 1312 **proferyd**, offered; **portose**, portable breviary. 1313 **wetyn**, know. 1314 **by**, buy; **cheryd**, cared for. 1321 **profyr**, offer. 1322 **thryftyare**, more prosperous; **richare**, richer. 1324 **awt**, owned. 1325 **yef**, if; **sad**, sober. 1327 **mevyn**, move. 1329 **Peteney Abbey**, Augustinian priory in Norfolk. 1330 **sey**, seen. 1331 **lyvery**, livery.

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sygth of the boke and lokyn yf thei mygth acordyn. He seyde, “Sere, I hope to be her ageyn the next woke and bryng it wyth me and, ser, I behote yow ye schal have it before any other man yyf yow lyke it.” The preste thankyd hym for hys good wyl, and  
1335 so they partyd asundyr, but the man wold nevyr comyn at the preste aftyr, and than the preste knew wel that the forseyd creaturys felyng was trewe.

25

Ferthermore her folwyth a rygth notabyl matere of the creaturys felyng, and it is wretyn her for convenyens inasmech as it is in felyng leche to the materys that ben wretyn beforne, notwythstondyng it befel long aftyr the materys whech folwyn. It happyd  
1340 in a worsheful town wher was o parysch cherch and tweyn chapelys annexid, the chapelys havyng and mynstryng alle sacramentys, except only cristenyng and purificacyons, thorw sufferawns of the person, whech was a monke of Seynt Benetys Ordry sent fro the hows of Norwych, kepyng resydens wyth three of hys bretheryn in the worsheful town befornwretyn. Thorw summe of the parischenys desyryng to  
1345 make the chapelys lych to the parysch cherch, pursuyng a bulle fro the cowrt of Rome, fel gret ple and gret hevynes betwen the priowr whech was her person and curat and the forseyd paryschennys that desyred to have funtys and purificacyons in the chapelys lych as weryn in the parysch cherch. And specyalyn in the on chapel whech was the grettar and the fayrare thei wold have a funte. Ther was pursuyd a bulle, in the whech  
1350 was grawntyd a funte to the chapel so it wer no derogacyon to the parysch cherch. The bulle was put in ple, and divers days wer kept be forme of lawe to prevyn whethyr the funte, yyf it wer had, schuld ben derogacyon to the parysch chyrch or nowt. The paryschennys whech pursuyd weryn rygth strong and haddyn gret help of lordshyp,  
1355 and also, the most of alle, thei wer ryche men, worsheful marchawntys, and haddyn gold anow, whech may spedie in every nede, and that is rewth that mede schuld spedie

1332 **lokyn**, see; **acordyn**, agree. 1333 **woke**, week. 1337 **matere**, matter. 1338 **her**, here.  
1340 **o**, one. 1342 **purificacyons**, purifications, the rite of “churching” women after child-birth; **person**, parson; **Benetys**, Benedict’s, i.e., a Benedictine monk. 1346 **fel gret ple**, there fell (befell) great legal action; **priowr**, prior. 1347 **paryschennys**, parishioners; **funtys**, baptisms. 1348 **on**, one. 1349 **fayrare**, fairer; **funte**, baptismal font. 1350–51 **The bulle was put in ple**, The bull was appealed. 1352 **derogacyon**, detraction. 1355 **spede**, help; **rewth**, pity.

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er than trewth. Nevyrthelesse the priowr whech was her person, thei he wer powyr,  
manfullly he wythstod hem thorw the help of summe of hys paryschens whech wer  
hys frendys and lovedyn the worshep of her parysch chyrch. So long this mater was in  
ple that it began yrkyn hem on bothe sydes, and it was nevyr the nerar an ende. Than  
1360 was the mater put in my Lord of Norwych Alnewyk to say if he myghth be trety bryng  
it to an ende. He laboryd this mater diligently, and for to settyn rest and pes he proferyd  
the forseyd paryschens mych of her desyre wyth certeyn condycyons, in so mech  
that thei that heldyn wyth the person and wyth her parysch chyrche weryn ful sory,  
1365 dredyng gretly that thei that suyd for to have a funte schuld obteyn and getyn her  
intent and so makyn the chapel eqwal to the parysch cherch. Than the preste whech  
aftyrward wrot this boke went to the creatur of whom this tretys makyth mencyon, as  
he had don befor in the tyme of ple, and askyd hir how sche felt in hir sowle in this  
mater whethyr thei schuld have a funte in the chapel or nowt. “Syr,” seyd the creatur,  
“drede ye not, for I undyrstond in my sowle, thow thei woldyn geve a buschel of  
1370 nobelys, thei schuld not have it.” “A modyr,” seyd the preste, “my Lord of Norwych  
hath proferyd it hem wyth certeyn condycyons, and thei have a tyme of avysement for  
to sey nay or ya whethyr thei wyl, and therfor I am aferd thei wyl not deny it but be ryt  
glad to have it.” Thys creatur preyd to God that hys wyl myt be fulfyllyd. And,  
1375 forasmuch as sche had be revelacyon that thei schuld not have it, sche was the mor  
bold to preyn owyr Lord to wythstonde her intent and to slakyn her bost. And, so as  
owyr Lord wolde, thei obeyd not ne lyked not the menys whech wer proferyd hem,  
for thei trostyd fully to han her entent be lordshep and be proces of lawe; and, as God  
wolde, thei wer deceyvyd of her entent, and for thei wold han al thei lost al. And so,  
1380 blyssed mot God ben, the parysch cherch stod stylle in her worshep and hyr degré as  
sche had don two hundryd yer befor and mor, and the inspiracyon of owyr Lord was  
be experiens preyd for very sothfast and sekyr in the forseyd creatur.

1356 **er than**, rather than; **thei**, though; **powyr**, poor. 1359 **yrkyn**, to irk, to annoy. 1360 **my Lord of Norwych Alnewyk**, William Alnwick, Bishop of Norwich, 1426–36; **be trety**, by negotiation. 1361 **for to settyn**, in order to establish; **pes**, peace. 1364 **suyd**, sued, petitioned; **her**, their. 1370 **nobelys**, nobles (gold coins). 1375 **her intent**, their intent; **slakyn her bost**, reduce their boasting. 1376 **menys**, means. 1381 **sothfast and sekyr**, truth and certainty.

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26

Whan tyme cam that this creatur schuld vysiten tho holy placys wher owyr Lord  
was whyk and ded, as sche had be revelacyon yerys aform, sche preyd the parysch  
preste of the town ther sche was dwellyng to sey for hir in the pulpty that, yf any man  
1385 er woman that cleymyd any dette of hir husband or of hir thei schuld come and speke  
wyth hir er sche went, and sche, wyth the help of God, schulde makyn aseth to ech of  
hem that thei schuldyn heldyn hem content. And so sche dede. Sythen sche toke hir  
leve at hir husband and of the holy ankyr, whech had told hir beforne the proces of hir  
goyng and mech dysese that sche schuld sufferyn be the wey, and, whan alle hir  
1390 felaschep forsoke hir, how a brokebakkyd man schuld ledyn hire forth in safté thorw  
the help of owyr Lord. And so it befel in dede, as it schal be wretyn aftyrwarde. Than  
sche toke hir leve of Mayster Robert and preyd hym of hys blyssyng, and so forth of  
other frendys. And than sche went forth to Norwych and offeryd at the Trinité, and  
sythen sche went to Yermowth, and offeryd at an ymage of owyr Lady, and ther sche  
1395 toke hir schyp. And the next day thei cam to a gret town hyte Seryce, wher owyr Lord  
of hys hey goodnesse vysited this creatur wyth abundawnt teerys of contricyon for hir  
owyn synnes and sumtyme for other mennys synnes also. And specyalys sche had  
teerys of compassyon in the mende of owyr Lordys Passyon. And sche was howselyd  
eche Sonday wher that tyme was and place convenient therto wyth gret wepyngys and  
1400 boystows sobbyngys that many men merveyled and wonderyd of the gret grace that  
God wroot in hys creatur. Thys creatur had etyn no flesch ne drunkyn no wyn four  
yere er sche went owt of Ynglond. And as now hyr gostly fadys chargyd hir be vertu  
of obediens that sche schulde bothyn etyn flesch and drynkyn wyn, and so sche dede  
a lytyl whyle. Sythen sche preyd hir confessowr he wolde heldyn hir excused thow  
1405 sche ete no flesch, and suffred hir to do as sche wold for a tyme as hym lykyd. And  
sone aftyr thorw mevyng of summe of her cumpny hyr confessowr was dysplesyd  
for sche ete no flesch, and so was mech of alle the cumpny. And thei wer most displesyd  
for sche wepyd so mech and spak alwey of the lofe and goodnes of owyr Lord as wel

1383 **whyk**, quick, alive. 1385 **cleymyd**, claimed; **dette**, debt. 1386 **aseth**, compensation.  
1390 **brokebakkyd**, broken backed; **safté**, safety. 1392 **Mayster Robert**, Robert Spryngolde,  
parish priest of St. Margaret's church and Margery's chief confessor. 1393 **Trinité**, Cathedral  
of the Holy Trinity, Norwich. 1394 **Yermowth**, Yarmouth. 1395 **Seryce**, Zierikzee, Zeeland,  
the Netherlands. 1402 **Ynglond**, England. 1406 **mevyng**, influence. 1408 **lofe**, love.

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at the tabyl as in other place. And therfor schamfully thei reprevyd hir and alto chedyn  
1410 hir and seyden thei wold not suffren hir as hir husbond dede whan sche was at hom and  
in Inglond. And sche seyd mekely ageyn unto hem, “Owyr Lord almygty God is as  
gret a lord her as in Inglond, and as gret cawse have I to lofe hym her as ther,  
blyssed mot he be.” For thes wordys hir felaschep was wrothar than thei wer beforne,  
whose wreth and unkyndnesse to this creatur was mater of gret hevynes, for thei wer  
1415 holdyn ryt good men, and sche desyred gretly her lofe yyf sche myth an had it to the  
plesawns of God. And than sche seyd to oon of hem specyalys, “Ye do me meche  
schame and gret grawns.” He answeryd ageyn anoon, “I prey God that the develys  
deth mote ovyrgo the sone and rathe.” And many mo cruel wordys he seyd to hir than  
sche cowde rehersyn. And sone aftyr summe of the cumpny on whech sche trostyd  
1420 best and hir owyn mayden also seyden sche schuld no lengar gon in her felaschep, and  
thei seyden thei woldyn han awey hyr mayden fro hir that sche schuld no strumpet be  
in hyr cumpny. And than on of hem he had hir gold in kepyng left hir a nobyl wyth  
gret angyr and tene to go wher sche wolde and helpyn hirself as wel as sche myth, for  
wyth hem, thei seyden, sche schuld no lengar abyde, and forsykyn hir that nygth.  
1425 Than on the next morwyn ther com to hir on of her cumpny, a man whech lovd hir  
wel, preyng hir that sche wold go to hys felaws andmekyn hir onto hem and preyn  
hem that sche myth go stylle in her cumpny tyl sche come at Constawns. And so sche  
dede, and went forth wyth hem tyl sche cam at Constawns wyth gret dissese and gret  
turbyl, for thei dedyn hir mech shame and mech reprefe as thei wentyn in dyvers  
1430 placys. They cuttyd hir gown so schort that it come but lytil benethyn hir kne and  
dedyn hir don on a whyte canwas in maner of a sekkyng gelle, for sche schuld ben  
holdyn a fool and the pepyl schuld not makyn of hir ne han hir in reputacyon. Thei  
madyn hir to syttyn at the tabelys ende benethyn alle other that sche durst ful evyl  
spekyn a word. And, notwythstondyng al her malyce, sche was had in mor worshep  
1435 than thei wherthathevyr thei comyn. And the good man of the hows ther thei wer

1409 **tabyl**, table; **alto chedyn**, severely chided. 1413 **wrothar**, angrier. 1414 **wreth**, wrath.  
1417–18 **develys deth mote . . . and rathe**, devil’s death might overcome you soon and  
quickly. 1421 **han awey**, take away. 1423 **and tene to go wher sche wolde**, and to direct herself  
wherever she would. 1424 **hem**, them. 1426 **mekyn hir**, humble herself. 1427 **Constawns**,  
Constance. 1431–32 **dedyn hir don . . . not makyn of hir**, made her to wear white canvas in the  
manner of a woman’s sackcloth garment, for she would be taken for a fool and the people  
should not (then) make much of her. 1433 **durst ful evyl**, dared hardly. 1434 **her**, their.

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hostellyd, thow sche sat lowest at the tablys ende, wold alwey cheryn hir befor hem alle as he cowde and myth and sent hir of hys owyn mees of swech servyse as he had, and that grevyd hir felawshep ful evyl. As thei went be the wey to Constawnward, it was told hem thei schuldyn ben harmyd and han gret disese les than thei had gret grace. Than this creatur cam be a cherch and went in to make hir prayer, and sche preyde wyth al hir hert, wyth gret wepyng and many teerys, for help and socowr ageyn her enmys. Anoon owyr Lord seyd to hir mende, “Drede the nowt, dowtyr, thi felawshep schal non harm han whyl thu art in her company.” And so, blyssed mote owyr Lord ben in alle hys werkys, thei wentyn forth in safté to Constawns.

27

1445     Than this creatur and hir felawshep was come to Constawns sche herd tellyn of an Englysch frer, a maystyr of divinité and the Popys legat, was in that cité. Than sche went to that worshepful man and schewyd hym hire lyfe fro the begynnyng unto that owyr as ny as sche mygth in confessyon, because he was the Popys legate and a worshepful clerk. And aftyr sche told hym what disese sche had wyth hir felawshep.  
1450     Sche told hym also what grace God gaf hir of contricyon and compuncyon, of swetnes and devocyon, and of many dyvers revelacyons whech owyr Lord had revelyd unto hir, and the dred that sche had of illusyons and deceytys of hir gostly enmys, wherfor sche levyd in gret drede, desyryng to putte hem away and non for to felyn yyf sche myth wythstonde hem. And, whan sche had seyd, the worshepful clerke gaf hir wordys  
1455     of gret comfort and seyd it was the werke of the Holy Gost, comawndyng and chargyng hir to obey hem and receyve hem whan God wold geve hem and no dowt han, for the devyl hath no powyr to werkyn swech grace in a sowle. And also he seyd he wold supportyn hir agen the evyl wyl of hir felawshep. Aftyrward, whan it lykyd hir felawshep, thei preyde this worthy doctowr to dyner. And the doctowr told so the  
1460     forseyd creatur, warnyng hir to syttyn at the mete in hys presens as sche dede in hys absens and kepyn the same maner of governauns that sche kept whan he was not ther. Whan tyme was comyn that thei schulde syttyn at mete, every man toke hys place as hym lyked, the worshepful legat and doctowr fyrst sett, and sythen other, and at the last

**1436 cheryn**, take care of. **1438 to Constawnward**, toward Constance. **1446 Popys legat**, papal legate. **1448 owyr**, hour; **ny**, nearly.

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the seyd creatur at the bordys ende sytting and no word spekyng as sche was won  
1465 to do whan the legate was not ther. Than the legate seyd unto hir, “Why ar ye no  
myryar?” And sche sat styll and answeryd not, as hymself had comawndyd hir to do.  
Whan thei had etyn, the company mad gret compleynt upon this creatur to the legate,  
and seyd uttyrly sche schulde no lengar be in her company les than he wolde  
comawndyn hir to etyn flesch as thei dedyn and levyn hir wepyng and that sche schulde  
1470 not speke so mech of holynes. Than the worsheful doctowr seyde, “Nay, serys, I wyl  
not don hir etyn flesch whyl sche may absteyne hir and ben the bettyr disposyd to  
lovyn owyr Lord. Of whech of yow alle that mad avowe to gon to Rome barfote I  
wolde not dispense wyth hym of hys vow whyl he myth fulfillyn it, ne I wyl not  
byddyn hir etyn flesch whyl owyr Lord gevith hir strength to absteyne. As for hyr  
1475 wepyng, it is not in my power to restreyn it, for it is the gyft of the Holy Gost. As for  
hir spekyng, I wyl prey hir to sesyn tyl sche comyth ther men wyl her hir wyth bettyr  
wyl than ye wyl do.” The company was wroth and in gret angyr. Thei govyn hir ovyr  
to the legate and seyden uttyrly thei woldyn no mor medyl wyth hir. He ful benyngly  
and goodly receyved hir as thow sche had ben hys modyr and receyved hir golde  
1480 abowte twenty pownd, and yet on of hem wythhelde wrongfully abowte sixteen pownd.  
And thei wythheldyn also hir mayden and wolde not letyn hir gon wyth hir maystres,  
notwythstondyng sche had behestyd hir maystres and sekyrd hir that sche schulde not  
forsake hir for no nede. And the legate ordeyned for this creatur and made hir chawnge  
as sche had ben hys modyr. Than this creatur went into a cherche and preyd owyr  
1485 Lorde to ordeyn hir a ledar. And anon owyr Lord spak to hir and seyd, “Thu schalt  
have rygh good help and a good ledar,” and aswythe aftyr ther cam to hir an olde man  
wyth a whyte berde. He was of Devynschir, and he seyd, “Damsel, wyl ye prey me for  
Goddys lofe and for owyr Ladys to gon wyth yow and ben yowr gyde for yowr  
cuntremen han forsake yow?” Sche askyd what was hys name. He seyde, “My name  
1490 is Willyam Wever.” Sche preyd hym at the reverens of God and of owyr Lady that he  
wolde helpyn hir at hir nede, and sche schulde wel rewardyn hym for hys labowre.

1464 **bordys ende**, table's end; **won**, wont, used. 1466 **myryar**, merrier. 1470–71 **I wyl not don hir etyn**, I will not make her eat. 1472 **avowe**, a vow; **barfote**, barefoot. 1476 **sesyn**, cease; **ther men wyl her hir**, where men will hear her. 1481 **maystres**, mistress. 1482 **behestyd**, promised; **sekyrd**, assured. 1483 **made hir chawnge**, made her exchange. 1485 **ordeyn hir a ledar**, appoint her a leader or a guide. 1486 **aswythe aftyr**, quickly thereafter. 1487 **Devynschir**, Devonshire. 1488 **gyde**, guide.

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And so thei wer accordyd. Than went sche to the legate and telde hym how wel owyr  
Lord had ordeynd for hir, and toke hir leve of hym and of hir cumpany that so ungodly  
had refusyd hir and also of hir mayden whech was bowndyn to a gon wyth hir. Sche  
1495 toke hir leve wyth ful hevy cher and rewful, havyng gret hevynes inasmeche as sche  
was in strawnge cuntré and cowde no langage ne the man that schuld ledyn hir neythr.  
And so the man and sche went forth togydder in gret drede and hevynes. As thei went  
togydder, the man seyd unto hir, “I am aferde thu schalt be take fro me, and I schal be  
betyn for the and forberyn my tabbarde.” Sche seyd, “Willyam, dredyth yow not; God  
1500 schai kepyn us rygth wel.” And this creatur had every day mend of the Gospel whech  
tellyth of the woman whech was takyn in avowtré and browt beforne owyr Lord. And  
than sche preyde, “Lord, as thow dreve awey hir enmys, so dryfe awey myn enmys,  
and kepe wel my chastité that I vowyd to the, and late me nevyr be defowlyd, for yyf  
I be, Lord, I make myn avow I wyl nevyr come in Inglonde whil I leve.” Than went  
1505 thei forth day be day and met wyth many joly men. And thei seyd non evyl worde to  
this creatur but govyn hir and hyr man mete and drynke, and the good wyvys ther thei  
weryn at inne leyden hir in her owyn beddys for Goddys lofe in many placys ther thei  
come. And owyr Lord vysite hir wyth gret grace of gostly comfort as sche went be the  
wey. And so God browt hir forth tyl sche cam to Boleyn de Grace. And, aftyr that sche  
1510 was come thedyr, cam hir other felawshep thedyr also whech had forsakyn hir befor.  
And, whan thei herdyn sey that sche was come to Boleyn er than thei, than had thei  
gret wondyr, and on of her felawshep cam to hir preyng hir to gon to hys felaschep  
and asayn yyf thei woldyn receyven hir ageyn into her felawshep. And so sche dede.  
“Yyf ye wyl gon in owyr felawshep, ye must makyn a new comnawnt, and that is this,  
1515 ye schal not speke of the Gospel wher we come, but ye schal syttyn styll and makyn  
mery, as we don, bothin at mete and at soper.” Sche consentyd and was receyvyd  
ageyn into hir felawshep. Than went thei forth to Venyce and thei dwellyd ther thirteen  
teekys. And this creatur was howselyd every Sonday in a gret hows of nunnys  
1520 and had gret cher among hem, wher owyr mercyful Lord Cryst Jhesu visite this creatur  
wyth gret devocyon and plentyuows terys that the good ladiis of the place wer mech-

1495 **rewful**, rueful, mournful. 1496 **cowde no langage**, lit., could no language (did not know the language). 1498–99 **and I . . . forberyn my tabbarde**, and I shall be beaten for you and made to give up my tabard (outer garment). 1500 **mend**, mind, memory. 1501 **avowtré**, adultery. 1503 **defowlyd**, defiled. 1504 **avow**, vow. 1509 **Boleyn de Grace**, Bologna. 1510 **thedyr**, thither. 1513 **asayn**, assay, try. 1514 **comnawnt**, covenant. 1518 **nunnys**, nuns. 1519 **cher**, comfort.

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amerveylyd therof. Sythyn it happyd, as this creatur sat at mete wyth hir felawshep, that sche rehersyd a text of a Gospel lych as sche had leryd befortyme wyth other goode wordys. And anon hir felawshep seyd sche had brokyn comenawnt. And sche seyd, “Ya, serys, forsothe I may no lengar hold yow comenawnt, for I must nedys  
1525 speke of my Lord Jhesu Crist thow al this world had forbodyn it me.” And than sche toke hir chawmbre and ete alone six wokys unto the tyme that owyr Lord mad hir so seke that sche wend to a be ded, and sythyn sodeynly he mad hir hool agen and al the tyme hir mayden let hir alone and mad the cumpanyes mete and wesch her clothis, and to hir maystres, whom sche had behestyd servyse, sche wolde no dele attende.

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1530 Also this cumpany whech had putt the forseyd creatur fro her tabyl that sche schulde no lengar etyn among hem ordeyned a schip for hemselfe to seylyn in. Thei bowtyn vessellys for her wyn and ordeyned hem beddyng for hemselfe but nothyng for hir. Than sche, seyng her unkyndnesse, went to that same man wher thei haddyn ben, and purveyd for hyr beddyng as thei had don, and cam ther thei weryn and schewyd hem  
1535 how sche had don, purposyng to seylyn wyth hem in that schyp whech thei had ordeyned. Sithyn, as this creatur was in contemplacyon, owyr Lord warnyd hir in hir mende that sche schuld not seylyn in that schip, and he assyngned hir another schip, a galey, that sche schulde seylyn in. Than sche told this to summe of the cumpany, and thei teld it forth to her felawshep, so than thei durst not seyl in the schip whech thei had ordeyned. And so thei seldyn awey her vessellys whech thei had ordeyned for her  
1540 wynys and wer ryth fayn to comyn to the galey ther sche was, and so, thow it wer ageyn her wyl, sche went forth wyth hem in her cumpany, for thei durst non otherwyse don. Whan it was tyme to makyn her beddys, thei lokyd up her clothis, and a preste wech was in her cumpany toke awey a schete fro the forseyd creatur and seyd it was  
1545 hys. Sche toke God to wytnesse that it was hire schete. Than the preste swor a gret

**1521 amerveylyd**, astonished. **1522 leryd**, learned. **1524 hold yow comenawnt**, keep covenant with you. **1525 forbodyn it me**, forbidden it to me. **1526 toke hir chawmbre**, took to her chamber. **1529 maystres**, mistress; **no dele**, no deal, not at all. **1530 tabyl**, table. **1531 seylyn**, sail. **1533 her**, their. **1534 ther**, where. **1540 seldyn**, sold. **1542–43 for thei . . . otherwyse don**, for they dared not do otherwise. **1543 lokyd**, locked; **her**, their. **1544 schete**, sheet.

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othe, and be the boke in hys hand, that sche was as fals as sche mygh be and dispysed  
hir and alto rebukyd hir. And so sche had evyr mech tribulacyon tyl sche cam to  
Jherusalem. And, er sche cam ther, sche seyd to hem that sche supposyd thei weryn  
grevyd wyth hir. “I prey yow serys, beth in charité wyth me, for I am in charité wyth  
1550 yow and forgevyth me that I have grevyd yow be the wey. And, yyf any of yow hath  
anything trespasyd agens me, God forgeve it yow and I do.” And so thei went forth  
into the Holy Lond tyl thei myth se Jerusalem. And, whan this creatur saw Jerusalem,  
rydyng on an asse, sche thankyd God wyth al hir hert, preyng hym for hys mercy that  
lych as he had browt hir to se this erdryl cyté Jerusalem he wold grawntyn hir grace to  
1555 se the blysful cité of Jerusalem abovyn, the cyté of hevyn. Owyr Lord Jhesu Cryst,  
answeryng to hyr thowt, grawntyd hir to have hir desyr. Than, for joy that sche had  
and the swetnes that sche felt in the dalyawnce of owyr Lord, sche was in poynt to a  
fallyn of hir asse, for sche myth not beryn the swetnesse and grace that God wroot in  
hir sowle. Than tweyn pylgrymys of Duchemen went to hir and kept hir fro fallynge, of  
1560 whech the on was a preste. And he put spycys in hir mowth to comfort hir, wenying  
sche had ben seke. And so thei holbyn hir forth to Jerusalem. And, whan sche cam  
ther, sche seyd, “Serys, I prey yow beth nowt displesyd thow I wepe sore in this holy  
place wher owyr Lord Jhesu Crist was qwyk and ded.” Than went thei to the tempyl in  
Jerusalem, and thei wer latyn in on the to day at evynsong tyme and abydyn therin til  
1565 the next day at evynsong tyme. Than the frerys lyftyd up a cros and led the pylgrimys  
abowte fro on place to an other wher owyr Lord had sufferyd hys peynys and hys  
passyons, every man and woman beryng a wax candel in her hand. And the frerys  
alwey, as thei went abowte, teld hem what owyr Lord sufferyd in every place. And the  
forseyd creatur wept and sobbyd so plentyuowsly as thow sche had seyn owyr Lord  
1570 wyth hir bodily ey sufferyng hys Passyon at that tyme. Befor hir in hyr sowle sche  
saw hym veryly be contemplacyon, and that cawsyd hir to have compassyon. And whan thei  
cam up onto the Mownt of Calvarye sche fel down that sche mygh not  
standyn ne knelyn but walwyd and wrestyd wyth hir body, spredyng hlr armys abrode,  
and cryed wyth a lowde voys as thow hir hert schulde a brostyn asundyr, for in the cité  
1575 of hir sowle sche saw veryly and freschly how owyr Lord was crucifyed. Beforn hir

1557–58 in poynt to a fallyn of hir asse, at the point of falling off her ass. 1559 tweyn  
pylgrymys of Duchemen, two German pilgrims. 1560 spycys, spices. 1564 and thei wer . . .  
day at evynsong, and they were let in on the one day at evensong. 1571 veryly, verily. 1573  
walwyd and wrestyd, wallowed and twisted. 1574 brostyn, burst; cité, city.

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face sche herd and saw in hir gostly sygth the mornynge of owyr Lady, of Sen John and Mary Mawdelyn, and of many other that lovyd owyr Lord. And sche had so gret compassyon and so gret peyn to se owyr Lordys peyn that sche myt not kepe hirself fro krying and roryng thow sche schuld a be ded therfor. And this was the fyrst cry  
1580 that evyr sche cryed in any contemplacyon. And this maner of crying enduryd many yerys aftyr this tyme for owt that any man myt do, and therfor sufferyd sche mych despyte and mech reprefe. The cryeng was so lowde and so wondyrful that it made the pepyl astoynd les than thei had herd it beforne and er ellys that thei knew the cawse of the crying. And sche had hem so oftyntymes that thei madyn hir ryth weyke in hir  
1585 bodily myghtys, and namely yf sche herd of owyr Lordys Passyon. And sumtyme, whan sche saw the crucyfyx, er yf sche sey a man had a wondre er a best whethyr it wer, er yyf a man bett a childe befor hir er smet an hors er another best wyth a whippe, yyf sche myth sen it er heryn it, hir thowt sche saw owyr Lord be betyn er wondyd lyk as sche saw in the man er in the best, as wel in the feld as in the town, and be hirselfe  
1590 alone as wel as among the pepyl. Fyrst whan sche had hir cryingys at Jerusalem, sche had hem oftyn tymes, and in Rome also. And, whan sche come hom into Inglonde, fyrst at hir comyng hom it comyn but seldom as it wer onys in a moneth, sythen onys in the weke, aftyrward cotidianly, and onys sche had fourteen on o day, and an other day sche had seven, and so as God wolde visiten hir, sumtyme in the cherch, sumtyme  
1595 in the strete, sumtym in the chawmbre, sumtyme in the felde whan God wold sendyn hem, for sche knew nevir tyme ne owyr whan thei schulde come. And thei come nevir wythowtyn passyng gret swetnesse of devocyon and hey contemplacyon. And, as sone as sche parceyvyd that sche schulde crye, sche wolde kepyn it in as mech as sche myth that the pepyl schulde not an herd it for noyng of hem. For summe seyd it  
1600 was a wikkyd spiryt vexid hir; sum seyd it was a sekenes; sum seyd sche had dronkyn to mech wyn; sum bannyd hir; sum wisshed sche had ben in the havyn; sum wolde sche had ben in the se in a bottumles boyt; and so ich man as hym thowte. Other gostly men lovyd hir and favowrd hir the mor. Sum gret clerkys seyden owyr Lady cryed nevir so ne no seynt in hevyn, but thei knewyn ful lytyl what sche felt, ne thei wolde  
1605 not belelevyn but that sche myth an absteynd hir fro crying yf sche had wold. And

**1576 mornynge**, mourning. **1582 despyte**, despite, scorn. **1583 astoynd**, astonished. **1586–87 er yf sche sey . . . whethyr it wer**, or if she saw a man or beast that had a wound. **1587 bett**, beat; **smet**, smote. **1593 cotidianly**, daily. **1599 noyng**, annoying. **1601 bannyd**, cursed; **havyn**, haven, harbor. **1602 gostly**, spiritual.

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therfor, whan sche knew that sche schulde cryen, sche kept it in as long as sche mygth  
and dede al that sche cowde to withstand it er ellys to put it awey til sche wex as blo as  
any leed, and evyr it schuld labowry in hir mende mor and mor into the tyme that it  
broke owte. And, whan the body myth ne lengar enduryn the gostly labowr but was  
1610 ovyr come wyth the unspekabyl lofe that wroot so fervently in the sowle, than fel  
sche down and cryed wondyr lowde. And the mor that sche wolde labowry to kepe it  
in er to put it awey, mech the mor schulde sche cryen and the mor lowder. And thus  
sche dede in the Mownt of Calvarye, as it is wretyn beforne. Sche had so very  
1615 contemplacyon in the sygth of hir sowle as yf Crist had hangyn befor hir bodily eye in  
hys manhode. And, whan thorw dispensacyon of the hy mercy of owyr sovereyn  
savyowr Crist Jhesu it was grawntd this creatur to beholdyn so verily hys precyous  
tendyr body, alto rent and toryn wyth scorgys, mor ful of wowndys than evyr was  
duffehows of holys, hangyng upon the cros wyth the corown of thorn upon hys hevyd,  
hys blysful handys, hys tendyr fete nayled to the hard tre, the reverys of blood flowing  
1620 owt plenteuowsly of every membr, the gresly and grevous wownde in hys precyous  
syde schedyng owt blood and watyr for hir lofe and hir salvacyon, than sche fel down  
and cryed wyth lowde voys, wondyrfully turnyng and wrestyng hir body on every  
syde, spredyng hir armys abrode as yyf sche schulde a deyd, and not cowde kepyn hir  
fro crying, and these bodily mevyngys for the fyer of lofe that brent so fervently in hir  
1625 sowle wyth pur ptyé and compassyon. It is nowt to be merveyled yyf this creatur  
cryed and made wondirful cher and cuntenawns, whan we may se eche day at eye  
bothe men and women, summe for los of werdly good, sum for affeccyon of her kynred  
er for werdly frenshepys thorw ovyr fele stody and erdly affeccyon, and most of alle  
for inordinat lofe and fleschly affeccyon yyf her frendys er partyn fro hem, thei wyl  
1630 cryen and roryn and wryngyn her handys as yyf thei had no wytte ne non mende, and  
yet wetyn thei wel know that thei displesyn God. And, yyf a man cownsel hem to  
leevyn er seesyn of her wepyng er crying, thei wyl seyn that thei may not; thei loydyd  
her frend so meche and he was so gentyl and so kende to hem that thei may be no wey  
forgetyn hym. How meche mor myth thei wepyn, cryen, and roryn yyf her most belovyd  
1635 frendys wer wyth vvolens takyn in her sygth and wyth al maner of reprefe browt befor

**1607 blo**, leaden-colored. **1608 leed**, lead. **1618 duffehows of holys**, dovecot of holes. **1619**  
**reverys**, rivers. **1626–27 whan we may . . . men and women**, when we may see each day with  
our eyes both men and women. **1628 thorw ovyr fele stody and erdly affeccyon**, through over  
much devotion and earthly affection. **1631–32 to leevyn er seesyn**, to leave off or cease.

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the juge, wrongfully condemnyd to the deth, and namely so spyteful a deth as owr  
mercyful Lord suffyrd for owyr sake. How schuld thei suffyr yt? No dowt but thei  
schulde bothe cry and rore and wrekyn hem yyf thei myth, and ellys men wold sey  
thei wer no frendys. Alas, alas, for sorwe, that the deth of a creatur whech hat ofty  
1640 synned and trespassyd ageyn her maker schal be so unmesurably mornyd and sorwyd.  
And it is offens to God and hyndryng to the sowlys on eche syde. And the compassyfe  
deth of owyr Savyowr, be the whech we arn alle restoryd to lyfe is not had in mende  
of us unworthy and unkende wretchys, ne not we wylle supportyn owyr Lordys owyn  
secretariis whech he hath indued wyth lofe, but rathyr detractyn hem and hyndry  
1645 hem in as mech as we may.

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Whan this creatur wyth hir felawshep cam to the grave wher owyr Lord was bertiid,  
anon, as sche entryd that holy place, sche fel down wyth hir candel in hir hand as sche  
schuld a deyd for sorwe. And sythen sche ros up ageyn wyth gret wepyng and sobbyng  
as thow sche had seyn owyr Lord bertiid even befor hir. Than sche thowt sche saw  
1650 owyr Lady in hir sowl, how sche mornyd and how sche wept hir sonys deth, and than  
was owyr Ladiis sorwe hir sorwe. And so ovyr al wher that evyr the frerys led hem in  
that holy place sche alwey wept and sobbyd wondyrfully, and specialy whan sche  
cam ther owyr Lord was nayled on the cros. Ther cryed sche and wept wythowtyn  
mesur that sche myth not restreyn hirself. Also thei comyn to a ston of marbyl that  
1655 owyr Lord was leyd on whan he was takyn down of the cros, and ther sche wept wyth  
gret compassyon, havyng mend of owyr Lordys Passyon. Aftyrwardys sche was  
howselyd on the Mownt of Calvarye, and than sche wept, sche sobbyd, sche cryed so  
lowde that it wondyr was to heryn it. Sche was so ful of holy thowtys and medytacyons  
and holy contemplacyons in the Passyon of owyr Lord Jhesu Crist and holy dalyawns  
1660 that owyr Lord Jhesu Crist dalyed to hir sowl that sche cowde nevyr expressyn hem  
aftyr, so hy and so holy thei weryn. Meche was the grace that owyr Lord schewyd to

**1638 wrekyn hem**, avenge them. **1641 offens**, an offense; **compassyfe**, compassionate.  
**1643–44 ne not we wylle . . . indued wyth lofe**, neither will we support our Lord's own  
secretaries (i.e., the holy men and women who "trace out" his life) which he has endued with  
love. **1644 hyndrym**, hinder. **1653 ther owyr**, where our.

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this creature whyl sche three wekys was in Jerusalem. Another day erly in the morwenyng  
thei went ageyn to the gret hylls. And her gydes told wher owyr Lord bare the cros on  
hys bakke, and wher hys Modyr met wyth hym, and how sche swownyd, and how  
1665 sche fel down and he fel down also. And so thei went forth al the fornoone tyl thei cam  
to the Mownt Syon. And evyr this creature wept abundawntly al the wey that sche went  
for compassyon of owyr Lordys Passyon. In the Mownt Syon is a place wher owyr  
Lord wesch hys disciplys fete, and a lityl therfro he mad hys Mawndé wyth hys  
disciplys. And therfor this creature had gret desyr to be howselyd in that holy place  
1670 wher owyr mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu fyrst sacryd hys precyows body in the forme of  
bred and gaf it to hys discipulis. And so sche was wyth gret devocyon, wyth plenteuows  
teerys, and wyth boystows sobbyngys, for in this place is plenyr remyssyon. And so is  
in other four placys in the tempyl. On is in the Mownt of Calvarye; an other at the  
grave wher owyr Lord was beriid; the thridde is at the marbly ston that hys preciows  
1675 body was leyd on whan it was takyn of the cros; the ferd is ther the holy cros was  
beriid, and in many other placys of Jerusalem. And, whan this creature cam into the  
place ther the apostelys receyved the Holy Gost, owyr Lord gaf hir gret devocyon.  
Aftyward sche went to the place ther owyr Lady was beriid, and as sche knelyd on  
hyr knes the tyme of tweyn messys heryng, owyr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd onto hir, “Thu  
1680 comyst not hedyr, dowtyr, for no nede but for meryte and for mede, for thy synnes wer  
forgovyn the er thou come her, and therfor thu comyst hedyr for incresyng of thi  
mede and of thi meryte. And I am wel plesyd wyth the, dowtyr, for thu stondist undyr  
obedyens of Holy Cherch and that thu wylt obey thi confessowr and folwyn hys  
cownsel, whech thorw auctorité of Holy Cherch hath asoyld the of thi synnes and  
1685 dispensyd wyth the that thu schuldist not go to Rome ne to Seynt Jamys les than thu  
wyl thin owyn selfe. Notwythstondyng al this, I comawnde the in the name of Jhesu,  
dowtyr, that thu go vysite thes holy placys and do as I byd the, for I am above al Holy  
Cherch and I schal gon wyth the and kepyn the rygth wel.” Than owyr Lady spak to  
hir sowle on this maner, seying, “Dowtyr, wel art thu blyssed, for my sone Jhesu schal  
1690 flowyn so mech grace in the that al the world schal wondryng of the. Be not aschamyd,

**1664 swownyd**, swooned. **1668 mad hys Mawndé**, made his Last Supper. **1670 sacryd**,  
consecrated. **1672 plenyr remyssyon**, plenary remission. **1675 ferd**, fourth. **1679 the tyme  
of tweyn messys heryng**, for the time it takes to hear two masses. **1684 asoyld**, pardoned.  
**1684–86 and dispensyd wyth . . . thin owyn selfe**, and absolved you so that you need not go  
(on pilgrimage) to Rome or to St. James (of Compostella) unless you yourself want to.

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my derworthy dowtyr, to receyve the gyftys whech my sone schal gevyn the, for I telle the in trewth thei schal be gret gyftys that he schal geve the. And therfore, my derworthy dowtyr, be not aschamyd of hym that is thi God, thi Lord, and thi lofe, no mor than I was whan I saw hym hangyn on the cros, my swete sone, Jhesu, for to  
1695 cryen and to wepyn for the peyn of my swete sone, Jhesu Crist; ne Mary Mawdelyn was not aschamyd to cryen and wepyn for my sonys lofe. And therfor, dowtyr, yyf thu wylt be partabyl in owyr joye, thu must be partabil in owyr sorwe." Thes swet spech and dalyawns had this creatur at owyr Ladiis grave, and mech mor than sche cowde evyr rehersyn. Aftyrward sche rood on an asse to Bedlem and whan sche cam to the  
1700 tempyl and to the crybbe wher owyr Lord was born, sche had gret devocyon, mech spech, and dalyawns in hyr sowle, and hy gostly comfort wyth mech wepyng and sobbyng so that hir felaws wold not latyn hir etyn in her company. And therfor sche ete hir mete be hirselfe alone. And than the Grey Frerys whech had led hir fro place to place receyved hir into hem and sett hir wyth hem at the mete that sche schuld not etyn  
1705 alone. And on of the frerys askyd on of hir felawshep yyf that wer the woman of Inglond the which thei had herd seyd spak wyth God. And, whan this cam to hir knowlach, sche wist wel that it was trewth that owyr Lord seyd to hir er sche went owt of Inglond, "Dowtyr, I schal makyn al the werld to wondryn of the, and many man and many woman schal spekyn of me for lofe of the and worshepyng me in the."

30

1710 An other tyme this creaturys felawshep wold gon to Flod of Jurdon and wold not letyn hir gon wyth hem. Than this creatur preyd owyr Lord that sche myth gon wyth hem, and he bad that sche schuld go wyth hem whethyr thei wold er not. And than sche went forth be the grace of God and askyd hem no leve. Whan sche cam to the Flood of Jurdon, the wedyr was so hoot that sche wend hir feet schuld a brent for the hete  
1715 that sche felt. Sithyn sche went forth wyth hir felawschep to the Mownt Qwarentyne ther owyr Lord fastyd fowrt days. And ther sche preyd hir felawshep to helpyn hir up onto the Mownt. And thei seyd nay, for thei cowd not wel helpyn hemself. Than had

1697 **partabyl in**, capable of partaking. 1699 **Bedlem**, Bethlehem. 1703 **Grey Frerys**, Franciscans. 1710 **Flod of Jurdon**, River Jordan. 1713 **askyd hem no leve**, did not ask them permission. 1715 **Mownt Qwarentyne**, Mount Quarentyne (near Jericho).

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sche mekyl sorwe for sche myth not comyn on the hille. And anon happyd a Sarazyn,  
a welfaryng man, to comyn by hir, and sche put a grote in hys hand, makyng to hym a  
1720 token for to bryng hir onto the Mownt. And as swythe the Sarazyn toke hir undyr hys  
arme and led hir up onto the hey Mownt wher owyr Lord fastyd fowrty days. Than  
was sche sor athryste and had no comfort of hir felashyp. Than God of hys hey goodnes  
mevyd the Grey Frerys wyth compassyon and thei comfortyd hir whan hir cuntremen  
wolde not knowyn hir. And so sche was evyrmor strengthyd in the lofe of owyr Lord  
1725 and the mor bold to suffyr shamys and reprevys for hys sake in every place ther sche  
cam for the grace that God wroot in hir of wepyng, sobbyng, and crying, the which  
grace sche myth not wythstonde whan God wold send it. And evyr sche prevyd hir  
felyngys trewe. And tho behestys that God had behyte hir whil she was in Ingłond and  
in other placys also thei fellyn to hir in effect lych as sche had felt beforne, and therfor  
1730 sche durst the bettyr receyven swech spechys and dalyawns and the mor boldly werkyn  
theraftyr. Sithyn, whan this creatur was comyn down of the Mownt, as God wold,  
sche went forth to the place ther Seynt Jon Baptyst was born. And sythyn sche went to  
Betanye ther Mary and Martha dwellyd and to the grave ther Lazer was beriid and  
reysed fro deth into lyfe. And sche went also in the chapel ther owyr blyssed Lord  
1735 aperyd to hys blysful modyr on Estern Day at morwyn fyrst of alle other. And sche  
stode in the same place ther Mary Mawdelyn stode whan Crist seyd to hir, “Mary,  
why wepyst thu?” And so sche was in many mo placys than be wretyn, for sche was  
three wekys in Jerusalem and in the cuntreys therabowtyn. And sche had ever gret  
devocyon as long as sche was in that cuntré. And the Frerys of the Tempyl mad hir  
1740 gret cher and govyn hir many gret relykys, desiryng that sche schuld a dwellyd stille  
amongs hem, yyf sche had wold, for the feyth thei had in hir. Also the Sarazines mad  
mych of hir and conveyd hir and leddyn hir abowtyn in the cuntré wher sche wold  
gon. And sche fond alle pepyl good onto hir and gentyl saf only hir owyn cuntremen.  
And, as sche cam fro Jerusalemward unto Rafnys, than wold sche a turnyd ageyne to  
1745 Jerusalem for the gret grace and gostly comfort that sche felt whan sche was ther and

**1718 mekyl**, much; **happyd**, came along. **1718–19 a Sarazyn, a welfaryng man**, a Saracen, a  
comely man. **1719 grote**, grote (silver coin). **1723 Grey Frerys**, Franciscans. **1725 reprovys**,  
reproofs. **1728 tho behestys**, those promises. **1733 Betanye**, Bethany; **ther Lazer**, where  
Lazarus. **1735 Estern Day**, Easter Day. **1736–37 “Mary, why wepyst thou?”**, see John 20:15.  
**1739 Frerys of the Tempyl**, Franciscans of the Convent of the Holy Sepulchre. **1744 Rafnys**,  
Ramleh (town outside Jerusalem on the road to Jaffa).

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for to purchasyn hir mor pardon. And than owyr Lord comawndyd hir for to gon to Rome, and so forth hom into Ingland, and seyd unto hir, “Dowtyr, as oftyntymes as thu seyst or thynkyst, ‘Worshepyd be alle tho holy placys in Jerusalem that Crist suffyrd bittyr peyn and passyon in,’ thu schalt have the same pardon as yyf thu wer ther wyth thi bodily presens bothyn to thiself and to alle tho that thu wylt gevyn it to.”  
1750 And, as sche went forth unto Venyce, mych of hir felaschep was ryth seke, and evyr owyr Lord seyd to hir, “Drede the not, dowtyr, ther schal no man deyin in the schip that thu art in.” And sche fond hir felyngys ryth trewe. And, whan owyr Lord had browt hem ageyn to Venyce in safté, hir cuntremen forsokyn hir and went away fro  
1755 hir, levynghir alone. And summe of hem seyden that thei wold not go wyth hir for an hundryd pownd. And, whan thei wer gon awey fro hir, than owyr Lord Jhesu Crist, that evyr helpyth at nede and nevyr forsakyth hys servawnt that trewly trostith to hys mercy, seyd to hys creatur, “Drede the not, dowtyr, for I schal ordeyn for the ryth wel and bryng the in safté to Rome and hom ageyn into Ingland wythowtyn ony velany of  
1760 thi body yyf thou wilt be clad in white clothys and weryn hem as I seyd to the whil thu wer in Ingland.” Than this creatur, beyng in gret hevynes and gret diswer, answeryd agen in hir mende, “Yyf thu be the spiryt of God that spekyst in my sowle and I may prevyn the for a trew spiryt wyth cownsel of the chirche, I schal obey thi wille, and, yyf thu bryng me to Rome in safté, I schal weryn white clothys, thou alle the world  
1765 schuld wondyr on me, for thi lofe.” “Go forth, dowtyr, in the name of Jhesu, for I am the spirit of God, the whech schal helpyn the at al thy nede, gon wyth the, and supportyn the in every place, and therfor mystrost me not. Thu fondist me nevyr deceyvabyl, ne I bid the no thyng do but that whech is worshep to God and profyte to thy sowle yyf thou wilt do therafter, and I schal flowyn on the gret plenté of grace.” Than anon, as  
1770 sche lokyd on the on syde, sche sey a powyr man sittyngh which had a gret cowche on hys bakke. Hys clothis wer al forclowtyd, and he semyd a man of fifty wyntyr age. Than sche went to hym and seyde, “Gode man, what eyleth yowr bak?” He seyd, “Damsel, it was brokyn in a sekenes.” Sche askyd what was hys name and what cuntreman he was. He seyd hys name was Richard and he was of Erlond. Than thowt sche of hir

**1746 purchasyn hir mor pardon**, lit., to “purchase” for herself more pardon. **1751 Venyce**, Venice. **1752 deyin**, die. **1759 velany**, shame. **1761 diswer**, doubt. **1767 deceyvabyl**, deceiving. **1769 flowyn on the gret plenté of grace**, pour out on you an abundance of grace. **1770 powyr**, poor; **cowche**, hump. **1771 forclowtyd**, patched. **1772 eyleth**, aileth. **1774 Erlond**, Ireland.

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1775 confessorys wordys whech was an holy ankyr, as is wretyn befor, that seyd to hir whil sche was in Ingland in this maner, “Dowtyr, whan yowr owyn felawshep hath forsakyn yow God schal ordeyn a brokebakkyd man to lede yow forth ther ye wil be.” Than sche wyth a glad spirit seyde unto hym, “Good Richard, ledith me to Rome, and ye schal be rewardyd for yowr labowr.” “Nay, damsel,” he seyd, “I wot wel thi cuntremen han 1780 forsakyn the, and therfor it wer hard to me to ledyn the. For thy cuntremen han bothyn bowys and arwys, wyth the whech thei myth defendyn bothyn the and hemself, and I have no wepyn save a cloke ful of clowntys. And yet I drede me that myn enmys schul robbyn me and peraventur takyn the awey fro me and defowllyn thy body, and therfor I dar not ledyn the, for I wold not for an hundryd pownd that thu haddyst a vylany in 1785 my cumpany.” And than sche seyd agen, “Richard, dredith yow not; God schal kepyn us bothen ryth wel, and I schal geve yow too noblys for yowr labowr.” Than he consentyd and went forth wyth hir. Sone aftyr ther cam too Grey Frerys and a woman that cam wyth hem fro Jerusalem, and sche had wyth hir an asse the whech bar a chyst and an ymage therin mad aftyr our Lord. And than seyd Richard to the forseyd creatur, 1790 “Thu schalt go forth wyth thes too men and woman, and I schal metyn wyth the at morwyn and at evyn, for I must gon on my purchase and beggyn my levyng. And so sche dede aftyr hys counsel and went forth wyth the frerys and the woman. And non of hem cowde undirstand hir langage, and yet thei ordeyned for hir every day mete, drynke, and herborwe as wel as he dedyn for hemselfe and rathyr bettyr that sche was 1795 evyr bownden to prey for hem. And every evyn and morwyn Richard wyth the broke bak cam and comfortyd hir as he had promysed. And the woman the which had the ymage in the chist, whan thei comyn in good citeys, sche toke owt the ymage owt of hir chist and sett it in worshepful wifys lappys. And thei wold puttyn schirtys ther upon and kyssyn it as thei it had ben God hymselfe. And, whan the creatur sey the 1800 worshep and the reverens that thei dedyn to the ymage, sche was takyn wyth swet devocyon and swet meditacyons that sche wept wyth gret sobbyng and lowde crying. And sche was mevyd in so mych the mor as, whil sche was in Ingland, sche had hy

1781 **bowys and arwys**, bows and arrows. 1782 **wepyn**, weapon; **cloke ful of clowntys**, cloak full of patches. 1783 **defowllyn**, defile. 1784 **ledyn the**, lead you. 1787 **too**, two. 1788 **chyst**, chest. 1790 **metyn**, meet. 1791 **gon on my purchase and beggyn my levyng**, attend to my occupation and beg my living. 1794 **herborwe**, lodging; **he . . . hemselfe**, they . . . themselves; **that**, so that. 1798 **worshepful wifys lappys**, the laps of honorable women. 1798–99 **wold puttyn schirtys ther upon**, would put shirts on the image. 1799 **thei**, though.

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meditacyons in the byrth and the childhode of Crist, and sche thankyd God forasmech  
as sche saw thes creaturys han so gret feyth in that sche sey wyth hir bodily eye lych  
1805 as sche had beforne wyth hir gostly eye. Whan thes good women seyn this creatur  
wepyn, sobbyn, and cryen so wondirfully and myghtly that sche was nerhand  
ovyrcomyn therwyth, than thei ordeyned a good soft bed and leyd hir ther upon and  
comfortyd hir as mech as thei myth for owyr Lordys lofe, blyssed mot he ben.

31

The forseyd creatur had a ryng the whech owyr Lord had comawndyd hir to do  
1810 makyn whil she was at hom in Ingland and dede hir gravyn ther upon, “Jhesus est  
amor meus.” Sche had mech thowt how sche schulde kepe this ryng fro thevys and  
stelyng as sche went be the cuntreys, for sche thowt sche wold not a lost the ryng for  
a thowsand pownde and meche mor because that sche dede it makyn be the byddyng  
of God. And also sche weryd it be hys byddyng, for sche purposyd befortyme er than  
1815 sche had it be revelacyon nevyr to a weryd ryng. And, as it happyd hir to be herberwyd  
in a good manrys hows, and many neyborwys comyn in to cheryn hir for hir perfeccyon  
and hir holynes, and sche gaf hem the mett of Cristys grave, the whech thei receyved  
ful goodly, havyng gret joy therof, and thankyd hir hly therfore, sithen this creatur  
1820 went to hir chawmbre and let hir ryng hang be hir purs stryng whech sche bar at hir  
brest. In the morwenyng on the next day whan sche wold a takyn hir ryng it was go,  
sche myth not fyndyn it. Than had schemekyl hevynes and compleyned to the good  
wyfe of the hows, seying in this wyse, “Madam, my bone maryd ryng to Jhesu Crist,  
as ho seyth, it is awey.” The good wyfe, undirstondyng what sche ment, preyde hir to  
1825 prey for hir, and sche chongyd hir cher and hir cuntenawns wondyrly as thow sche  
had ben gulty. Than this creatur toke a candel in hir hand and sowt al abowtyn hir bed  
ther sche had leyn al nygth, and the good wyfe of the hows toke another candel in hir  
hand and bisyed hir to sekyn also abowte the bed. And at the last sche fonde the ryng

**1806 nerhand**, nearly. **1810 gravyn**, engrave. **1810–11 “Jhesus est amor meus,”** Jesus is  
my love. **1811 thevys**, thieves. **1814–15 purposyd befortyme er . . . a weryd ryng**, previously  
intended, before she had it by revelation, never to wear a ring. **1816 cheryn**, encourage.  
**1817 mett**, measure. **1822 bone maryd**, good marriage. **1823 as ho seyth**, as one might say;  
awey, lost. **1825 sowt**, sought.

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undyr the bed on the bordys, and wyth gret joye sche telde the good wyfe that sche had fownden hir ryng. Than the good wyfe, obeyng hir, preyd this creatur of forgevenes  
1830 as sche cowde, “Bone Cristian, prey pur me.” Aftyrward this creatur cam to Assyse and ther sche met wyth a Frer Menowr, an Englischman, and a solempne clerke he was holdyn. Sche tolde hym of hir maner levynge, of hir felingys, of hir revelacyons, and of the grace that God wroot in hir sowle be holy inspiracyons and hy contemplacyons, and how owyr Lord dalyed to hir sowle in a maner of spekyng. Than  
1835 the worshepful clerke seyd that sche was mech beholdyn to God, for he seyd he had nevyr herd of non sweche in this worlde levynge for to be so homly wyth God be lofe and homly dalyawnce as sche was, thankyd be God of hys gyftys, for it is hys goodnes and no mannys mertye. Upon a tyme as this creatur was in cherche at Assyse, ther was schewyd owyr Ladys kerche whech sche weryd her in erth wyth gret lyghth and gret  
1840 reverens. Than this creatur had gret devocyon. Sche wept, sche sobbyd, sche cryed wyth gret plenté of teerys and many holy thowtys. Sche was ther also on Lammes Day, whan ther is gret pardon of plenyr remyssyon, for to purchasyn grace, mercy, and forgevenes for hirself, for alle hir frendys, for alle hir enmys, and for alle the sowlys in purgatory. And ther was a lady was comyn fro Rome to purchasyn hir  
1845 pardon. Hir name was Margaret Florentyne and sche had wyth hir many Knygtys of Roodys, many gentylwomen, andmekyl good caryage. Than Richard, the brokebakkyd man, went to hir, preyng hir that this creatur myght gon wyth hir to Rome and hymself also for to be kept fro perel of thevys. And than that worshepful lady receyved hem into hir cumpayne and let hem gon wyth hir to Rome as God wolde. Whan the forseyd  
1850 creatur was comyn into Rome, and thei that weryn hir felaws beforntyme and put hir owt of her cumpany weryn in Rome also and herd tellyn of swech a woman was come thedyr, thei had gret wondir how sche cam ther in safté. And than sche went and ordeynd hir white clothys and was clad al in white liche as sche was comawndyd for to do yerys befor in hir sowle be revelacyon, and now it was fulfilt in effect. Than  
1855 was this creatur receyved into the hospital of Seynt Thomas of Cawntyrbury in Rome and ther was sche howselyd every Sonday wyth gret wepyng, boistows sobbyng, and

1828 **bordys**, boards. 1830 **pur**, for; **Assyse**, Assisi. 1831 **Frer Menowr**, Franciscan. 1839 **kerche**, veil (The Lower Church of St. Francis holds the Veil of Our Lady.). 1841–42 **Lammes Day**, Lammas Day (August 1). 1842 **plenyr**, plenary. 1845–46 **Knygtys of Roodys**, Knights of Rhodes. 1846 **mekyl good caryage**, ample means of conveyance. 1855 **hospital of Seynt Thomas of Cawntyrbury**, hospice for English pilgrims to Rome.

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lowde crying and was hly belovyd wyth the maystyr of the hospital and wyth alle  
hys brethyr. And than thorw steryng of hyr gostly enmy ther cam a preste that was  
holdyn an holy man in the hospital and also in other placys of Rome, the whech was  
1860 on of hir felaws and on of hir owyn cuntremen. And notwythstondyng hys holynes he  
spak so evyl of this creatur and slawndryd so hir name in the hospital that thorw hys  
evyl langage sche was put owte of the hospital that sche myth no lengar be schrevyn  
ne howselyd therin.

32

Whan this creatur sey sche was forsakyn and put fro among the good men, sche  
1865 was ful hevy, most for sche had no confessowr ne myth not be schrevyn than as sche  
wolde. Than preyde sche owyr Lord of hys mercy that he wolde disposyn for hir as  
was most plesawns unto hym, wyth gret plenté of teerys. And sithyn sche clepyd onto  
hir the forseyd Richard wyth the broke bak, preyng hym to go ovyr to a cherch agen  
the hospital and enformyn the person of the chyrche of hir maner of governawnce,  
1870 and what sorwe sche had, and how sche wept for sche myth not be schrevyn ne  
howselyd, and what compuncyon and contricyon sche had for hir synnes. Than Ri-  
chard went to the person and enformyd hym of this creatur, and how owyr Lord gaf  
hir contricyon and compuncyon wyth gret plenté of teerys, and how sche desired to  
be howseld every Sonday yyf sche myth and sche had no preste to be schrevyn to.  
1875 And than the person, heryng of hir contricyon and compuncyon, was ryth glad and  
bad sche schulde come to hym in the name of Jhesu and sey hir confiteor, and he  
schulde howseln hire hys owyn self, for he cowde not undyrstond non Englysch. Than  
owyr Lord sent Seynt John the Evangelyst to heryn hir confessyon, and sche seyd  
“*Benedicité*.” And he seyd “*Dominus*” verily in hir sowle that sche saw hym and herd  
1880 hym in hire gostly undirstondyng as sche schuld a do an other preste be hir bodily  
wittys. Than sche teld hym alle hir synnes and al hir hevynes wyth many swemful

**1865 schrevyn**, shriven. **1871 howselyd**, administered the sacrament. **1876 confiteor**, con-  
fession of sins. **1878 Seynt John the Evangelyst**, St. John, the beloved disciple. He also  
appeared to Elizabeth of Hungary, whose *Revelation* was possibly important to Kempe. See  
McNamer, Staley (1994). **1879 “Benedicité,”** Bless you; “*Dominus*,” Lord. **1881 swemful**,  
sorrowful.

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teerys, and he herd hir ful mekely and benyngly. And sythyn he enjoyned hir penawns that sche schuld do for hir trespass and asoyled hir of hir synnes wyth swet wordys and meke wordys, hly strengthyng hir to trostyn in the mercy of owyr Lord Jhesu Crist,  
1885 and bad hir that sche schulde receyven the sacrament of the awter in the name of Jhesu. And sithyn he passyd awey fro hir. Whan he was go, sche preyd wyth al hir hert alle the tyme as sche herd hir messe, “Lord, as wistly as thu art not wroth wyth me, grawnt me a welle of teerys, wherthorw I may receyve thi precyows body wyth al maner terys of devocyon to thi worshep and encresyng of my meryte, for thu art my  
1890 joye, Lord, my blysse, my comfort, and alle the tresor that I have in this world, for other werdlys joye coveyt I non but only the. And therfor, my derworthy Lord and my God, forsake me not.” Than owyr blysful Lord Crist Jhesu answeryd to hir sowle and seyd, “My derworthy dowtyr, I swer be myn hy magesté that I schal nevyr forsakyn the. And, dowtyr, the mor schame, despite, and reprefe that thu sufferyst for my lofe,  
1895 the bettyr I lofe the, for I far liche a man that lovyth wel hys wyfe, the mor envye that men han to hir the bettyr he wyl arayn hir in despite of hir enmys. And ryth so, dowtyr, schal I faryn wyth the. In no thyng that thu dost, dowtyr, ne seyst, thu mayst no bettyr plesyn God than belevyn that he lovyth the, for, yyf it were possybyl that I myth wepyn wyth the, I wold wepyn wyth the, dowtyr, for the compassion that I have of the.  
1900 Tyme schal come whan thu schalt holdyn the ryth wel plesyd, for it schal be verifyed in the the comown proverbe that men seyn, ‘He is wel blyssed that may sytten on hys wel stool and tellyn of hys wo stool.’ And so schalt thu don, dowtyr, and al thi wepyng and thi sorwe schal turnyn into joy and blysse, the whech thu schalt nevyr mysse.”

33

An other tyme, as this creatur was at Seynt Jonys Cherch Lateranens befor the  
1905 awter heryng the messe hir thowt that the preste whech seyd messe semyd a good man

**1882 enjoyned**, commanded, directed. **1883 asoyled**, absolved. **1887 wistly**, certainly; **wroth**, angry. **1890 tresor**, treasure. **1891 werdlys**, worldly. **1895 far liche**, fare (proceed) like. **1896 to**, toward; **arayn**, array, dress. **1900 holdyn the ryth wel plesyd**, hold yourself right well pleased. **1901 the the**, you the. **1901–02 He is wel blyssed . . . hys wo stool**, He is well blessed who can sit on his well stool and tell of his woe stool, i.e., He is lucky who can sit in good fortune and tell of his former misfortune.

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and devowte. Sche was sor mevyd in spiryt to speke wyth hym. Than sche preyd hir man wyth the brokyn bak for to gon to the preste and preyn hym to spekyn wyth hir. Than the preste undirstod non Englysch ne wist not what sche seyd, and sche cowde non other langage than Englisch, and therfor thei spokyn be an interpretowr, a man  
1910 that telde her eythyr what other seyde. Than sche preyd the preste in the name of Jhesu that he wolde makyn hys preyeris to the blysful Trinité, to owir Lady, and to alle the blissed sentys in hevyn, also steryn other that lovedyn owir Lord to preyn for hym, that he myth han grace to undirstondyn hir langage and hir speche in swech thyngys as sche thorw the grace of God wold seyn and schewyn unto hym. The preste  
1915 was a good man, and of hys birth he was a Dewcheman, a good clerke, and a wel lernyd man, hily belovyd, wel cherschyd, and myche trostynd in Rome, and had on of the grettest office of any preste in Rome. Desyryng to plese God, he folwyd the cownsel of this creatur, and mad hys praerys to God devoutly as he cowde every day that he myth han grace to undirstandyn what the forseyd creatur wolde seyn to hym, and also  
1920 he mad other loverys of owyr Lord to prey for hym. Thus thei preyd therten days. And aftyr therten days the preste cam ageyn to hir to prevyn the effect of her preyrys, and than he undirstod what sche seyd in Englysch to hym and sche undirstod what that he seyd. And yet he undirstod not Englisch that other men spokyn; thow thei spokyn the same wordys that sche spak, yet he undirstod hem not les than sche spak hirselfe.  
1925 Than was sche confessyd to this preste of alle hir synnes as ner as hir mende wold servyn hir fro hir childhode unto that owre and receyved hir penawns ful joyfully. And sithyn sche schewyd hym the secret thyngys of revelacyons and of hey contemplacyons, and how sche had swech mend in hys Passyon and so gret compassyon whan God wolde geve it that sche fel down therwyth and myth not beryn it. Than sche  
1930 wept bittyrly, sche sobbyd boistowsly and cryed ful lowde and horybly that the pepil was oftyntymes aferd and gretly astoyned, demyng sche had ben vexyd wyth sum evyl spiryt, not levyng it was the werk of God but rathyr sum evyl spiryt, er a sodeyn sekenes, er ellys simulacyon and ypocrisy falsly feyned of hir owyn self. The preste had gret trost that it was the werk of God, and, whan he wolde mystostyn, owyr Lord  
1935 sent hym swech tokenys be the forseyd creatur of hys owyn mysgovernawns and hys

**1908 cowde**, knew. **1909 be**, by means of, through. **1912 sentys**, saint; **steryn**, directing, urging; **other that lovedyn**, others who loved. **1920 therten**, thirteen. **1924 les than**, unless. **1928 swech mend**, such memory. **1931 demyng**, deeming, thinking. **1932 levyng**, believing. **1933 symulacyon**, simulation.

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levyng, the whech no man knew but God and he, as owyr Lord schewyd to hir be revelacyon and bad hir tellyn hym, that he wist wel therby hir felyngys wer trewe. And than this preste receyved hir ful mekely and reverently as for hys modyr and for hys syster and seyd he wolde supportyn hir agen hir enmys. And so he dede as long as  
1940 sche was in Rome and sufferd many evyl wordys and meche tribulacyon. And also he forsoke hys office beawse that he wolde supportyn hir in hir sobbyng and in hir crying whan alle hir cuntremen had forsakyn hir, for thei weryn evyr hir most enmys and cawsyd hir mych hevynes in every place ther they comyn, for thei wold that sche schulde neythyr a sobbyd ne cryed. And sche myth nowt chesyn, but that wolde thei  
1945 not belewyn. And ther thei wer evyr ageyn hir and ageyn the good man whech supportyd hir. And than this good man, seyng this woman so wondirfully sobbyn and cryin, and specialy on Sondays whan sche schuld ben howselde among alle the pepyl, purposyd hym to prevyn whethyr it wer the gyfte of God, as sche seyd, er ellys hir owyn feynyn by ypocrisy, as the pepyl seyd, and toke hir alone an other Sonday into an other chirche  
1950 whan mes was don and alle the pepil was hom, no man wetyng therof saf hymself and the clerk only. And, whan he schulde howselyn hir, sche wept so plentyuowsly and sobbyd and cryed so lowde that he was astoyned hymself, for it semyd to hys heryng that sche cryed nevyr so lowde befor that tyme. And than he belevyd fully that it was the werkyng of the Holy Gost and neithyr feynyn ne ypocrisé of hir owyn self. And  
1955 than aftyrward he was not abasshyd to heldyn wyth hir and to spekyn agens hem that wolde defamyn hir and spekyn evyl of hir tyl he was detractyd of the enmys of vertu nerhand as mech as sche, and that lykyd hym wel to suffir tribulacyon for Goddyns cawse. And meche pepyl in Rome that wer disposyd to vertu lovyd hym meche the mor and hir also and oftyntymes preyd hir to mete and madyn hir ryth gret cher,  
1960 preyng hir to prey for hem. And evyr hir owyn cuntremen wer obstynat, and specyaly a preste that was amonx hem. He steryd meche pepyl agen hir and seyd mech evyl of hir, for sche weryd white clothyng mor than other dedyn whech wer holyar and bettyr than evyr was sche as hym thowt. The cawse of hys malyce was for sche wold not obeyn hym. And sche wist wel it was ageyn the helth of hir sowle for to obeyn hym as  
1965 he wolde that sche schulde a don.

1944 **chesyn**, choose. 1946 **seyng**, seeing. 1950 **wetyng**, knowing; **saf**, except. 1956 **defamyn**, defame; **detractyd of**, disparaged by. 1957 **nerhand**, nearly.

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34

Than the good man, the Duche preste that sche was schrevyn onto, thorw the steryng  
of the Englysch preste whech was hir enmye askyd hir yf sche wolde be obedient unto  
hym er not. And sche seyd, "Ya, syr." "Wyl ye don than as I schal byd yow don?"  
"Wyth ryth good wyl, sire." "I charge yow than that ye leve yowr white clothys, and  
1970 weryth ageyn yowr blak clothys." And sche dede hys comawndment. And than had  
sche felyng that sche plesyd God wyth hir obediens. Than suffyrd sche many scornys  
of wifys of Rome. Thei askyd hir yyf malendrynes had robbyd hir, and sche seyd,  
"Nay, madame." Sythen, as sche went on pylgrimage, it happyd hir to metyn wyth the  
preste that was hir enmye, and he enjoyid gretly that sche was put fro hir wille and  
1975 seyd unto hir, "I am glad that ye gon in blak clothyng as ye wer wont to do." And sche  
seyd agen to hym, "Ser, owyr Lord wer not displesyd thow I weryd whyte clothys, for  
he wyl that I do so." Than the preste seyd to hir agen, "Now wote I wel that thu hast a  
devyl wythinne the, for I her hym spekyn in the to me." "A, good ser, I pray yow  
dryvyth hym away fro me, for God knowyth I wolde ryth fawyn don wel and plesyn  
1980 hym yf I cowde." And than he was ryth wroth and seyd ful many schrewyd wordys.  
And sche seyd to hym, "Ser, I hope I have no devyl wythinne me, for, yyf I had a  
devyl wythin me, wetyth wel I schuld ben wroth wyth yow and, sir, me thynkyth that  
I am nothyng wroth wyth yow for no thynge that ye can don onto me." And than the  
preste partyd awey fro hir wyth hevy cher. And than owyr Lord spak to this creatur in  
1985 hir sowle and seyd, "Dowtyr, drede the not what that evyr he sey onto the, for, thow  
he renne every yer to Jerusalem, I have no deynté of hym, for as long as he spekyth  
ageyns the, he spekyth ageyns me, for I am in the and thu art in me. And herby mayst  
thow knowyn that I suffyr many schrewyd wordys, for I have oftyntymes seyd to the  
that I schuld be newe crucifyed in the be schrewyd wordys, for thu schalt non otherwyse  
1990 ben slain than be schrewyd wordys sufferyng. For this preste that is thyn enmy he is  
but an ypocryte." Than the good preste hir confessowr bad hir be vertu of obediens  
and also in party of penawns that sche schulde servyn an hold woman that was a poure  
creatuer in Rome. And sche dede so sex wekys. Sche servyd hir as sche wolde a don  
owyr Lady. And sche had no bed to lyn in ne no clothys to be cured wyth saf hir owyn

**1972 wifys**, women; **malendrynes**, highwaymen. **1979 ryth fawyn**, right fain. **1980 schrewyd**,  
sharp. **1986 deynté of**, delight in, affection for. **1987 herby**, hereby. **1992 party**, part; **hold**,  
old; **poure**, poor. **1994 cured**, covered.

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1995 mentyl. And than was sche ful of vermyne and suffyrd gret peyn therwyth. Also sche fet hom watyr and stykkys in hir nekke for the poure woman and beggyd mete and wyn bothyn for hir. And, whan the pour womans wyn was sowr, this creatur hirself drank that sowr wyn and gaf the powr woman good wyn that sche had bowt for hir owyn selfe.

**35**

2000 As this creatur was in the Postelys Cherch at Rome on Seynt Laterynes Day, the Fadry of Hevyn seyd to hir, “Dowtyr, I am wel plesyd wyth the inasmeche as thu belevyst in alle the sacramentys of Holy Chirche and in al feyth that longith therto, and specialy for that thu belevyst in manhode of my sone and for the gret compassyon that thu hast of hys bittyr Passyon.” Also the Fadry seyd to this creatur, “Dowtyr, I wil 2005 han the weddyd to my Godhede, for I schal schewyn the my prevyteys and my cownseleys, for thu schalt wonyn wyth me wythoutyn ende.” Than the creatur kept sylens in hir sowle and answeryd not therto, for sche was ful sor aferd of the Godhed and sche cowde no skylle of the dalyawns of the Godhede, for al hir lofe and al hir affeccyon was set in the manhode of Crist and therof cowde sche good skylle and sche wolde for 2010 no thyng a partyd therfro. Sche was so meche affectyd to the manhode of Crist that whan sche sey women in Rome beryn children in her armys, yyf sche myth wetyn that thei wer ony men children, sche schuld than cryin, roryn, and wepyn as thei sche had seyn Crist in hys childhode. And, yyf sche myth an had hir wille, oftyntymes sche 2015 wolde a takyn the childeryn owt of the moderys armys and a kyssed hem in the stede of Criste. And, yyf sche sey a semly man, sche had gret peyn to lokyn on hym les than sche myth a seyn hym that was bothe God and man. And therfor sche cryed many tymes and oftyn whan sche met a semly man and wept and sobbyd ful sor in the manhood of Crist as sche went in the stretyes at Rome that thei that seyn hir wondryd ful mych on hir, for thei knew not the cawse. And therfor it was no wondyr yyf sche wer

1995 **mentyl**, mantle, cloak; **vermyn**, vermin. 1995–96 **fet hom**, fetched home. 1996 **in her nekke**, on her neck; **mete**, food. 1997 **sowr**, sour. 1998 **gaf**, gave. 2000 **Postelys Cherch**, Apostles’ Church; **Seynt Laterynes Day**, St. John Lateran’s Day, November 9. 2005 **prevyteys**, secrets. 2006 **wonyn**, dwell; **sylens**, silence. 2010 **to**, by. 2014 **stede**, place (i.e., instead of). 2015 **semly**, seemly, becoming.

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2020 stille and answeryd not the Fadry of Hevyn whan he told hir that sche schuld be weddyd to hys Godhed. Than seyd the Secunde Persone, Crist Jhesu, whoys manhode sche lovyd so meche, to hir, “What seyst thu, Margery, dowtyr, to my Fadry of thes wordys that he spekyth to the? Art thu wel plesyd that it be so?” And than sche wold not answeryn the Secunde Persone but wept wondir sor, desiryng to have stille hymselfe  
2025 and in no wyse to be departyd fro hym. Than the Secunde Persone in Trinité answeryd to hys Fadry for hir and seyde, “Fadry, have hir excused, for sche is yet but yong and not fully lernyd how sche schulde answeryn.” And than the Fadry toke hir be the hand in hir sowle befor the Sone and the Holy Gost and the Modyr of Jhesu and alle the twelve apostelys and Seynt Kateryn and Seynt Margarete and many other seyntys and  
2030 holy virgynes wyth gret multitude of awngelys, seying to hir sowle, “I take the, Margery, for my weddyd wyfe, for fayrar, for fowlar, for richar, for powerar, so that thu be buxom and bonyr to do what I byd the do. For, dowtyr, ther was nevyr childe so buxom to the modyr as I schal be to the bothe in wel and in wo, to help the and comfort the. And therto I make the suyrté.” And than the Modyr of God and alle the seyntys  
2035 that wer ther present in hir sowle preyde that thei myth have mech joy togedyr. And than the creatur wyth hy devocyon, wyth gret plenté of terys, thankyd God of this gostly comfort, heldyng hirself in hir owyn felyng ryth unworthy to any swech grace as sche felt, for sche felt many gret comfortys, bothe gostly comfortys and bodily comfortys. Sumtyme sche felt swet smellys wyth hir nose; it wer swettyr, hir thowt,  
2040 than evyr was ony swet erdry thyng that sche smellyd beforne, ne sche myth nevyr tellyn how swet it wern, for hir thowt sche myth a levyd therby yyf they wolde a lestyd. Sumtyme sche herd wyth hir bodily erys sweche sowndys and melodiis that sche myth not wel heryn what a man seyd to hir in that tyme les he spoke the lowder. Thes sowndys and melodiis had sche herd nyhand every day the terme of twenty-five  
2045 yere whan this boke was wretyn, and specialy whan sche was in devout prayer, also many tymes whil sche was at Rome and in Ingland bothe. Sche sey wyth hir bodily eyne many white thyngys flying al abowte hir on every syde as thykke in a maner as motys in the sunne; it weryn ryth sotyl and comfortabyl, and the brygtare that the sunne schyned, the bettyr sche myth se hem. Sche sey hem many dyvers tymes and in

**2021 whoys**, whose. **2031 fayrar**, fairer; **fowlar**, fouler; **powerar**, poorer. **2032 buxom**, gentle; **bonyr**, obedient. **2034 suyrté**, surety. **2041–42 a levyd . . . a lestyd**, could have lived thereby (i.e., on those sweet smells) had they lasted. **2044 nyhand**, almost. **2048 sotyl**, diaphanous; **brygtare**, brighter.

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2050 many dyvers placys, bothe in chirche and in hir chawmbre, at hir mete and in hir  
praerys, in felde and in towne, bothyn goyng and sytting. And many tymes sche was  
aferde what thei myth be, for sche sey hem as wel on nytyps in dyrkenes as on daylygth.  
Than, whan sche was aferde of hem,owir Lord seyd onto hir, “Be this tokyn, dowtyr,  
believe it is God that spekyth in the, for wherso God is hevyn is, and wher that God is  
ther be many awngelys, and God is in the and thu art in hym. And therfor be not  
aferde, dowtyr, for thes betokyn that thu hast many awngelys abowte the to kepyn the  
bothe day and nygth that no devyl schal han power ovyr the ne non evyl man to der the.”  
Than fro that tyme forwarde sche usyd to seyn whan sche saw hem comyn, “*Benedictus  
qui venit in nomine domini.*” Also owr Lord gaf hir an other tokne, the whech enduryd  
2055 abowtyn sixteen yer and it encresyd evyr mor and mor, and that was a flawme of fyer  
wondir hoot and delectabyl and ryth comfortabyl, nowt wastyng but evyr incresyng,  
of lowe, for, thow the wedyr wer nevyr so colde, sche felt the hete brennyng in hir  
brest and at hir hert, as verily as a man schuld felyn the material fyer yyf he put hys  
hand or hys fynger therin. Whan sche felt fyrst the fyer of love brennyng in her brest,  
2060 sche was aferd therof, and than owr Lord answeryd to hir mend and seyde, “Dowtyr,  
be not aferd, for this hete is the hete of the Holy Gost, the whech schal bren away alle  
thi synnes, for the fyer of lofe qwenchith alle synnes. And thu schalt undirstondyn be  
this tokyn the Holy Gost is in the, and thu wost wel wherthat evyr the Holy Gost is ther  
is the Fadir, and wher the Fadyr is ther is the Sone, and so thu hast fully in thi sowle al  
2065 the Holy Trinité. Therfor thow hast gret cawse to lovyn me ryth wel, and yet thu schalt  
han grettyr cawse than evyr thu haddyst to lovyn me, for thu schalt heryn that thu nevyr  
herdist, and thu schalt se that thu nevyr sey, and thu schalt felyn that thu nevyr feltist.  
For, dowtyr, thu art as sekyr of the lofe of God as God is God. Thy sowle is mor sekyr  
of the lofe of God than of thin owyn body, for thi sowle schal partyn fro thy body but  
2070 God schal nevyr partyn fro thi sowle, for thei ben onyd togedyr wythowtyn ende.  
Therfor, dowtyr, thu hast as gret cawse to be mery as any lady in this werld, and, yyf  
thu knew, dowtyr, how meche thu plesyst me whan thu suffyrst me wilfully to spekyn

2057 **der**, harm. 2058–59 “*Benedictus qui venit in nomine domini*,” “Blessed is he who  
comes in the name of the Lord,” the blessing used to welcome Christ’s entrance into the  
elements of the Mass, thus a sentence underlining the sacramental nature of her visions.  
2060 **flawme of fyer**, the sensation of inward burning was a fairly widespread experience  
among medieval mystics. 2062 **lowe**, flame. 2064 **fyer**, fire. 2071–72 **heryn that thu nevyr  
herdist**, hear what you never heard. 2073 **sekyr**, certain. 2075 **onyd**, joined.

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in the, thu schuldist nevyr do otherwise, for this is an holy lyfe and the tyme is ryth  
wel spent. For, dowtyr, this lyfe plesyth me mor than weryng of the haburjon or of the  
2080 hayr or fastyng of bred and watyr, for, yyf thu seydest cvcry day a thowsand Pater  
Noster, thu schuldist not plesyn me so wel as thu dost whan thu art in silens and  
sufferyst me to speke in thy sowle.

36

“Fastyng, dowtyr, is good for yong begynnars and discrete penawns, namly that  
her gostly fadys gevyth hem er injoyneth hem for to do. And for to byddyn many  
2085 bedys it is good to hem that can no bettyr do, and yet it is not parfyte. But it is a good  
wey to perfeccyonward. For I telle the, dowtyr, thei that arn gret fastarys and gret  
doers of penawnce thei wold that it schuld ben holdyn the best lyfe; also thei that  
gevyn hem to sey many devocyonys thei wold han that the best lyfe, and thei that  
gevyn mech almes thei wold that that wer holdyn the best lyfe. And I have oftyntymes,  
2090 dowtyr, told the that thynkyng, wepyng, and hy contemplacyon is the best lyfe in  
erthe. And thu schalt have mor meryte in hevyn for o yer of thynkyng in thi mende than  
for an hundryd yer of preyng wyth thi mowth, and yet thu wylt not levyn me, for thu  
wilt byddyn many bedys whedyr I wil or not. And yet dowtyr, I wyl not be displesyd  
wyth the whedir thu thynke, sey, or speke, for I am alwey plesyd wyth the. And, yyf I  
2095 wer in erde as bodily as I was er I deyd on the cros, I schuld not ben aschamyd of the  
as many other men ben, for I schuld take the be the hand amongs the pepil and make  
the gret cher that thei schuldyn wel knowyn that I loyvd the ryth wel. For it is convenient  
the wyf to be homly wyth hir husband. Be he nevyr so gret a lorde and sche so powr  
a woman whan he weddyth hir, yet thei must ly togedir and rest togedir in joy and pes.  
2100 Ryght so mot it be twyx the and me, for I take non hed what thu hast be but what thu  
woldist be. And oftyntymes have I telde the that I have clene forgave the alle thy  
synnes. Therfore most I nedys be homly wyth the and lyn in thi bed wyth the. Dowtyr,  
thow desyrest gretly to se me, and thu mayst boldly, whan thu art in thi bed, take me to  
the as for thi weddyd husband, as thy derworthy derlyng, and as for thy swete sone,

2079 **haburjon**, habergeon, jacket of mail. 2080 **hayr**, hair shirt. 2084–85 **byddyn many bedys**, say many prayers. 2085 **parfyte**, perfect. 2086 **fastarys**, fasters. 2091 **o yer**, one year.  
2094 **whedir**, whatever. 2095 **erde**, earth. 2098 **homly**, familiar. 2100 **hed**, heed.

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2105 for I wyl be lovyd as a sone schuld be lovyd wyth the modyr and wil that thu love me,  
dowtyr, as a good wife owyth to love hir husbonde. And therfor thu mayst boldly take  
me in the armys of thi sowle and kyssen my mowth, myn hed, and my fete as swetly as  
thow wylt. And, as oftyntymes as thu thynkyst on me er woldyst don any good dede to  
me, thu schalt have the same mede in hevyn as yyf thu dedist it to myn owyn precyows  
2110 body whech is in hevyn, for I aske no mor of the but thin hert for to lovyn that lovyth  
the, for my lofe is evyr redy to the." Than sche gaf thankynge and preysing to owr Lord  
Jhesu Crist for the hy grace and mercy that he schewyd unto hir unworthy wreich.  
Thys creatur had divers tokenys in hir bodily heryng. On was a maner of sownde as it  
had ben a peyr of belwys blowyng in hir ere. Sche, beyng abasshed therof, was warnyd  
2115 in hir sowle no fer to have for it was the sounnd of the Holy Gost. And than owr Lord  
turnyd that sownde into the voys of a dowe, and sithyn he turnyd it into the voys of a  
lityl bryd whech is callyd a reedbrest that song ful merily oftyntymes in hir ryght ere.  
And than schuld sche evyrmor han gret grace aftyr that sche herd swech a tokyn. And  
sche had been used to swech tokenys abowt twenty-five yer at the writyng of this  
2120 boke. Than seyd owr Lord Jhesu Crist to hys creatur, "Be thes tokenys mayst thu wel  
wetyn that I love the, for thu art to me a very modir and to al the world for that gret  
charité that is in the, and yet I am cawse of that charité myself, and thu schalt have gret  
mede therfor in Hevyn.

37

2125 "Dowtyr, for thu art so buxom to my wille and clevyst as sore onto me as the skyn  
of stokfysche clevyth to a manrys handys whan it is sothyn, and wilt not forsake me  
for no schame that any man can don to the, and thu seyst also that thow I stod beforne  
the myn owyn persone and seyd to the that thu schuldist nevyr han my lofe, ne nevyr  
comyn in hevyn, ne nevyr sen my face, yet seist thu, dowtyr, that thu woldist nevyr  
forsake me in erthe, ne nevyr lofe me the lesse, ne nevyr do the lesse besynes to plesse  
2130 me, thow thu schuldyst lye in helle wylbowtyn ende, for thu maist not forber my lofe in  
erthe, ne thu can han non other comforth but me only, whech am I, thi God, and am al

2109 **mede**, reward. 2114 **peyr of belwys**, pair of bellows; **ere**, ear. 2115 **fer**, fear. 2116 **voys of a dowe**, voice of a dove. 2124 **clevyst as sore**, cleaves as sorely, tenderly. 2125 **stokfysche**, fish dried hard in the open air; **sothyn**, seethed, boiled. 2129 **besynes**, business.

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joy and al blysse to the. Therfore I sey to the, derworthy dowtyr, it is unpossybyl that any swech sowle schuld be dampnyd or departyd fro me whech hath so gretmeknes and charité to me. And therfor, dowtyr, drede the nevyr for alle the gret behestys that  
2135 I have behite to the and to alle thyn and to alle thy gostly faderys schal ever be trewe and trewly fulfilled whan tyme comyth. Have no dowt therof.” An other tyme whil sche was in Rome a lityl befor Cristemes, owr Lord Jhesu Criste comawndyd hir to gon to hir gostly fadry, Wenslawe be name, and byddyn hym gevyn hir leve to weryn ageyn hir white clothys, for he had put hir therfro be vertu of obediens, as is wretyn beforne.  
2140 And, whan sche teld hym the wyl of owr Lord, he durst not onys sey nay. And so weryd sche white clothys evyr aftyr. Than owr Lord bad hir that sche schuld at Cristemes gon hom ageyn to hir ostys howse ther sche was at hostel befortyme. And than sche went to a powr woman whech sche servyd at that tyme be the byddyng of hir confessowr, as is beforne wretyn, and telde the powr woman how sche must gon fro  
2145 hir. And than the powr woman was ryth sory and mad gret mone for hir departyng. And than this creatur teld hir how it was the wil of God that it schuld be so, and than sche toke it the mor esily. Aftyrward, as this creatur was in Rome, owr Lord bad hir gevyn awey al hir good and makyn hir bar for hys lofe. And anon sche wyth a fervent desyr to plesyn God gaf awey swech good as sche had and sweche as sche had borwyd  
2150 also of the brokebakkyd man that went wyth hir. Whan he wist how that sche had govyn awey hys good, he was gretly mevyd and evyl plesyd for sche gaf awey hys good, and spak ryth scharply to hir. And than sche seyd unto hym, “Richard, be the grace of God we schal comyn hom into Inglond ryth wel. And ye schal come to me in Brystowe in the Whitsunwoke, and ther schal I pay yow ryth wel and trewly be the grace of God, for I trust ryth wel that he that bad me gevyn it awey for hys lofe wil help me to payn it ageyn.” And so he dede.  
2155

Afftyr that this creatur had thus govyn awey hir good and had neyther peny ne

2134 **behestys**, promises. 2135 **behite**, promised. 2136 **dowt**, doubt. 2140 **durst not onys**, dared not once. 2142 **ostys**, host’s. 2145 **mone**, moan. 2148 **bar**, bare; **lofe**, love. 2151 **gaf**, gave. 2154 **Brystowe**, Bristol; **Whitsunwoke**, Whitsun week.

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halfpeny to helpyn hirself wyth, as sche lay in Seynt Marcellys Chirche in Rome,  
thynkyng and stodyng wher sche schuld han hir levyng inasmech as sche had no sylvir  
2160 to cheys hir wytthal, owr Lord answeryd to hir mende and seyde, “Dowtyr, thu art  
not yet so powr as I was whan I heng nakyd on the cros for thy lofe, for thu hast  
clothys on thy body, and I had non. And thou hast cownseld other men to ben powr  
for my sake, and therfor thou must folwyn thyn owyn cownsel. But drede the not,  
dowtyr, for ther is gold to theward, and I have hyte the befortyme that I wolde nevyr  
2165 fayl the. And I schal preyn myn owyn modir to beggyn for the, for thu hast many tymes  
beggyd for me and for my modir also. And therfor drede the not. I have frendys in  
every cuntré and schal make my frendys to comfort the.” Whan owr Lord had thus  
swetly dalyed to hir sowle, sche thankyd hym of this gret conforte, havyng good tryst  
it schuld be as he seyd. Sythen sche, risyng up, went forth in the strete and met casualy  
2170 wyth a good man. And so they fellyn in good comunicacyon as thei went togedir be  
the wey, to whom sche had many good talys and many good exhortacyonys tyl God  
visited hym wyth terys of devocyon and of compuncyon to hys hey comfort and  
consolacyon. And than he gaf hir mony, be the whech sche was wel relevyd and  
comfortyd a good while. Than on a nyth sche say in vision how owyr Lady, hir thowt,  
2175 sat at the mete wyth many worsheful personys and askyd mete for hir. And than  
thowt this creatur that owr Lordys wordys wer fulfilled gostly in that vision, for he  
behestyd this creatur a lityl beforne that he schuld preyn hys modir to beggyn for hir. And  
in schort tyme aftyr this visyon sche met wyth a worsheful lady, Dame Margarete  
Florentyn, the same lady that browt hir fro Assyse into Rome. And neithyr of hem  
2180 cowd wel undirstand other but be syngnys er tokenys and in fewe comown wordys.  
And than the lady seyd onto hir, “Margerya in poverté?” Sche, undirstondyng what  
the lady ment, seyd agen, “Ya, grawnt poverté, Madam.” Than the lady comawndyd  
hir to etyn wyth hir every Sonday and set hir at hir owen tabil abovyn hirself and leyd  
hir mete wyth hir owyn handys. Than thys creatur sat and wept ful sor, thankyng owr  
2185 Lord that sche was so cheryd and cherisched for hys lofe of hem that cowd not  
undirstond hir langage. Whan thei had etyn, the good lady used to takyn hir an hamper  
wyth other stiffe that sche myght makyn hir potage therwyth, as meche as wolde

2158 **Seynt Marcellys Chirche**, the Church of Santa Marcello. 2160 **cheys**, sustain. 2164  
**theward**, thee-ward, i.e., coming to you; **hyte the**, promised you. 2173 **relevyd**, relieved.  
2179 **Assyse**, Assisi. 2180 **syngnys**, signs. 2182 **grawnt**, great. 2187 **potage**, soup, stew.

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servyn hir for a too days mete, and filled hir botel wyth good wyn. And sumtyme sche  
gaf hir an eight bolendinys therto. And than an other man in Rome, whech was clepyd  
2190 Marcelle, bad hir to mete two days in the woke, whos wyfe was gret wyth childe, hly  
desiryng to have had this creatur to godmodyr to hir childe whan it had ben born, and  
sche abood not so long in Rome. And also ther was an holy mayden gaf this creatur hir  
mete on the Wednysday. Other days whan sche was not purveyd sche beggyd hir  
mete fro dor to dore.

39

2195 An other tyme, ryth as sche cam be a powr womanys hows, the powr woman clepyd  
hir into hir hows and dede hir sytten be hir lytyl fyer, gevynge hir wyn to drynke in a  
cuppe of ston. And sche had a lytel manchylde sowkyng on hir brest, the whech  
sowkyd o while on the moderys brest; an other while it ran to this creatur, the modyr  
sytyng ful of sorwe and sadness. Than this creatur brast al into wepyng, as thei sche  
2200 had seyn owr Lady and hir sone in tyme of hys Passyon, and had so many of holy  
thowtys that sche myth nevir tellyn the halvendel, but evyr sat and wept plentyuowsly  
a long tyme that the powr woman, havyng compassyon of hir wepyng, preyd hir to  
sesyn, not knowyng why sche wept. Than owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to the creatur,  
“Thys place is holy.” And than sche ros up and went forth in Rome and sey meche  
2205 poverté among the pepyl. And than sche thankyd God hly of the poverté that sche  
was in, trostyng therthorw to be partynyr wyth hem in meryte. Than was ther a gret  
jentylwoman in Rome preyng thys creatur to be godmodyr of hir childe and namyd it  
aftyr Seynt Brigypt, for they haddyn knowlach of hir in hir lyvetyme. And so sche  
dede. Sithyn God gaf hir grace to have gret lofe in Rome, bothyn of men and of  
2210 women, and gret favour among the pepyl. Whan the maystyr and brothyr of the hos-  
pital of Seynt Thomas, wher sche was refusyd befortyme, as is wretyn beforne, herd  
tellyn what lofe and what favouwr sche had in the cyté, they preyd hir that sche wolde  
come ageyn to hem, and sche schulde be wolcomear than evyr sche was beforne, for thei

**2188 botel**, bottle. **2189 bolendinys**, coins of Bologna; **clepyd**, called, named. **2190 bad hir to mete**, invited her to dinner. **2193 purveyd**, supplied, taken care of. **2197 sowkyng**, sucking.  
**2199 brast**, burst. **2201 halvendel**, half. **2203 sesyn**, cease. **2204 sey**, saw. **2208 Seynt Brigypt**, Bridget of Sweden. **2213 wolcomear**, more welcome.

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weryn ryth sory that thei had put hir awey fro hem. And sche thankyd hem for her  
2215 charité and dede her comawndment. And, whan sche was comyn agen to hem, thei  
madyn hir ryth good cher and weryn rith glad of hir comyng. Than fond sche ther hir  
that was hir mayden befortyme, and wyth ryght schulde a be so styllle, dwellyng in the  
hospital in meche welth and prosperyté, for sche was kepar of her wyn. And this  
creature went sumtyme to hir for cawse ofmekenes and preyd hir of mete and drynke,  
2220 and the mayden gaf hir wyth good wyl, and sumtyme a grote therto. Than sche  
compleyned to hir mayden and seyd that sche thowt gret swem of her departyng and  
what slawndir and evyl wordys men seyd of hir for thei wer asundyr, but wold sche  
nevr the rathyr be ageyn wyth hir. Aftyrward this creature spak wyth Seynt Brydys  
mayden in Rome, but sche cowd not undirstondyn what sche seyd. Than had sche a  
2225 man that cowde undirstondyn hir langage, and that man tolde Seynt Brygiptys mayden  
what this creature seyde and how sche askyd aftyr Seynt Brigupty, hir lady. Than the  
mayden seyd that hir lady, Seynt Brigupty, was goodly and meke to every creature and  
that sche had a lawhyng cher. And also the good man wher this creature was at hoste  
telde hir that he knew hir hys owyn selfe but he wend lityl that sche had ben so holy a  
2230 woman as sche was, for sche was evyr homly and goodly to alle creaturys that woldyn  
spekyn wyth hir. Sche was in the chawmbre that Seynt Brigupty deyd in, and herd a  
Dewche preste prechyn of hir therin and of hir revelacyonys and of hir maner of  
levyng. And sche knelyd also on the ston on the whech owr Lord aperyd to Seynt  
Brigypete and telde hir what day sche schuld deyn on. And this was on of Seynt Brigupty's  
2235 days that this creature was in hir chapel, whech befortyme was hir chawmbre that sche  
deyd in. Owr Lord sent swech tempestys of wyndys and reynes and dyvers impressyonys  
of eyrs that thei that wer in the feldys and in her labowrys wythowtynforth wer  
compellyd to entyr howsys in socowryng of her bodiis to enchewyn dyvers perellys.  
Thorw swech tokenys this creature suposyd that owr Lord wold hys holy seyntys day

**2217 and wyth ryght schulde a be so styllle**, and by right should be so still. **2218 kepar**,  
keeper. **2221 swem**, sorrow. **2223 Brydys**, Bridget's. **2228 lawhyng cher**, laughing counte-  
nance; **at hoste**, boarding. **2229 wend**, thought. **2234–35 on of Seynt Brigupty's days**, There  
were three days sacred to St. Bridget, July 23, the feast of her death; May 28, the feast of her  
translation; and Oct 7, the medieval date for her canonization. See Meech, pp. 304–05, for  
reasons for linking this passage to the latter date. **2236–37 impressyonys of eyrs**, changes,  
disturbances. **2238 in socowryng . . . dyvers perellys**, in relief of their bodies [and] to avoid  
diverse perils. **2239 wold**, wanted.

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2240 schulde ben halwyd and the seynt had in mor worshep than sche was at that tyme. And sumtyme, whan this creatur wolde a gon the Stacyownys, our Lord warnyd hir on the nyght beyng in hir bed that sche schulde not gon owte fer fro hir ostel, for he schulde sendyn gret tempestys that day of levenys and thunderys. And so it was in dede. Ther wer so gret tempestys that yer of thunderys and levenys, of gret reynes and dyvers  
2245 wederyngys, that ryth elde men that tyme dwellyng in Rome seydyn thei had nevyr seyn swech befor, the levenys wer so plentyuows and so brygth schyning wythinne her howsys that thei wendyn verily it schulde a brent her howsys wyth contentys. Than cryed thei upon the forseyd creatur to prey for hem, fully trustyng that sche was the servawnt of almyghty God and thorw hir prayerys thei schuldyn ben holbyn and  
2250 socowryd. This creatur at her request preyng owr Lord of mercy, he answeryd in hir sowle, seying, “Dowtyr, be not aferd, for ther schal no wedyr ne tempest noyin the, and therfor mystrost me not, for I schal nevyr disceyven the.” And owr merciful Lord Cryst Jhesu, as it plesyd hym, wythdrow the tempestys, preservyng the pepyl fro alle myschevys.

**40**

2255 Than thorw the provysyon of owr mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu ther was comyn a preste, a good man, owte of Inglond into Rome wyth other felawshep speryng and inqwyryng diligently aftyr the seyd creatur whom he had nevyr seyn befor, ne sche hym. But whil he was in Inglond he herd tellyn of swech a woman was at Rome wyth the whech he longyd hly to spekyn yyf God wolde grawntyn hym grace. Wherfor,  
2260 whyl he was in hys owyn lond, he, purposyng to se this creatur whan he thorw the sufferawns of owr Lord myght come ther sche was, purveyd golde to bryng hir in relevyng of hir yyf sche had nede. Than be inqwyryng he cam into the place wher that sche was, and ful humbely and mekely he clepyd hir modyr, preyng hir for charité to receyven hym as hir sone. Sche seyd that he was wolcom to God and to hir as to hys  
2265 owyn modyr. So be holy dalyawns and communycacyon sche felt wel he was a good

**2240 halwyd**, hallowed. **2241 Stacyownys**, Stations (of Rome), i.e., visiting and praying in a sequence of churches in Rome. **2242 fer**, far; **ostel**, hostel. **2243 levenys**, lightnings. **2245 wederyngys**, stormy weather; **elde**, old. **2247 brent**, burnt; **contentys**, contents. **2249–50 ben holbyn and socowryd**, be helped and succoured. **2256 speryng**, asking.

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man. And than sche, discuryng the prevyté of hert, revelyd what grace God wroot in  
hir sowle thorw hys holy inspiracyon and sumwhat of hir maner of levynge. Than wolde  
he no lengar suffyr hir to beggyn hir mete fro dore to dore, but preyid hir to eten  
wyth hym and hys felawshep, les than good men and women be the wey of charité and  
2270 for gostly comfort wolde preyn hir to mete. Than he wolde that she schulde take it in the  
name of owr Lord, and ellys sche ete wyth hym and wyth hys felawschep every day,  
and gaf hir golde sufficiently to come hom wyth into Ingland. And than was fulfilled  
that owr Lord seyd to hir a lityl beforne, “Gold is to thewarde.” And so it was in dede,  
thankyd be alle myghty God. Than summe of hir felaws whech sche had ben wyth at  
2275 Jerusalem comyth to this good preste, newly come to Rome, compleynyng of hir, and  
seyd that sche was schrevyn at a preste whech cowde not undirstondyn hir langage  
ne hir confessyown. Than this good preste, trostyng to hir as to hys modyr, desyryng  
the helth of hir sowle, askyd of hir yf hir confessowr undirstod hir whan sche spak to  
hym er not. “Good sone, I beseche yow preyth hym to dyne wyth yow and wyth yowr  
2280 felawys and late me be present, and than schal ye knowyn the trewh.” Hyr confessowr  
was preyd to mete and, whan tyme cam, sett and servyd wyth this good preste and hys  
felaschep, the seyd creatur beyng present, the good preste of Inglonde dalyng and  
comownyng in her owyn langage, Englysch. The Duche preste, a worthy clerke as is  
2285 wretyn beforne, confessowr to the seyd creatur, satt al stille in a maner of hevynes for  
cawse he undirstod not what thei seyden in Englysch les than thei spokyn Latyn. And  
thei dede it in purpose, hys unwetyng, to prevyn yf he undirstod Englysch er not. At  
the last, the seyd creatur, seyng and wel undirstondyng that hir confessowr undirstod  
not her langage and that was tediows to hym, than, in party to comfort hym and in  
party er ellys meche mor to prevyn the werk of God, sche telde in hyr owyn langage in  
2290 Englysch a story of Holy Writte whech as sche had lernyd of clerkys whil sche was at  
hom in Ingland, for sche wolde spekyn of no vanyté ne of no fantasiis. Than thei  
askyd hir confessowr yf he undirstod that sche had seyd, and he anon in Latyn telde  
hem the same wordys that sche seyd beforne in Englisch, for he cowde neythyr speke  
Englysch ne undirstondyn Englisch save only aftyr hir tunge. And than thei had gret  
2295 mervayle, for thei wist wel that he undirstod what sche seyde and sche undirstod what

**2266 discuryng the prevyté of hert**, disclosing the secret of (her) heart. **2269 les than**,  
unless. **2273 “Gold is to thewarde,”** lit., Gold is to thee-ward, or gold is coming to you. **2280 late**, let. **2281 preyd**, prayed, invited. **2286 in**, on; **hys unwetyng**, he (the German priest’s)  
unknowing. **2288 her**, their. **2288–89 in party**, in part.

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he seyd, and he cowde undirstonde non other Englyschman, so blyssed mote God ben  
that mad an alyon to undirstondyn hir whan hir owyn cuntrmen had forsakyn hir and  
wolde not heryn hir confessyon les than sche wolde a left hir wepyng and spekyng of  
holynes. And yet sche myth not wepyn but whan God gaf it hir. And oftyntymes he  
2300 gaf it so plentyuowsly that sche cowde not wythstonde it. But the mor that sche wolde  
a wythstonde it er put it awey, the mor strongly it wroot in hir sowle wyth so holy  
thowtys that sche schulde not sesyn. Sche schulde sobbyn and cryen ful lowde al  
ageyn hir wyl that many man and woman also wondryd on hir therfore.

41

Sumtyme, whan the forseyd creatur was at sermownys wher Duchemen and other  
men prechyd, techyng the lawys of God, sodeyn sorwe and hevynes occupying hir hert  
cawsyd hir to compleyn wyth mornyngh cher for lak of undirstondyng, desyryng to be  
refreschyd wyth sum crumme of gostly undirstondyng unto hir most trustyd and  
entyrlyest belovyd sovereyn, Crist Jhesu, whos melydiows voys swettest of alle  
savowrys softly sowndyng in hir sowle, seyd, “I schal preche the and teche the myselfe,  
2310 for thi wyl and thy desyr is acceptabyl unto me.” Than was hir sowle so delectably  
fed wyth the swet dalyawns of owr Lorde and so fulfilled of hys lofe that as a drunkyn  
man sche turnyd hir fyrst on the o syde and sithyn on the other wyth gret wepyng and  
gret sobbyng, unmythy to kepyn hirselfe in stabilnes for the unqwenchabyl fyer of  
lofe whech brent ful sor in hir sowle. Than meche pepyl wonderyd upon hir, askyng  
2315 hir what sche eyled, to whom sche as a creatur al wondyd wyth lofe and as reson had  
fayled, cryed wyth lowde voys, “The Passyon of Crist sleth me.” The good women,  
havyng compassyon of hir sorwe and gretly mervelyng of hir wepyng and of hir cry-  
ing, meche the mor thei loyyd hir. And therfor thei, desyryng to make hir solas and  
comfort aftyr hir gostly labowr, be sygnys and tokenys, for sche undirstod not her  
2320 speche, preyid hir and in a maner compellyd hir to comyn hom to hem, willyng that  
sche schulde not gon fro hem. Than owr Lord sent hyr grace to han gret lofe and gret  
favour of many personys in Rome, bothyn of religyous men and other. Sum religyous

2297 **alyon**, alien. 2306 **mornyngh**, mourning. 2307 **crumme**, crumb. 2308 **entyrlyest**,  
“entireliest,” most utterly; **melydiows**, melodious. 2309 **savowrys**, delights. 2313 **unmythy**,  
unable. 2315 **eyled**, ailed. 2316 **sleth**, slays.

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comyn to swech personys of hyr cuntremen as loyed hir and seyden, “This woman hath sowyn meche good seed in Rome sithyn sche cam hydir, that is to sey, schewyd good exampyl to the pepyl, wherthorw thei lobyn God mor than thei dede beforne.” On a tyme, as this creatur was in a chirche at Rome wher the body of Seynt Jerom lyth biriid (whech was myraculosly translatyd fro Bedlem into that place and ther now is had in gret worshep besyden the place wher Seynt Lauerawnce lyth beriid), to this creatureys gostly sygth apering, Seynt Jerom seyd to hir sowle, “Blissed art thou, 2325 dowtyr, in the wepyng that thu weyst for the peplys synnes, for many schal be savyd therby. And, dowtyr, drede the nowt, for it is a synguler and a specyal gyft that God hath govyn the, a welle of teerys the whech schal nevir man take fro the.” Wyth swech maner of dalyawns he hily comfortyd hir spiritys. And also he made gret preysyng and thankyng to God for the grace that he wrowt in hir sowle, for les than sche had an 2330 had sweche gostly comfortys it had ben unpossybyl hir to a boryn the schamys and wonderyngys the whech sche suffyrd pacyently and mekely for the grace that God schewyd in hyr.

42

Whan tyme of Estern er ellys Paske was come and go, this creatur wyth hir felawschep, purposyng to gon ageyn into her owyn natyf lond, it was telde hem that 2340 ther wer many thevys be the wey whech wolde spoyl hem of her goodys and peraventur selen hem. Than the seyd creatur wyth many a bittyr teer of hir eye preyd to owr Lord Jhesu Crist, seying, “Crist Jhesu, in whom is al my trost, as thow hast behyte me many tymes befor that ther schulde no man be disesyd in my cumpayne, and I was nevir deceyved ne defrawdyd in thi promysse as long as I fully and trewly trostyd onto the, 2345 so here the preyerys of thin unworthy servawnt al holy trustyng in thi mercy. And grawnt that I and myn felawschep wythowtyn hyndryng of body er of catel, for of owr

**2326 Seynt Jerom**, The remains of Saint Jerome were held in the church of Santa Maria Maggiore. **2328 Seynt Lauerawnce**, The remains of St. Lawrence lie in the church of San Lorenzo, some two miles from Santa Maria Maggiore. **2335 a boryn**, have borne. **2338 Estern er ellys Paske**, “Paske” was another word for Easter. **2339 natyf**, native. **2340 peraventur**, perhaps. **2342 behyte**, promised. **2346 catel**, chattels, goods.

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sowlis, Lord, have thei no powr, may gon hom ageyn into owr lond lych as we come hedyr, for thi lofe, and late nevyr owr enmiis have no powr ovyr us, Lord, yyf it plese the. As thu wilt, so mot it be." Than owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to hir mende, "Drede 2350 the not, dowtyr, for thu and alle that ben in thy cumpany schal gon as safe as yyf thei wer in Seynt Petrys Cherch." Than thankyd sche God wyth alle hir spiritys, and was bold anow to go wher God wolde, and toke hir leve of hir frendys in Rome, and most specyaly of hir gostly fadys, whech, for owr Lordys lofe, had supportyd hir and socowrd hir ful tenderly ageyn the wykked wyndys of hir invyows enmyis, whos departyng 2355 was ful lamentabyl as wytnessyd wel the pur watyrdropsy rennyng down be her chekys. Sche, fallyng on hyr knes, receyved the benefys of hys blyssyng, and so departyd asundyr whom charité joyned bothyn in oon, thorw the whech thei trostyd to metyn ageyn, whan owr Lord wolde, in her kendly cuntré whan thei wer passyd this wretchyd wordelys exile. And thus sche and hir felaschep passyd forth into Inglondward. And 2360 whan thei wer a lityl wey owte of Rome, and the good preste, whech as is beforne wretyn this creatur had receyved as for hir owyn sone, hadmekyl drede of enmyis. Wherfor he seyd onto hir, "Modyr, I drede me to be deed and slayn wyth enmyis." Sche seyd, "Nay, sone, ye schal far ryth wel and gon saf be the grace of God." And he was wel comfortyd wyth hyr wordys, for he trustyd meche in hir felyngys and mad hir 2365 as good cher be the wey as yyf he had ben hir owyn sone born of hir body. And so thei cam forth to Medylborwgh, and than hir felaschep wolde takyn her jurné into Inglondward on the Sunday. Than the good preyste cam to hir, seying, "Modyr, wyl ye gon wyth your felaschep er not on this good day?" And sche seyde, "Nay, sone, it is not my Lordys wille that I schulde gon so sone hens." And so sche abood styllle wyth 2370 the good preste and summe other of the felaschyp tyl the Satyrday aftyr. And mech of her felaschep went to schip on the Sonday. On the Fryday aftyr, as this creatur went to sportyn hir in the felde and men of hir owyn nacyon wyth hir, the whech sche informyd in the lawys of God as wel as sche cowde; and scharply sche spak ageyns hem for thei sworyn gret othys and brokyn the comawndment of owr Lord God. And as sche went 2375 thus dalyng wyth hem, owr Lord Jhesu Crist bad hir gon hom in haste to hir hostel,

**2347–48** *lych as we come hedyr*, like (in the same condition) as we came hither. **2354** *invyows*, envious. **2355** *pur*, pure. **2356–57** *so departyd . . . in oon*, so parted asunder those whom charity had joined as one. **2358** *kendly*, natural. **2366** *Medylborwgh*, Middelburg (in Zeeland); *jurné*, journey. **2372** *sportyn*, disport.

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for ther schulde come gret wederyng and perlyows. Than sche hyed hir homwardys  
wyth hir felaschep, and, as sone as thei come hom to her hostel, the wederyng fel as  
sche felt be revelacyon. And many tymes, as sche went be the wey and in the feldys,  
ther fel gret levenys wyth hedows thunderys, gresely and grevows, that sche feryd hir  
2380 that it schulde a smet hir to deth, and many gret reynes, whech cawsyd in hir gret drede  
and hevynes. Than owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to hir, “Why art thou aferd whil I am  
wyth the? I am as mythy to kepyn the her in the felde as in the strengest chirche in alle  
this worlde.” And aftyr that tyme sche was not so gretly aferd as sche was beforne, for  
2385 evyr sche had gret trust in hys mercy, blyssed mote he be that comfortyd hir in every  
sorwe. And sithyn it happyd an Englyschman to come to this creatur and swor a gret  
oth. Sche, heryng that oth, wept, mornyd, and sorwyd wythowtyn mesur, not of powr  
to restreyn hirselfe fro wepyng and sorwyng, forasmeche as sche sey hir brothyr  
offendyn owr Lord God almygthy and lytyl heed wold takyn to hys owyn defawte.

43

On the next day betymes come to this creatur the good preste, whech was as hir  
2390 sone, and seyd, “Modyr, good tydyngys. We have good wynd, thankyd be God.” And  
anon sche gaf preysyng to owr Lord and preyd hym of hys mercy to grawntyn hem  
good perseverawns of wynde and wederyng that thei myth come hom in safté. And it  
was answeryd and comawndyd in hir sowle that thei schuld gon her wey in the name of  
Jhesu. Whan the preste knew that sche wolde algatys gon forth, he seyd, “Modyr, her  
2395 is no schip; her is but a lityl hecke.” Sche answeryd ageyn, “Sone, God is as mythy in  
a lityl schip as in a gret schip, for I wyl go therin be the leve of God.” And, whan thei  
wer in the lityl schip, it began to waxin gret tempestys and dyrke wedyr. Than thei  
cryed to God for grace and mercy, and anon the tempestys sesyd, and thei had fayr  
2400 wedyr and seyled al the nygth on ende and the next day tyl evynsong tyme, and than thei  
cam to londe. And, whan thei wer on the londe, the forseyd creatur fel downe on hir  
knes kyssyng the grownde, hyly thankynge God that had browt hem hom in safté.

2376 **gret wederyng and perlyows**, stormy and perilous weathers; **hyed**, hied, hastened. 2379  
levenys, lightning; **gresely and grevows**, ghastly and grievous. 2382 **the her**, you here. 2388  
defawte, default, lack. 2389 **betymes**, early. 2392 **perseverawns**, perseverance. 2394 **algatys**,  
anyway. 2395 **hecke**, small vessel. 2396 **leve**, permission. 2401 **hyly**, highly.

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Than had this creatur neithyr peny ne halfpeny in hir purse. And so thei happyd to meten wyth other pilgrimys whech govyn hir three halfpenys, inasmeche as sche had in comownyng telde hem good talys. And than was sche rygth glad and mery, for sche  
2405 had sum good that sche myght offeryn in the worshep of the Trinité whan sche come to Norwych as sche dede whan sche went owt of Inglondward. And so, whan sche cam ther, sche offeryd wyth rygth good wylle and sithyn went sche wyth hir felaschep to the vykary of Seynt Stevenys, Maistyr Richard Castyr, whech levyd that tyme. And he led hem wyth hym to the place ther he went to boorde and mad hem ryth good cher.  
2410 And he seyd to the forseyd creatur, “Margery, I merveyl how ye can be so mery and han had so gret labowr and ben so fer hens.” “Syr, for I have gret cawse to ben mery and joyn in owr Lorde that hath holbyn me and socowryd me and browt me ageyn in safté, blyssed and worshepyd mot he be.” And so thei dalyed in owr Lord a good while and had ful goodly cher. And than thei tokyn her leve, and sche went to an  
2415 ankyr whech was a monke of a fer cuntré and dwellyd in the chapel of the felde. He bar a name of gret perfeccyon and befortyme had lovyd this creatur ryth meche. And sithyn thorw evyl langage that he herd of hir he turnyd al agens hir. And therfor sche went to hym in purpose tomekyn hysrfelte and drawyn hym to charité yyf sche myth. Whan sche was come to hym, he wolcomyd hir hom schortly and askyd wher sche  
2420 had don hir chylde the whech was begotyn and born whil sche was owte, as he had herd seyde. And sche seyd, “Ser, the same childe that God hath sent me I have browt hom, for God knowyth I dede nevr sithyn I went owte wherthorw I schulde have a childe.” And wolde he not levyn hir for nowt that sche cowde sey. And nevrthelesse yet sche lowly and mekely schewyd hym for trust that sche had in hym how it was  
2425 owr Lordys wyl that sche schulde be clad in white clothyng. And he seyd “God forbede it,” for sche schulde than make al the world to wondyr on hir. And sche seyd agen, “Ser, I make no fors so that God be plesyd therwyth.” Than he bad hir comyn agen to hym and be governyd be hym and be a good preste hite Ser Edwarde. And sche seyd sche schulde wete first yyf it wer the wil of God er not, and therwyth sche toke hir leve at

**2408 Richard Castyr**, Richard Caister, vicar of St. Stephen's church, Norwich. **2412 joyn**, joyful. **2418 to mekyn hysrfelte**, to meeken (humble) herself. **2419–20 wher sche had don . . . whil sche was owte**, where she had disposed of her child, the one who was begotten and born while she was out (of the country). **2422–23 I dede nevr . . . childe**, I did nothing since I went out wherethrough I should have a child. **2427 I make no fors**, I take no heed. **2428 hite**, named.

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2430 that tyme. And, as sche went fro hymward be the wey, owr Lord seyde to hir sowle, “I wil not that thu be governyd be hym.” And sche sent hym worde what answer sche had of God.

44

And than preyid sche to God, seying, “As wostly, Lorde, as it is thy wille that I schulde be clad in white, as grawnt me a tokne of levyn, thundyr, and reyn so that it 2435 hyndir ne noy no thyng that I unworthy may the rathyr fulfillyn thy wil.” Than owr Lord awnsweryd and seyd unto hys unworthy servawnt, “Dowtyr, dowte it not, thu schalt have that tokyn be the thryd day.” And so it was. On the Fryday next folwyng, erly in the morwenyng, as sche lay in hir bed, sche sey gret levyn, sche herd gret thundyr and gret reyn folwyng, and as swythe it passyd awey and was fayr wedir ageyn. And than 2440 sche purposyd hir fullych to weryn white clothis, saf sche had neithyr gold ne sylver to byen wyth hir clothyng. And than owr Lord seyd to hir sowle, “I schal ordeyn for the.” Than went sche forth to a worshepful man in Norwich to whom sche was ryth wolcome and had gret chere. And, as thei sat togedyr tellyng good talys, evyr owr Lord seyde in hir sowle, “Speke to this man, speke to this man.” Than sche seyd to 2445 that worshepful man, “Wolde God, ser, that I myth fyndyn a good man whech wolde lendyn me two nobelys tyl I myth payn hym ageyn to byen me clothys wyth.” And he seyde, “That wil I do, damsel, gladly. What clothys wil ye weryn?” “Ser,” sche seyde, “white clothis, wyth the leve of God.” So this good man bowt white cloth and dede makyn hir a gowne therof and an hood, a kyrtyl, and a cloke. And on the Satyrday, 2450 whech was the next day, at evyn he browt hir this clothyng and gaf it hir for Goddyns lofe, and meche mor goodnes dede to hir for owr Lordys lofe, Crist Jhesu be hys reward and have mercy upon hys sowle and on alle Cristen. And on the Trinité Sunday next folwyng sche was howselyd al in white, and sithen hath sche sufferyd meche despyte and meche schame in many dyvers cuntreys, cyteys, and townys, thankyd be 2455 God of alle. And sone aftyr hir husband cam fro Lynne unto Norwych to se how sche ferd and how sche had sped, and so went thei hom togedyr to Lynne. And sche in

2433 **wostly**, certainly. 2434 **levyn**, lightning. 2435 **nøy**, annoy. 2452 **Trinité Sunday**, perhaps May 26, 1415 (see Meech, p. 308, n.104, for dating). Trinity Sunday was the Patron’s Day of Norwich Cathedral.

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schor tyme aftyr fel in gret sekenes in so mech that sche was anoyntyd for dowt of deth. And sche desired, yf it wer the wil of God, that sche myth sekyn Seynt Jamys er sche deyid and suffyr mor schame for hys lofe, as he had hyte hir befor that sche schuld do. And than owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to hir in hir sowle that sche schuld not dey yet, and sche wend hirselfe that sche schulde not a levyd for hir peyn was so gret. And hastily aftyrwarde sche was heyl and hoyl. And than it drow into wyntyrwarde, and sche had so meche colde that sche wist not what sche myth do, for sche was powr and had no mony, and also sche was in gret dette. Than suffyrd sche schamys and reprevys for weryng of hir white clothys and for sche cryed so lowde whan owr Lord gaf hyr mende of hys Passyon. And for the compassyon that sche had of owr Lordys Passyon sche cryed so wondyr lowde, and thei had nevyr herd hir cryen beforntyme, and it was the more merveyl onto hem. For sche had hir fyrst cry at Jerusalem, as is wretyn befor. And many seyd ther was nevyr seynt in hevyn that cryed so as sche dede, wherfor thei woldyn concludyn that sche had a devyl wythinne hir whech cawsyd that crying. And so thei seyden pleynly and meche mor evyl. And al sche toke paciently for owr Lordys lofe, for sche wist wel that the Jewys seyd meche wers of hys owyn persone than men dede of hir. And therfor sche toke it the mor mekely. Sum seyde that sche had the fallyng evyl, for sche wyth the crying wrestyd hir body turnyng fro the o syde into the other and wex al blew and al blo as it had ben colowr of leed. And than folke spitted at hir for horrour of the sekenes, and sum scornyd hir and seyd that sche howlyd as it had ben a dogge and bannyd hir and cursyd hir and seyd that sche dede meche harm among the pepyl. And than thei that beforntyme had govyn hir bothyn mete and drynke for Goddys lofe now thei put hir awey and bodyn hir that sche schulde not come in her placys for the schrewyd talys that thei herd of hir. And aftyrward, whan tyme cam that sche wolde gon to Seynt Jamys, sche went to the best frendys that sche had in Lynne and telde hem hir entent, how sche purposyd to gon to Seynt Jamys yf sche myth han good to gon wyth, but sche was powr and awt meche dette. And hir frendys seyden to hir, “Why have ye govyn awey yowr good and other mennys also? Wher schal ye now have so meche good as ye owe?” And sche seyd agen, “Owr Lord God schal helpyn ryth wel, for he fayld me nevyr in no cuntré, and therfor I trust hym ryth wel.” And sodeynly cam a good man and gaf hir fowryt pens,

**2457** dowt, fear. **2458** Seynt Jamys, the shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain. **2462** heyl, hale; hoyl, whole; drow, drew. **2463** powr, poor. **2474** wrestyd, twisted. **2475** blo, pale, leaden, grey. **2479** bodyn hir, bade hir. **2480** schrewyd, sharp. **2483** awt, owed.

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and wyth sum therof sche bowt hir a pylche. And evyr owr Lord seyd to hir, “Dowtyr, stody thow for no good, for I schal ordeyn for the, but evyr stody thow to love me and  
2490 kepe thi mende on me, for I schal go wyth the wher thow gost as I have hite the befor.” And aftyrwarde ther cam a woman, a good frend to this creatur, and gaf hir seven marke for sche schulde prey for hir whan that sche come to Seynt Jamys. And than sche toke hir leve at hir frendys in Lynne, purposyng hir forward in al the hast that sche myth. And than was it seyd in Lynne that ther wer many thevys be the wey.  
2495 Than had sche gret drede that thei schulde robbyn hir and takyn hir golde awey fro hir. And owr mercyful Lord, comfortyng hir, seyd onto hir, “Go forth, dowtyr, in the name of Jhesu, ther schal no thef han powyr ovyr the. Than went sche forth and cam to Brystowe on the Wednysday in Whitson weke, and ther fond sche redy the brokebakkyd man whech had ben wyth hir at Rome, whom sche left in Rome whan sche cam thens  
2500 too yer befor this tyme. And, whil they wer in Rome, sche borwyd certeyn golde of hym and be the byddyng of God sche gaf awey to powr pepil al the mony that sche had, and that sche had borwyd of hym also, as is wretyn befor. And than, whil sche was in Rome, sche hite hym to payn hym ageyn in Bristowe at this tyme, and so was he come thedyr for hys payment. And owr Lord Jhesu Crist had so ordeyned for hir, as  
2505 sche went to Bristoweward, that ther was govyn hir so meche mony that sche myth wel payn the forseyd man al that sche awt hym. And so sche dede, blissed be owr Lord therfor. And than sche lay stille in Bristowe be the byddyng of God for to abyden schepyng six wokys, inasmech as ther wer non Englisch schepys that myth seylen thedyr for thei wer arestyd and takyn up for the kyng. And other pilgrymes that wer at  
2510 Bristowe, desiryng to spedyn her jurné, went abowte fro port to port and sped nevir the mor. And so thei cam ageyn to Bristowe, whyl sche lay stille and sped bettyr than they for al her labowr. And, whil sche was thus stille in Bristowe aftyr the byddyng of God, owr mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu visityd hys creatur wyth many holy meditacyons and many hy contemplacyonys and many swet comfortys. And ther was sche howselyd  
2515 every Sonday wyth plentyuows terys and boystows sobbyngys, wyth lowde cryingys

**2488** *pylche*, outer garment of skin. **2489** *stody thow for no good*, do not strive for goods.

**2498** *Brystowe*, Bristol; **Whitson**, Whitsunday, the Feast of Pentecost comes seven Sundays and fifty days after Easter and celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit. **2507** *lay stille*, stayed. **2507–08** *for to abyden schepyng*, to await shipping. **2509** *the kyng*, Henry V, whose second expedition to France in 1417 placed great demands on English shipping. **2510** *jurné*, journey.

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and schille schrykyngys. And therfor many man and many woman wondyrd upon hir,  
skornyd hir and despised hir, bannyd hir and cursyd hir, seyde meche evyl of hir,  
slawndryd hir, and born hyr on hande that sche schulde a seyd thyng whech that sche  
seyd nevyr. And than wept sche ful sor for hir synne, preyng God of mercy and  
2520 forgevenes for hem, seying to owr Lord, “Lord, as thu seydyst hangyng on the cros  
for thi crucefyerys, ‘Fadyr, forgeve hem; thei wite not what thei don,’ so I beseche  
the, forgeve the pepyl al scorne and slawndrys and al that thei han trespasyd, yyf it be  
thy wille, for I have deservyd meche mor and meche more am I worthy.”

45

On Corpus Cristi Day aftyr, as the prestys born the Sacrament abowte the town  
2525 wyth solempne processyon, wyth meche lyth and gret solempnyté, as was worthy to  
be do, the forseyd creatur folwyd ful of terys and devocyon, wyth holy thowtys and  
meditacyon, sor wepyng and boystows sobbyng. And than ther cam a good woman be  
this creatur and seyd, “Damsel, God gef us grace to folwyn the steppys of owr Lord  
Jhesu Crist.” Than that worde wroot so sor in hir herte and in hir mende that sche  
2530 myth not beryn it that sche was fawyn to takyn an hows. And ther sche cryed, “I dey,  
I dey,” and roryd also wondirfully that the pepil wonderyd upon hir, havyng gret  
merveyl what hir eyled. And yet owr Lord mad summe to lofe hir and cherschyn hir  
ryth meche and haddyn hir hom bothe to mete and to drynke and haddyn ful gret  
gladnes to heryn hir dalyin in owre Lord. And so ther was a man of Newe Castel, hys  
2535 name was Thomas Marchale, whech oftetimes bad this creatur to mete for to heryn  
hir dalyawns. And he was so drawyn be the good wordys that God put in hir to sey of  
contricion and compuncyon, of swetnes and of devocyon that he was al mevyd as he  
had ben a newe man wyth terys of contricion and compuncyon, bothe days and  
nyghtys, as owr Lord wolde visiten hys hert wyth grace, that sumtyme whan he went  
2540 in the feldys he wept so sor for hys synnes and hys trespasses that he fel down and myth

**2516 schille schrykyngys**, shrill shriekings. **2518 born hyr on . . . a seyd**, accused her of saying. **2520–21 “Lord, as thu . . . thei don,”** Luke 23:34. **2521 crucefyerys**, crucifiers, i.e., those who crucified Jesus. **2524–26 On Corpus Cristi . . . to be do**, On Corpus Christi Day, as the priests carried the Sacrament about the town in a solemn procession, with many candles and great solemnity, as was proper to do. **2530 fawyn to takyn an hows**, had to enter a house.

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not beryn it and telde the forseyd creatur that he had ben a ful rekles man and mysgovernyd, and that sore rewyd hym, thankyd be God. And than he blyssed the tyme that he knew this creatur and purposyd hym fully to be a good man. Also he seyd to the seyd creatur, “Modyr, I have her ten marke. I pray yow that it be yowr as yowr  
2545 owyn, for I wil helpyn yow to Seynt Jamys wylth Goddys grace. And what that ye byd me gevyn to any powr man er woman I wyl do yowr bydding, alwey o peny for yow an other for myselfe.” Than, as it plesyd owr Lord, he sent a schip owte of Breteyn into Bristowe, whech schip was mad redy and arayd for to seylen to Seynt Jamys. And than the seyd Thomas Marchale went and payd the maystyr for hymselfe and for the  
2550 seyd creatur. Than was ther riche man of Bristowe whech wolde not late the seyd creatur seylen in that schip, for he held hir no good woman. And than sche seyd to that ryche man, “Syr, yf ye put me owt of the schip, my Lord Jhesu schal put yow owt of hevyn, for I telle yow, ser, owr Lord Jhesu hath no deynté of a ryche man les than he wil be a good man and a meke man.” And so sche seyde many scharp wordys onto  
2555 hym wythowtyn any glosyng er flateryng. And than owr Lord seyd to hir in hir sowle, “Thow schalt han thy wylle and gon to Seynt Jamys at thi desyr.” And anon aftyr sche was putt up befor the bischop of Worcetyl that lay three myle beyondyn Bristowe and moneschid to aper befor hym ther he lay. Sche ros up erly on the next day and went to the place wher he lay hymselfe, yet beyng in bedde, and happyd to metyn on of hys worschepfulest men in the town, and so thei dalyid of God. And, whan he had herd hir  
2560 dalyin a good while, he preyd hir to mete and sithyn he browt hir into the bischopys halle. And, whan sche cam into the halle, sche saw many of the bischopys men al to raggyd and al to daggyd in her clothys. Sche, lyftyng up hir hande, blissed hir. And than thei seyd to hir, “What devyl eyleth the?” Sche seyd agen, “Whos men be ye?”  
2565 Thei answeryd agen, “the bischopys men.” And than sche seyd, “Nay, forsothe, ye arn lykar the develys men.” Than thei weryn wroth and chedyn hir and spokyn angrily unto hir, and sche suffryd hem wel and mekely. And sithyn sche spak so sadly ageyn syn and her mysgovernawns that thei wer in sylens and held hem wel plesyd wylth hyr dalyawns, thankyd be God, er than sche left. And than sche went into the chirch and

2542 **rewyd**, rued, grieved. 2547 **Breteyn**, Brittany. 2553 **hath no deynté of**, has no delight in.  
2555 **glosyng**, glossing, deception. 2557 **bischop of Worcetyl**, Thomas Peverel, Bishop of Worcester, 1407–1418/19. 2558 **moneschid**, admonished. 2562–63 **al to raggyd and al to daggyd in her clothys**, wearing ragged and dagged clothing (clothes fashionably slashed and pointed). 2566 **lykar**, more like.

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2570 abood the comyng of the bischop. And whan he cam sche knelyd down and askyd what was hys wille and why sche was somownde to come befor hym; it was to hir gret noye and hynderawns inasmeche as sche was a pilgryme purposyng be the grace of God to Seynt Jamyswarde. Than the bischop seyde, “Margery, I have not somownd the, for I knowe wel inow thu art John of Burnamys dowtyr of Lynne. I pray the be not 2575 wroth, but far fayr wyth me, and I schal far fayr wyth the, for thu schalt etyn wyth me this day.” “Syr,” sche seyd, “I prey yow have me excusyd, for I have behestyd a good man in town to etyn with hym today.” And than he seyd, “thu schalt etyn wyth me and he bothyn.” And so sche abood wyth hym tyl God sent wynde that sche mytn seylen and had gret cher of hym and of hys meny also. And sithyn sche was schrevyn to the 2580 bischop. And than he preyd hir to prey for hym that he myth deyn in charité, for it was warnyd hym be an holy man whech had be revelacyon that this bischop schulde be ded wythinne the terme of two yer. And it fel so in dede. And therfor he compleynyd to this creatur and preyde hir to prey for hym that he myth deyn in charité. At the last sche toke hir leve of hym, and he gaf hir golde and hys blyssyng and comawndyd hys 2585 mené to lede hir forth in hir wey. And also he preyd hir whan sche come fro Seynt Jamys ageyn that sche wolde come unto hym. And so sche went forth to hir schip. Befor that sche entryd the schip, sche mad hir preyerys that God schulde kepe hem and preserve hem fro venjawns, tempestys, and perellys in the se that thei myth go and come in safté, for it was telde hir yyf thei haddyn any tempest thei woldyn castyn hyr 2590 in the se, for thei seyd it was for hir, and thei seyde the schip was the wers for sche was therin. And therfor sche in hir preyer seyde on this maner, “Almythy God Crist Jhesu, I beseche the for thi mercy, yyf thou wilte chastisyn me, spar me tyl I come ageyn into Inglond. And, whan I come ageyn, chastyse me ryth as thou wilte.” And than owr Lord grawntyd hir hir bone. And so sche toke hir schip in the name of Jhesu and seylyd 2595 forth wyth hir felaschip, whom God sent fayr wynde and wedyr so that thei comyn to Seynt Jamys on the seventhy day. And than thei that weryn agen hir whan thei wer at Bristowe now thei made hir good cher. And so thei abedyn ther fourteen days in that lond, and ther had sche gret cher, bothyn bodily and gostly, hy devocyon, and many gret cryes in the mende of owr Lordys Passion, wyth plentyuows terys of compassyon.

**2570 abood**, awaited. **2571 somownde**, summoned. **2572 noye**, annoyance. **2574 John of Burnamys**, John Brunham's. **2575 far fayr**, behave properly. **2579 meny**, many, affinity group, household. **2580 deyn**, die. **2585 mené**, servants. **2588 venjawns**, vengeance. **2590 for**, because of; **wers**, worse. **2594 bone**, boon, request.

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2600 And sithyn thei come hom ageyn to Bristowe in five days. And sche abood not long  
ther but went forth to the Blod of Hayles, and ther was schrevyn and had lowde cryes  
and boystows wepyngys. And than the religiows men had hir in amongse hem and  
mad hir good cher, saf thei sworyn many gret othys and horrable. And sche undyrname  
hem therof aftyr the Gospel, and therof had thei gret wondyr. Nevrthelesse summe  
2605 wer ryth wel plesyd, thankyd be God of hys goodnesse.

46

Sythyn yed sche forth to Leycetyr, and a good man also, Thomas Marchale, of  
whom is wretyn beforne. And ther sche cam into a fayr cherch wher sche behelde a  
crucyfyx was petowsly poyntyd and lamentabyl to beheldyn, thorw whech beheldyng  
the Passyon of owr Lord entryd hir mende, wherthorw sche gan meltyn and al to  
2610 relentyn be terys of pyté and compassyown. Than the fyer of lufe kyndelyd so yern in  
hir hert that sche myth not kepyn it prevy, for, whedyr sche wolde er not, it cawsyd hir  
to brekyn owte wyth a lowde voys and cryen merveylowslyche and wepyn and sobbyn  
ful hedowslyche that many a man and woman wondryd on hir therfor. Whan it was  
ovrcomyn, sche goyng owt at the chirche dore, a man toke hir be the sleve and seyd,  
2615 "Damsel, why wepist thu so sor?" "Ser," sche seyd, "it is not yow to telle." And so  
sche and the good man, Thomas Marchale, went forth and toke hir hostel and ther etyn  
her mete. Whan thei had etyn, sche preyd Thomas Marchale to writyn a lettyr and  
sendyn to hir husband that he myth fettyn hir hom. And, wyl the lettyr was in wrytyng,  
the osteler cam up to hir chawmbyr in gret hast and toke awey hir scryppe and bad hyr  
2620 comyn yerne and spekyn wyth the meyr. And so sche dede. Than the meyr askyd hir  
of what untré sche was and whos dowtyr sche was. "Syr," sche seyd, "I am of Lynne  
in Norfolke, a good manys dowtyr of the same Lynne, whech hath ben meyr fyve  
tymes of that worsheful burwgh and aldyrman also many yerys, and I have a good  
man, also a burgeys of the seyd town, Lynne, to myn husband." "A," seyd the meyr,  
2625 "Seynt Kateryn telde what kynred sche cam of and yet ar ye not lyche, for thu art a fals

**2601 Blod of Hayles**, blood of Christ preserved at the Abbey of Hailes in Gloucestershire.

**2603 undyrname**, rebuked. **2606 yed**, went; **Leycetyr**, Leicester. **2608 petowsly poyntyd**,

piteously decorated. **2609–10 al to relentyn be**, completely dissolve in. **2610 yern**, quickly.

**2619 osteler**, inn-keeper; **scryppe**, bag. **2620 yerne**, quickly. **2623 burwgh**, borough, town.

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strumpet, a fals loller, and a fals deceyver of the pepyl, and therfor I schal have the in preson." And sche seyd ageyn, "I am as redy, ser, to gon to preson for Goddys lofe as ye arn redy to gon to chirche." Whan the meyr had long chedyn hir and seyd many evyl and horybyl wordys onto hir and sche, be the grace of Jhesu, had resonably  
2630 answeryd hym to al that he cowde seyn, than he comawndyd the jaylerys man to ledyn hir to preson. The jaylerys man, havyng compassyon of hir wyth wepyng terys, seyd to the meyr, "Ser, I have non hows to put hir inne les than I putte hir among men." Than sche, mevyd wyth compassyon of the man whech had compassyon of hir  
2635 preyng for grace and mercy to that man as to hir owyn sowle, seyd to the meyr, "I prey yow, ser, put me not among men, that I may kepyn my chastité and my bond of wedlak to myn husband, as I am bowndyn to do." And than seyd the jayler hys owyn selfe to the meyr, "Ser, I will be bowndyn to kepe this woman in safwarde tyl ye wyl have hir ageyn." Than was ther a man of Boston, and seyd to the good wyfe ther sche was at ostel, "Forsothe," he seyth, "in Boston this woman is holdyn an holy woman  
2640 and a blissed woman." Than the jayler toke hir into hys awarde and led hyr hom into hys owyn hows and put hir in a fayr chawmbyr, schetyng the dor wyth a key and comendyng hys wyfe the key to kepyn. Nevrthelesse he lete hir gon to chirche whan sche wolde and dede hir etyn at hys owyn tabyl and mad hir ryght good cher for owr Lordys lofe, thankyd be almygthy God therof.

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2645 Than the styward of Leycetyl, a semly man, sent for the seyd creatur to the jaylerys wyfe, and sche, for hir husband was not at hom, wolde not late hir gon to no man, styward ne other. Whan the jayler knew therof, he cam hys propyr persone and browt hir befor the stywarde. The styward anon, as he sey hir, spak Latyn unto hir, many prestys stondyng abowtyn to here what sche schulde say and other pepyl also. Sche  
2650 seyd to the stywarde, "Spekyth Englisch, yf yow lyketh, for I undyrstonde not what

**2626 loller**, Lollard, heretic. **2628 chedyn**, chided. **2632 hows**, house. **2637 safwarde**, safe-keeping. **2640 awarde**, custody. **2643 dede hir etyn**, allowed her to eat. **2648 spak Latyn unto hir**, spoke Latin to her. In the fifteenth century, laywomen who were latinate were suspect, since they thereby intruded upon a male and clerical preserve and might well have read heretical texts or been inclined to interpret scripture without the mediation of a member of the clergy.

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ye sey." The styward seyd unto hir, "Thu lyest falsly in pleyn Englysch." Than seyd sche unto hym agen, "Syr, askyth what qwestyon ye wil in Englysch, and thorw the grace of my Lord Jhesu Cryst I schal answeyn yow resonabely thereto." And than askyd he many qwestyonys, to the whech sche answeryd redily and resonabely that he cowde  
2655 getyn no cawse ageyn hir. Than the stywarde toke hir be the hand and led hir into hys chawmbyr and spak many fowyl rebawdy wordys unto hir, purposyng and desyryng, as it semyd hir, to opressyn hir and forlyn hir. And than had sche meche drede and meche sorwe, crying hym mercy. Sche seyd, "Ser, for the reverens of almythy God, sparyth me, for I am a mannys wife." And than seyd the stywarde, "Thu schalt telle me  
2660 whethyr thu hast this speche of God er of the devyl, er ellys thu schalt gon to preson." "Ser," sche seyd, "for to gon to preson I am not aferd for my Lordys lofe, the whech meche mor suffyrd for my lofe than I may for hys. I pray yow doth as yow thynkyt the beste." The stiwarde, seyng hir boldenes that sche dred no presonyng, he strobelyd  
2665 wyth hir, schewyng unclene tokenys and ungodly cuntenawns, wherthorw he frayd hir so mech that sche telde hym how sche had hyr speche and hir dalyawns of the Holy Gost and not of hir owyn cunyng. And than he, al astoyned of hir wordys, left hys besynes and hys lewydnes, seyng to hir as many man had do beforne, "Eythyr thu art a ryth good woman er ellys a ryth wikked woman," and delyveryd hir ageyn to hir gayler. And he led hyr hom ageyn wyth hym. Sithyn thei tokyn two of hyr felaws that  
2670 went wyth hyr on pylgrimage, the on was Thomas Marchale beforne seyd, the other, a man of Wisbeche, and put hem bothyn in preson for cawse of hyr. Than was sche hevy and sory for her distres and preyd to God for her delyverawns. And than our merciful Lord Crist Jhesu seyd to hys creatur, "Dowtyr, I schal for thy love so disposyn for hem that the pepyl schal be ryth fayn to letyn hem gon and not longe kepyn hem."  
2675 And, on the next day folwyng, our Lord sent sweche wederyng of levenys, thunderys, and reynes contynuyng that al the pepyl in the town wer so afryad thei wist not what to do. Thei dreddyn hem it was for thei had put the pylgrimys in preson. And than the governorys of the town went in gret hast and toke owt tho tweyn pilgrimys whech had leyn in preson al the nyth beforne, ledyng hem to the gyldehalle ther to be examynyd

**2656 fowyl rebawdy wordys**, foul ribald words. **2657 opressyn hir**, violate her; **forlyn hir**, lie with her. **2663–64 strobelyd wyth hir**, wrestled with her (?). **2664 schewyng unclene tokenys**, showing or making unclean signs; **frayd**, frightened. **2666 cunyng**, cunning; **astoyned**, astonished. **2667 besynes**, business. **2669 gayler**, jailor. **2671 Wisbeche**, Wisbeach (Cambridgeshire). **2672 hevy**, sad. **2675 wederyng**, stormy weather; **levenys**, lightnings.

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2680 befor the meyr and the worschepful men of the town, compellyng hem to sweryn yyf the forseyd creatur wer a woman of the ryth feyth and ryth beleve, continent and clene of hir body, er not. As fer as thei knewyn, thei sworyn, as wittyrly God schulde help hem at the day of dome, that sche was a good woman of the ryth feyth and ryth beleve, clene and chaste in al hir governawns as fer as thei cowde knowyn in cher, cuntenawns, 2685 in worde, and in werke. And than the meyr let hem gon whedyr thei wolde. And anon the tempest sesyd, and it was fayr wedir, worschepyd be owre Lord God. The pilgrimys thei wer glad that thei wer delyveryd and durst no lengar abydyn in Leycetyl but went ten myle thens and abood ther that thei myth have knowlach what schulde be do wyth the seyde creatur, for, whan thei bothyn wer put in preson, thei had telde hyr hemselfe 2690 that thei supposyd, yyf the meyr myth han hys wil, he wolde don hir be brent.

**48**

On a Wednysday the seyd creatur was browt into a chirch of Alle Halwyn in Leycetyl, in whech place befor the hy awter was sett the abbot of Leycetyl wyth summe of hys chanownys, the den of Leicetyl, a worthy clerke. Ther wer also many frerys and preystys, also the meyr of the same town wyth mech other of lay pepyl. 2695 Ther was so meche pepyl that thei stodyn upon stolys for to beheldyn hir and wonderyn upon hir. The sayd creatur lay on hir knes, makyng hir prayerys to almythy God that sche myth han grace, wytte, and wysdam so to awseryn that day as myth ben most plesawns and worschep to hym, most profyth to hir sowle, and best exampyl to the pepyl. Than ther cam a preste to hir and toke hir be the hand and browt hir beforne the 2700 abbot and hys assessowrys sytting at the awter, the wheche dedyn hir sweryn on a boke that sche schulde awseryn trewly to the artyculs of the feyth lych as sche felt in hem. And fyrst thei rehersyd the blysful sacrament of the awter, chargyng hir to seyn ryth as sche belevyd therin. Than sche seyd, “Serys, I beleve in the sacrament of the

2691 **Alle Halwyn**, All Saints. 2692 **abbot of Leycetyl**, Richard Rothley, the abbot of the house of Augustinian canons in Leicester. 2693 **chanownys**, canons; **den**, dean. 2694 **freyrs**, friars. 2695 **stolys**, stools. 2700 **assessowrys**, assessors; **dedyn hir**, made her. 2701 **artyculs of the feyth**, Articles of the Faith; **in**, about. 2702 **And fyrst . . . of the awter**, The subject of the Eucharist, or of belief in transubstantiation, was a key subject when addressing a suspected heretic. In this scene Margery is asked questions designed to catch suspected Lollards.

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awter on this wyse, that what man hath takyn the ordyr of presthode, be he nevyr so  
2705 vicyows a man in hys levyng, yyf he sey dewly tho wordys ovyr the bred that owr  
Lord Jhesu Criste seyde whan he mad hys Mawndé among hys disciplys ther he sat at  
the soper, I believe that it is hys very flesch and hys blood and no material bred ne  
nevyr may be unseyd be it onys seyd.” And so sche answeryd forth to alle the artycles  
2710 as many as thei wolde askyn hir that thei wer wel plesyd. The meyr, whech was hir  
dedly enmy, he seyd, “In fayth, sche menyth not wyth hir hert as sche seyth with hir  
mowthe.” And the clerkys seyden to hym, “Sir, sche answeryth ryth wel to us.” Than  
the meyr alto rebukyd hir and rehersyd many reprevows wordys and ungodlyl, the  
whiche is mor expedient to be concelyd than expressyd. “Sir,” sche seyde, “I take  
witnesse of my Lord Jhesu Crist, whos body is her present in the sacrament of the  
2715 awter, that I nevyr had part of mannys body in this worlde in actual dede be wey of  
synne, but of myn husbandys body, whom I am bowndyn to be the lawe of matri-  
mony, and be whom I have born fourteen childeryn. For I do yow to wetyn, ser, that  
ther is no man in this worlde that I lofe so meche as God, for I lofe hym abovyn al  
thyng, and, ser, I telle yow trewly I lofe al men in God and for God.” Also ferthermor  
2720 sche seyd pleynly to hys owyn persone, “Sir, ye arn not worthy to ben a meyr, and that  
schal I prevyn be Holy Writte, for owr Lord God seyde hymself er he wolde takyn  
venjawnce on the cyteys, ‘I schal comyn down and seen.’ And yet he knew al thyng.  
And that was not ellys, sir, but for to schewe men as ye ben that ye schulde don non  
execucyon in ponischyng but yyf ye had knowyng befor that it wer worthy for to be  
2725 don. And, syr, ye han do al the contrary to me this day, for, syr, ye han cawsyd me  
myche despite for thyng that I am not gilty in. I pray God forgrave yow it.” Than the  
meyr seyde to hir, “I wil wetyn why thow gost in white clothys, for I trowe thow art  
comyn hedyr to han awey owr wvvys fro us and ledyn hem wyth the.” “Syr,” sche  
seyth, “ye schal not wetyn of my mowth why I go in white clothys; ye arn not worthy to  
2730 wetyn it. But, ser, I wil tellyn it to thes worthy clerkys wyth good wil be the maner of  
confessyon. Avyse hem yyf thei wyl telle it yow.” Than the clerkys preyd the meyr to  
gon down fro hem wyth the other pepyl. And, whan thei weryn gon, sche knelyd on  
hir knes befor the abbot, and the den of Leycetyl, and a Frer Prechowr, a worschipful  
clerke, and telde thes three clerkys how owr Lord be revelacyon warnyd hir and bad  
2735 hir weryn white clothys er sche cam at Jerusalem. “And so have I tolde my gostly

2706 **Mawndé**, Last Supper. 2708 **onys**, once. 2710 **menyth**, means. 2713 **concelyd**, con-  
cealed. 2717 **For I do yow to wetyn**, For I want you to know. 2726 **despite**, vexation.

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faderys. And therfor thei han chargyd me that I schulde gon thus, for thei dar not don ageyn my felyngys for dred of God, and, yyf thei durste, thei wolde ful gladlych. And therfor, serys, yyf the meyr wil wetyn why I go in whyte, ye may seye, yyf yow likyth, that my gostly faderys byddyn me gon so, and than schal ye make no lesynggys ne he  
2740 schal not knowe the trewth." So the clerkys clepyd up agen the meyr and teldyn hym in cownsel that hir gostly faderys had chargyd hir to weryn white clothis and sche had bowndyn hir to her obediens. Than the meyr clepyd hir to hym, seying, "I wil not letyn the gon hens for thyng that thow canst seyn les than thu wil gon to my Lord of Lynkoln for a lettyr, inasmeche as thu art in hys jurisdiccyon, that I may be dischargyd  
2745 of the." Sche seyd, "Ser, I dar speke to my Lord of Lyncolne ryth wel, for I have had of hym rith good cher afor this tyme." And than other men askyd hir yyf sche wer in charité with the meyr, and sche seyd, "Ya, and with alle creaturyrs." And than sche, obeyng hir to the meir, preyd hym to ben in charité wyth hyr wyth wepyng terys and  
2750 forgewyn hir any thyng that sche had displesyd hym. And he gaf hir goodly wordys for a while that sche wend al had ben wel and he had ben hir good frende, but aftyrward sche wist wel it was not so. And thus she had leve of the meir for to gon to my Lord of Lyncolne and fettyn a lettyr be the whech the meyr schulde be excusyd.

**49**

So sche went fyrst to the Abbey of Leycetyr into the chirche, and, as sone as the Abbot had aspyed hir, he, of hys goodnes, wyth many of hys brethyr, cam for wolcomyn  
2755 hir. Whan sche sey hem comyn, anon in hir sowle sche beheld owr Lord comyng wyth hys apostelys, and sche was so raveschyd into contemplacyon wyth swetnes and devocyon that sche myth not stondyn ageyns her comyng as curtesy wolde but lenyd hir to a peler in the chirche and held hir strongly therby for dred of fallyng, for sche wold a stondyn and sche myth not for plenté of devocyon whech was cawse that sche  
2760 cryed and wept ful sor. Whan hir criyng was ovrycomyn, the Abbot preyd hys brethyr to have hir in wyth hem and comfortyn hir, and so thei govyn hir ryth good wyn and madyn hir ryth good cher. Than sche gat hir a lettyr of the abbot to my Lord of Lyncolne

**2739–40 than schal . . . the trewth**, then shall you tell no lies nor shall he know the truth.

**2743–44 my Lord of Lynkoln**, Philip Repingdon, Bishop of Lincoln. **2752 fettyn**, fetch.

**2757–58 lenyd hir to a peler**, leaned herself against a pillar. **2759 plenté**, abundance.

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into record what conversacyon sche had ben the tyme that sche was in Leicetyr. And the Deen of Leicetyr was redy to recordyn and witnessyn wyth hir also, for he had gret  
2765 confidens that owre Lord lovyd hir, and therfor he cheryd hir ful hily in hys owyn place. And so sche toke leve of hir sayd sone, purposyng forth to Lyncolnward wyth a man whech hite Patryk, that had ben wyth hir at Seynt Jamys befortyme. And as this tyme he was sent be Thomas Marchale beforne seyd fro Melton Mowmbray to Leycetyr for to inqwir and se how it stod wyth the same creatur. For the forseyd Thomas Marchal  
2770 feryd meche that sche schuld a be brent, and therfor he sent this man Patryk to prevyn the trewth. And so sche and Patryk wyth many good folke of Leicetyr comyn to cheryn hir, thankyng God that had preservyd hir and govyn hir the victory of hir enmyis, wentyn forth owt at the townys ende and madyn hir ryth good cher, behestyng hir yf evyr sche come ageyn sche schuld han bettyr cher among hem than evyr sche had beforne.  
2775 Than had sche forgetyn and left in the towne a staf of a Moyses yerde whech sche had browt fro Jerusalem, and sche wold not a lost it for forty shillings. Than went Patryk agen into the towne for hir staffe and hir scryppe and happyd to metyn wyth the meyr, and the meir wolde a putte hym in preson. So at the last he scapyd of hard and left ther hir scripp. Than the forseyd creatur abood this man in a blynd womanys hows in gret  
2780 hevynes, dredyng what was fallyn of hym for he was so long. At the last this man cam rydyng forby ther that sche was. Whan sche sey hym sche cryed, “Patryk, sone, wher ha ye ben so long fro me?” “Ya, ya, modyr,” seyd he, “I have ben in gret perel for yow. I was in poynt to a ben put in preson for yow, and the meyr hath gretly turmentyd me for yow, and he hath takyn awey your scripp fro me.” “A, good Patryk,” seyd  
2785 sche, “be not displesyd, for I schal prey for yow, and God schal rewardyn your labour ryth wel; it is al for the best.” Than Patryk set hir upon hys hors and browt hir hom into Melton Mowmbray into hys owyn hows wher was Thomas Marchale befor wretn and toke hir down of the hors, hly thankyng God that sche was not brent. So thei enjoyed in our Lord al that nyth. And aftyrward sche went forth to the Byschop of  
2790 Lyncolne ther he lay that tyme. Sche, not verily knowyng wher he was, met a worschepful man wyth a furryd hood, a worthy officer of the bischops, whech seyd

2766 **sayd sone**, literally, “said son,” referring to Thomas Marshall, who calls her “mother.”

2768 **Melton Mowmbray**, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. 2770 **feryd**, feared; **brent**, burnt.

2775 **a staf of a Moyses yerde**, a relic from the Holy Land (?). 2777 **scryppe**, small bag. 2778

**scapyd of hard**, escaped with difficulty. 2779 **abood**, waited for. 2781 **forby**, past. 2784

**scripp**, small bag.

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unto hir, “Damsel, knowyst thou not me?” “No, sir,” sche seyd, “forsythe.” “And yet thou wer behodyn,” he seyd, “for I have sumtyme mad the good cher.” “Sir, I trust that ye dedyn ye dedyn for Goddys lofe, and therfor I hope he schal ryth wel rewardyn  
2795 yow. And I prey yow heldyth me excusyd, for I take lytil heed of a manrys bewté er of hys face, and therfor I forgete hym meche the sonar.” And than he teld hir goodly wher sche schulde have the bischop. And so sche gat hir a lettyr of the bischop to the meyr of Leycetyl, monyschyngh hym that he schulde not vexyn hir ne lettyn hir to gon and comyn whan sche wolde. Than ther fellyn gret thunderys and levensys and many  
2800 reynes that the pepil demyd it was for venjawns of the sayd creatur, gretly desyryng that she had ben owt of that cuntré. And sche wolde in no wise gon thens tyl that sche had hir scryppe ageyn. Whan the seyde meyr receyved the forseyd lettyr, he sent hir hir skryppe and leet hir gon in safté wher sche wolde. Three wokys sche was lettyd of hir journey be the meyr of Leycetyl er he wold letyn hyr gon owt that cooste. Than sche  
2805 hyryd the forseyd man Patryk to gon wyth hir in the cuntré and so went thei forth to Yorke.

**50**

Whan sche was com into Yorke, sche went to an ancre wheche had lovyd hir wel er sche went to Jerusalem to han knowlach of hyr gostly encres, also desyryng for mor gostly communicacyon to etyn wyth the ancre that day no thyng ellys but bred and  
2810 watyr, for it was on owr Ladiis Evyn. And the ancre wolde not receyven hir, for sche had herd telde so mech evyl telde of hir. So sche went forth to other fremd folk, and thei made hir rith good cher for owr Lordys lofe. On a day, as sche sat in a chirche of Yorke, owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd in hir sowle, “Dowtyr, ther is meche tribulacyon to thewarde.” Sche was sumdel hevy and abaschyd therof and therfor sche, sytting stille,  
2815 answeryd not. Than seyd owr blissed Lord agen, “What, dowtyr, art thou evyl payd for

**2795 bewté**, beauty. **2796 sonar**, sooner. **2798 monyschyngh**, admonishing. **2798–99 ne lettyn hir . . . whan sche wolde**, nor hinder her from going and coming as she wished. **2800 demyd**, deemed, thought. **2803 lettyd**, hindered. **2804 letyn**, allow. **2805 hyryd**, hired. **2807 ancre**, anchoress. **2808 gostly**, spiritual; **encres**, spiritual increase. **2810 owr Ladiis Evyn**, possibly September 7, 1417, the Eve of the Nativity of the Virgin. **2811 fremd**, strange. **2815 evyl payd**, evil pleased, i.e., not pleased.

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to suffyr mor tribulacyon for my lofe? Yyf thou wilte no mor suffyr, I schal take it awey fro the." And than seyd sche agen "Nay, good Lord, late me be at thi wille and make me mythy and strong for to suffyr al that evyr thou wilt that I suffyr, and grawnt me mekenes and pacyens therwyth." And so, fro that tyme forwarde that sche knew it was  
2820 owr Lordys wille that sche schulde suffyr mor tribulacyon, sche receyved it goodly whan owr Lorde wolde send it and thankyd hym hily therof, beyng ryth glad and mery that day that sche suffryd any disese. And be processe of tyme that day whech sche suffyrd no tribulacyon sche was not mery ne glad as that day whan sche suffyrd tribulacyon. Sithyn, as sche was in the Mynster at Yorke forseyd, a clerk cam to hir,  
2825 seying, "Damsel, how long wil ye abydyn her?" "Ser," sche seyd, "I purpose to abyden thes fourteen days." And so sche dede. And in that tyme many good men and women preyd hir to mete and madyn hir ryth good cher and weryn ryth glad to heryn hyr dalyawns, havyng gret merveyle of hir speche for it was fruteful. And also sche had many enmyis whech slawndryd hir, scornyd hir, and despysed hir, of whech o prest  
2830 cam to hir whil sche was in the seyd Mynstyr and, takyng hir be the coler of the gowne, seyd, "Thu wolf, what is this cloth that thu hast on?" Sche stod stylle and not wolde answeryn in hir owyn cawse. Childer of the monastery goyng besyde seyd to the preste, "Ser, it is wulle." The preste was anoyed for sche wolde not answer and gan to sweryn many gret othis. Than sche gan to spekyn for Goddys cawse; sche was  
2835 not aferd. Sche seyd, "Ser, ye schulde kepe the comawndmentys of God and not sweryn so necgligently as ye do." The preste askyd hir hoo kept the comawndmentys. Sche seyd, "Ser, thei that kepyn hem." Than seyd he, "Kepyst thou hem?" Sche seyd ageyn, "Syr, it is my wille to kepyn hem, for I am bownde therto, and so ar ye and every man that wil be savyd at the last." Whan he had long jangelyd wyth hir, he went awey  
2840 prevyly er sche was war, that sche wist not wher he became.

51

An other tyme ther cam a gret clerke onto hir, askyng thes wordys how thei schuld ben undirstondyn, "*Crescite et multiplicamini.*" Sche, answeryng, seyd, "Ser, thes

**2830** coler, collar. **2832** Childer of the monastery, Children of the monastery (i.e., going to school in or given to the monastery by their parents). **2833** wulle, wool. **2839** jangelyd, talked idly. **2840** prevyly, secretly. **2842** "*Crescite et multiplicamini,*" Be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:22).

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wordys ben not undirstondyn only of begetyng of chyldren bodily, but also be purchasyng of vertu, whech is frute gostly, as be heryng of the wordys of God, be  
2845 good exampyl gevynge, be mekenes and paciens, charité and chastité, and swech other,  
for pacyens is more worthy than myraclys werkynge.” And sche thorw the grace of  
God answeryd so that clerke that he was wel plesyd. And owr Lord of hys mercy evyr  
he mad sum men to lovyn hir and supportyn hir. And so in this cité of Yorke ther was  
2850 a doctowr of divinté, Maistyr John Aclom, also a Chanown of the Mynstyr, Syr John  
Kendale, and another preste whech song be the bischopys grave; thes wer hir good  
frendys of the spirituallté. So sche dwellyd stille in that cité fourteen days, as sche had  
seyd beforne, and sumdel mor, and on the Sundays sche was howseld in the Mynster  
wyth gret wepyng, boistows sobbyng, and lowde crying that many man merveyled ful  
meche what hir eyled. So aftyrward ther cam a preste, a worschepful clerke he semyd,  
2855 and seyd unto hir, “Damsel, thu seydest whan thu come first hedyr that thu woldyst  
abydyn her but fourteen days.” “Ya, ser, wyth your leve, I seyd that I wolde abydyn  
her fourteen days, but I seyd not that I schulde neithyr abydyn mor her ne les. But as  
now, ser, I telle yow trewly I go not yet.” Than he sett hir a day, comawndyng hir for  
to aperyn beforne hym in the chapelhows. And sche seyd that sche wolde obey hys  
2860 monycyon wyth a good wil. Sche went than to Maistyr John Aclom, the forseyd  
doctowr, preyng hym to be ther on hir party. And so he was, and he toke gret favour  
amongys hem alle. Also another maistyr of divinité had behestyd hir to a ben ther  
wyth hir, but he drow on bakke tyl he knew how the cawse schulde gon, whedyr wyth  
hir or agen hir. Ther was meche pepil that day in the chapetilhows of the Mynstyr to  
2865 her and se what schulde ben seyd er do to the forseyd creatur. Whan the day cam, sche  
was al redy in the Mynstyr to come to hir answer. Than cam hir frendys to hir and  
bodyn hir ben of good cher. Sche, thankynge hem, seyd so sche schulde. And aswythe  
cam a preste ful goodly and toke hir be the arme for to helbyn hir thorw the prees of  
the pepil and browte hir beforne a worschepful doctowr, the whech had monyschyd hir  
2870 beforne for to aperyn beforne hym in the chapetylhows as this day in Yorke Minstyr.  
And wyth this doctowr setyn many other clerkys ful reverende and worsheful, of the  
whech clerkys summe loyd the sayd creatur ryth wel. Than seyd the worschepful  
doctowr to hir, “Woman, what dost thou her in this cuntré?” “Syr, I come on pilgrim-

2851 **the spirituallté**, the churchmen. 2852 **sumdel mor**, somewhat more. 2859 **chapelhows**, chapter-house. 2860 **monycyon**, monition, warning. 2861 **party**, part. 2863 **drow on bakke**, hesitated. 2864 **chapetilhows**, chapter-house; **Mynstyr**, minister, a church of a monastery.

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age to offyr her at Seynt William." Than seyd he agen, "Hast thou an husband?" Sche  
2875 seyd, "Ya." "Hast thou any lettyr of recorde?" "Sir," sche seyd, "myn husband gaf me  
leve wyth hys owyn mowthe. Why fare ye thus wyth me mor than ye don wyth other  
pilgrimys that ben her, wheche han no lettyr no mor than I have? Syr, hem ye latyn  
gon in peys and qwyet and in reste, and I may no rest have amongys yow. And, syr,  
yyf her be any clerke amongys yow alle that can prevyn that I have seyd any worde  
2880 otherwise than I awt for to do, I am redy for to amende it wyth good wille. I wil neithyr  
meynteyn errowr ne heresy, for it is my ful wil to holdyn as Holy Chirche holdith and  
fully to plesyn God." Than the clerkys examynde hir in the Articles of the Feyth and  
in many other poyntrys as hem likyde, to the whech sche answeryd wel and trewly that  
thei myth have non occasyon in hir wordys for to disesyn hir, thankyd be God. And  
2885 than the doctowr whiche satt ther as a juge somownd hir to apere befor the Erchebisshop  
of Yorke and telde hir what day at a towne hite Cowoode, comawndyng hir to be kept  
in preson tyl the day of hir apering come. Than the seculer pepil answeryd for hir and  
seyde sche schulde not comyn in preson, for thei woldyn hemself undirtakyn for hir and  
gon to the Erchebisshop wyth hir. And so the clerkys seyd no mor to hir at that tyme,  
2890 for thei resyn up and went wher thei wolde and letyn hir gon wher sche wolde, worschip  
to Jhesu. And sone aftyr ther cam a clerke unto hir, on of the same that had sotyn  
ageyn hir, and seyd, "Damsel, I prey the be not displesyd wyth me, thow I sat wyth the  
doctowr ageyns the; he cryed so upon me that I durst non otherwise don." And sche  
seyd, "Ser, I am not displesyd wyth yow therfor." Than seyd he, "I pray yow than  
2895 preyth for me." "Sir," sche seyd, "I wil alredy."

52

Ther was a monke schulde prechyn in Yorke, the whech had herd meche slawndyr  
and meche evyl langage of the sayd creatur. And, whan he schulde prechyn, ther was  
meche multitude of pepil to heryn hym, and sche present wyth hem. And so, whan he

2874 **Seynt William**, shrine in York Minster of William Fitzherbert, Archbishop of York (d.  
1154). 2881 **meynteyn**, maintain. 2884 **disesyn**, trouble. 2885–86 **apere**, appear. 2885–86  
**Erchebisshop of Yorke**, Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York from 1407 to 1423, known for his  
antipathy to Lollards. 2886 **Cowoode**, Cawood, Yorkshire. 2888 **undirtakyn**, be surety.  
2891–92 **sotyn ageyn hir**, opposed her.

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was in hys sermown, he rehersyd many materys so openly that the pepil conceyved  
2900 wel it was for cawse of hir, wherfor hir frendys that lovd hir wel wer ful sory and  
hevy therof, and sche was meche the mor mery, for sche had mater to prevyn hyr  
paciens and hir charité wherthorw sche trostyd to plesyn owr Lord Crist Jhesu. Whan  
the sermown was don, a doctowr of dyvinyté whech lovd hir wel wyth many other  
also come to hir and seyd, “Margery, how have ye don this day?” “Sir,” sche seyd,  
2905 “ryth wel, blyssed be God. I have cawse to be ryth mery and glad in my sowle that I  
may any thyng suffyr for hys lofe, for he suffryd mech mor for me.” Anon aftry cam  
a man whech lovd hir rith wel of good wil wyth hys wife and other mo, and led hir  
seven myle thens to the Erchebisshop of Yorke, and browt hir into a fayr chawmbyr,  
wher cam a good clerke, seying to the good man whech had browt hir thedry, “Sir,  
2910 why have ye and your wife browt this woman hedyr? Sche schal stelyn awey fro yow,  
and than schal ye han a velany of hir.” The good man seyd, “I dar wel say sche wil  
abydyn and ben at hir answer wyth good wille.” On the next day sche was browt into  
the Erchebisshops chapel, and ther comyn many of the Erchebisshops meny,  
despisyng hir, callyng hir “loller” and “heretyke,” and sworyn many an horrabyll othe  
2915 that sche schulde be brent. And sche, thorw the strength of Jhesu, seyd agen to hem,  
“Serys, I drede me ye schul be brent in helle wythoutyn ende les than ye amende yow of  
your othys sweryng, for ye kepe not the comawndementys of God. I wolde not sweryn  
as ye don for al the good of this worlde.” Than thei gedyn awey as thei had ben  
aschamyd. Sche than, makyng hir prayer in hir mende, askyd grace so to be demenyd  
2920 that day as was most plesawns to God and profyte to hir owyn sowle and good exampyl  
to hir evyn cristien. Owr Lord, answeryng hir, seyd it schulde be ryth wel. At the last the  
seyd Erchebisshop cam into the chapel wyth hys clerkys, and scharply he seyde to hir,  
“Why gost thu in white? Art thu a mayden?” Sche, knelyng on hir knes befor hym,  
seyd, “Nay, ser, I am no mayden; I am a wife.” He comawndyd hys mené to fettyn a  
2925 peyr of feterys and seyd sche schulde ben feteryd, for sche was a fals heretyke. And than  
sche seyd, “I am non heretyke, ne ye schal non preve me.” The Erchebisshop went awey  
and let hir stondyn alone. Than sche mad hir prayers to owr Lord God almythy for to  
helpyn hir and socowryn hir ageyn alle hir enmyis, gostly and bodily, a long while,  
and hir flesch tremelyd and whakyd wondirly that sche was fayn to puttyn hir handys

**2911 velany**, shame. **2914 loller**, Lollard. **2918 gedyd**, went. **2919 so to be demenyd**, so to  
conduct herself. **2921 evyn cristien**, fellow Christians. **2924 fettyn**, fetch. **2925 feterys**,  
fetters. **2928 socowryn**, succour. **2929 tremelyd and whakyd**, trembled and quaked.

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2930 undyr hir clothis that it schulde not ben aspyed. Sythyn the Erchebischop cam ageyn into the chapel wyth many worthy clerkys, amongys whech was the same doctowr whech had examynd hir beforne and the monke that had prechyd ageyn hir a lityl tyme beforne in Yorke. Sum of the pepil askyd whedyr sche wer a Cristen woman er a Jewe; sum seyd sche was a good woman, and sum seyd nay. Than the Erchebischop toke  
2935 hys see, and hys clerkys also, iche of hem in hys degré, meche pepil beyng present. And in the tyme whil the pepil was gaderyng togedyr and the Erchebischop takyn hys see, the seyd creatur stod al behyndyn, makynghir preyerys for help and socowr ageyn hir enmiis wyth hy devocyon so long that sche meltyd al into teerys. And at the last sche cryed lowde therwith, that the Erchebischop and his clerkys and meche pepil  
2940 had gret wondyr of hir, for thei had not herd swech crying beforne. Whan hir crying was passyd, sche cam beforne the Erchebischop and fel down on hir kneys, the Erchebischop seying ful boystowsly unto hir, "Why wepist thu so, woman?" Sche, aweryng, seyde, "Syr, ye schal welyn sum day that ye had wept as sor as I." And than anon, aftyr the Erchebischop put to hir the Articles of owr Feyth, to the whech God  
2945 gaf hir grace to aweryn wel and trewly and redily wythowtyn any gret stody so that he myth not blamyn hir, than he seyd to the clerkys, "Sche knowith hir feyth wel anow. What schal I don wyth hir?" The clerkys seyden, "We knowyn wel that sche can the Articles of the Feith, but we wil not suffyr hir to dwellyn among us, for the pepil hath gret feyth in hir dalyawnce, and peraventur sche myth pervertyn summe of hem."  
2950 Than the Erchebischop seyd unto hir, "I am evyl enformyd of the; I her seyn thu art a ryth wikked woman." And sche seyd ageyn, "Ser, so I her seyn that ye arn a wikkyd man. And, yyf ye ben as wikkyd as men seyn, ye schal nevyr come in hevyn les than ye amende yow whil ye ben her." Than seyd he ful boistowsly, "Why, thow, what sey men of me." Sche aweryd, "Other men, syr, can telle yow wel anow." Than seyd a  
2955 gret clerke wyth a furryd hood, "Pes, thu speke of thiself and late hym ben." Sithyn seyd the Erchebischop to hir, "Ley thin hand on the boke her beforne me and swer that thu schalt gon owt of my diocese as sone as thu may." "Nay, syr," sche sayd, "I praye yow, geve me leve to gon ageyn into Yorke to take my leve of my frendys." Than he gaf hir leve for on day er too. Sche thowt it was to schort a tyme, wherfor sche seyd  
2960 agen, "Sir, I may not gon owt of this diocese so hastily, for I must teryn and spekyn

2935 **see**, seat. 2943 **welyn**, wish. 2947 **can**, knows. 2949 **peraventur**, perhaps; **pervertyn**, pervert. 2950 **I her seyn**, I have heard it said. 2953 **boistowsly**, rudely, roughly. 2960 **teryin**, tarry.

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wyth good men er I go, and I must, ser, wyth yowr leve, gon to Brydlyngton and spekyn wyth my confessor, a good man, the whech was the good priowrys confessor that is now canonysed.” Than seyd the Erchebisshop to hir, “thow schalt sweryn that thu schalt ne techyn ne chalengyn the pepil in my diocese.” “Nay, syr, I schal not sweryn,”  
2965 sche seyde, “for I schal spekyn of God and undirnemyn hem that sweryn gret othys whersoevyr I go unto the tyme that the pope and holy chirche hath ordeynde that no man schal be so hardy to spekyn of God, for God almythy forbedith not, ser, that we schal speke of hym. And also the gospel makyth mencyon that, whan the woman had herd owr Lord prechyd, sche cam beforne hym wyth a lowde voys and seyd, ‘Blyssed  
2970 be the wombe that the bar and the tetys that gaf the sowkyn.’ Than owr Lord seyd agen to hir, ‘Forsothe so ar thei blissed that heryn the word of God and kepyn it.’ And therfor, sir, me thynkyth that the gospel gevith me leve to spekyn of God.” “A ser,” seyd the clerkys, “her wot we wel that sche hath a devyl wythinne hir, for sche spekyth of the gospel.” As swythe a gret clerke browt forth a boke and leyd Seynt Powyl for  
2975 hys party ageyns hir that no woman schulde prechyn. Sche, answeryng therto, seyde, “I preche not, ser, I come in no pulptyt. I use but comownycacyon and good wordys, and that wil I do whil I leve.” Than seyd a doctowr whech had examynd hir beforntyme, “Syr, sche telde me the werst talys of prestys that evyr I herde.” The bischop comawndyd hir to tellyn that tale. “Sir, wyth yowr reverens, I spak but of o preste be  
2980 the maner of exampyl, the whech as I have lernyd went wil in a wode thorw the sufferawns of God for the profite of hys sowle tyl the nygth cam upon hym. He, destytute of hys herborwe, fond a fayr erber in the whech he restyd that nyght, havynge

**2961 Brydlyngton**, Bridlington, site of the cult of the fervently devout St. John of Bridlington (d. 1379), prior of the house of Augustinian canons there. **2962–63 the good priowrys . . . is now canonysed**, i.e., William Sleightholme (to whom Kempe refers as Sleytham, chapter 53), confessor to St. John Bridlington. **2964 chalengyn**, reprove. **2965 undirnemyn hem**, reprove them. **2970 the bar**, bore you; **tetys**, teats; **sowkyn**, suck. **2973–74 for sche spekyth of the gospel**, the Lollards were known as Gospel-quoting “Bible men and women.” **2974–75 and leyd Seynt Powyl . . . no woman schulde prechyn**, 1 Corinthians 14:34–35, verses that were commonly used against women taking active and vocal parts in religious instruction, for which they might be accused of Lollardy. See Blamires and Marx; Lochrie, pp. 105–13. **2976 comownycacyon**, talk. **2977 whil I leve**, while I live. **2978 the werst talys**, the worst tales. **2980 wil**, wayward; **wode**, wood. **2981 sufferawns**, sufferance. **2982 herborwe**, lodging; **erber**, garden.

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a fayr pertre in the myddys al floreschyd wyth flowerys and belschyd, and blomys ful delectabil to hys syght, wher cam a bere, gret and boistows, hogely to beheldyn,  
2985 schakying the pertre and fellyng down the flowerys. Gredily this grevows best ete and devowryd tho fayr flowerys. And, whan he had etyn hem, turnyng his tayl ende in the prestys presens, voydyd hem owt ageyn at the hymyr party. The preste, havyng gret abhominacyon of that lothly syght, conceyvyng gret hevynes for dowte what it myth mene, on the next day he wandrid forth in hys wey al hevy and pensife, whom it  
2990 fortunyd to metyn wyth a semly agydd man lych to a palmyr er a pilgrime, the whiche enqwiryd of the preste the cawse of hys hevynes. The preste, rehersyng the mater beforn wretyn, seyd he conceyvyd gret drede and hevynes whan he beheld that lothly best defowllyn and devowryn so fayr flowerys and blomys and afterward so horrubely to devoydyn hem befor hym at hys tayl ende, and he not undirstondyng what this  
2995 myth mene. Than the palmyr, schewyng hymselfe the massanger of God, thus aresond hym, ‘Preste, thu thiself art the pertre, sumdel florischyng and floweryng thorw thi servyse seyyng and the sacramentys ministryng, thow thu do undevoutly, for thu takyst ful lytyl heede how thu seyst thi mateynes and thi servyse, so it be blaberyd to an ende. Than gost thu to thi messe wythowtyn devocyon, and for thi synne hast thu  
3000 ful lityl contricyon. Thu receyvyst ther the frute of evyrlestyng lyfe, the sacrament of the awter, in ful febyl disposicion. Sithyn al the day aftyr thu myssespendist thi tyme, thu gevist the to bying and sellynge, choppynge and chongyng, as it wer a man of the world. Thu sittyst at the ale, gevynge the to glotonye and excesse, to lust of thy body, thorw letchery and unclennesse. Thu brekyst the comawndmentys of God thorw sweryng, lying, detraccyon, and bakbytyng, and swech other synnes usyng. Thus be thy mysgovernawns, lych onto the lothly ber, thu devowrst and destroist the flowerys and blomys of vertuows levynge to thyn endles dampnacyon and many manrys hyndryng lesse than thu have grace of repentinaus and amendyng.” Than the Erchebisshop likyd wel the tale and comedyd it, seying it was a good tale. And the clerk whech had

**2983 pertre**, pear tree; **myddys**, midst; **floreschyd**, adorned; **belschyd**, embellished; **blomys**, blooms. **2984 hogely**, ugly. **2987 hymyr party**, hinder, shameful part. **2990 agydd**, aged; **palmyr**, palmer. **2995 massanger**, messenger; **aresond**, addressed. **2996 sumdel**, somewhat. **2998 mateynes**, matins, the service that with lauds forms the first of the canonical hours; **blaberyd**, blabbered. **2999 messe**, mass. **3002 choppynge and chongyng**, buying and selling. **3003 Thu sittyst at the ale**, You sit at ale, i.e., at the table. **3005 bakbytyng**, backbiting, malicious gossiping.

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3010 examynd hir befortyme in the absens of the Erchebisshop, seyd, “Ser, this tale smythyth  
me to the hert.” The forseyd creatur seyd to the clerk, “A, worschipful doctowr, ser, in  
place wher my dwellyng is most, is a worthy clerk, a good prechar, whech boldly  
spekyth ageyn the mysgovernawns of the pepil and wil flatyr no man. He seyth many  
tymes in the pulpit, ‘Yf any man be evyl plesyd wyth my prechyng, note hym wel,  
3015 for he is gylty.’ And ryth so, ser,” seyd sche to the clerk, “far ye be me, God forgrave  
it yow.” The clerk wist not wel what he myth sey to hir. Aftyrward the same clerk cam  
to hir and preyid hir of forgefnes that he had so ben ageyn hir. Also he preyid hir  
specyaly to prey for hym. And than anon aftyr the Erchebisshop seyd, “Wher schal I  
have a man that myth ledyn this woman fro me?” As swythe ther styrt up many yong  
3020 men, and every man seyd of hem, “My Lord, I wyl gon wyth hir.” The Erchebisshop  
answeryd, “Ye ben to yong; I wil not have yow.” Than a good sad man of the  
Erchebisbopys meny askyd hys Lord what he wolde gevyn hym and he schulde ledyn  
hir. The Erchebisshop proferyd hym five shillings and the man askyd a nobyl. The  
Erchebisshop, answeryng, seyd, “I wil not waryn so mech on hir body.” “Yys, good  
3025 ser,” seyd the sayd creatur, “our Lord schal rewardyn yow ryth wel agen.” Than the  
Erchebisshop seyd to the man, “Se, her is five shillings, and lede hir fast owt of this  
cuntré.” Sche, knelyng down on hir kneys, askyd hys blissyng. He, preyng hir to  
preye for hym, blissed hir and let hir go. Than sche, goyng agen to Yorke, was receyved  
of mech pepil and of ful worthy clerkys, whech enjoyed in owr Lord that had govyn  
3030 hir not lettryd witte and wisdom to answeryn so many lernyd men wythowtyn velani  
or blame, thankynge be to God.

53

Sithyn that good man whech was hir ledar browte hir owt of the town and than  
went thei forth to Brydelynton to hir confessowr, whech hite Sleytham, and spak  
wyth hym and wyth many other good men whech had cheryd hir befortyme and don  
3035 meche for hir. Than sche wolde not abydyn ther but toke hir leve for to walke forth in

**3015 far ye be me**, fare you by me, i.e., so you treat me. **3019 ledyn**, lead. **3023 proferyd**,  
offered. **3024 waryn**, spend. **3030 hir not lettryd**, her unlettered intelligence. **3032 ledar**,  
leader. **3033 whech hite Sleytham**, who was called Sleytham (i.e., William Sleightholme).

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hir jurné. And than hir confessowr askyd hir yyf sche durst not abydyn for the Erchebisshop of Yorke, and sche seyd, “No, forsothe.” Than the good man gaf hir sylver, besechynghir to prey for hym. And so sche yed forth unto Hulle. And ther on a tyme, as thei went in processyon, a gret woman alto despysed hir, and sche seyd no  
3040 word therto. Many other folke seyd that sche schulde be sett in preson and madyngret thretyng. And notwythstondyng al her malyce, yet a good man cam and preyd hir to mete and mad hir ryth good cher. Than the malicyows pepil, the whech had despisyd hir beforne, cam to this good man and bad hym that he schulde do hir no good, for thei  
3045 helde that sche was no good woman. On the next day at morwyn hir hoste led hir owt at the townys ende, for he durst no lengar kepyn hir. And so sche went to Hesyl and wolde a gon ovyr the watyr at Humbyr. Than happyd sche to fyndyn ther too Frer Prechowrys and two yemen of the Duke of Bedforthys. The frerys telde the yemen that woman sche was, and the yemen arrestyd hir as sche wolde a takyn hir boot, and restyd a man that went wyth hir also. “For owr Lord,” thei seyd, “the Duke of Bedforth  
3050 hath sent for the. And thu art holdyn the grettest loller in al this cuntré er abowte London eythyr. And we han sowt the in many a cuntré, and we schal han an hundryd pownde for to bryng the beforne owr Lord.” Sche seyd to hem, “Wyth good wil, serys,  
I schal gon wyth yow wher ye wil ledyn me.” Than thei browt hir agen into Hesyl, and ther men callyd hir loller, and women cam rennyng owt of her howsys wyth her rokkys,  
3055 crying to the pepil, “Brennyth this fals heretyk.” So, as sche went forth to Beverleward wyth the seyd yemen and the frerys beforne seyd, thei mettyn many tymes wyth men of the cuntré, whech seyd unto hir, “Damsel, forsake this lyfe that thu hast, and go spynne and carde as other women don, and suffyr not so meche schame and so meche wo. We wolde not suffir so meche for no good in erthe.” Than sche seyd to hem, “I suffir not  
3060 so mech sorwe as I wolde do for owr Lordys lofe, for I suffir but schrewyd wordys, and owr merciful Lord Crist Jhesu, worshepyd be hys name, suffyrd hard strokys, bittyr scorgyngys, and schamful deth at the last for me and for al mankynde, blyssed mot he be. And therfor it is ryth nowt that I suffir in regarde to that he suffyrd.” And so, as sche went wyth the forseyd men, sche telde hem good talys tyl on of the dukys

**3036** *jurné*, journey. **3038** *yed*, went; **Hulle**, Hull. **3044** *morwyn*, morning. **3045** **Hesyl**, Hessle, Yorkshire. **3046** **Humbyr**, Humber; **too**, two. **3047** *yemen*, yeomen; **Duke of Bedforthys**, John, Duke of Bedford, third son of Henry IV, and at this time Lieutenant of the kingdom during Henry V’s absence abroad. **3048** *boot*, boat. **3049** *restyd*, arrested. **3054** *rokkys*, distaffs. **3055** **to Beverleward**, toward Beverly. **3060** **schrewyd**, sharp.

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3065 men wech had arrestyd hir seyd unto hir, “Me ovrthynkyth that I met wyth the, for  
me semyth that thu seyst ryth good wordys.” Than seyd sche unto hym, “Ser,  
ovrthynkyth ne repentith yow not that ye met wyth me. Doth yowr lordys wille, and  
I trust al schal be for the best, for I am ryth wel plesyd that ye met wyth me.” He seyd  
agen, “Damsel, yf evyr thu be seynt in hevyn, prey for me.” Sche answeryd, seying to  
3070 hym agen, “Sir, I hope ye schal be a seynt yowrselife and every man that schal come to  
hevyn.” So thei yedyn forth til thei comyn into Beverlé, wher dwellyd on of the mennys  
wifys that had arrestyd hir. And thedyr thei leddyn hir and tokyn awey fro hir hir purs  
and hir ryng. Thei ordeynd hir a fayr chambyr and an honest bed therin wyth the  
necessaries, lokkyng the dor wyth the key and beryng awey the key wyth hem. Sithyn  
3075 thei tokyn the man whom thei arrestyd wyth hir, wheche was the Erchebischopys man  
of Yorke, and put hym in preson. And sone aftyr that same day cam tydyngys that the  
Erchebischop was comyn into the town wher hys man was put in preson. It was telde  
the Erchebischop of hys manys presonyng, and anon he dede hym be latyn owte.  
Than that man went to the sayd creatur wyth angry cher, seying, “Alas that evyr knew  
3080 I the. I have ben presonyd for the.” Sche, comforting hym, seyd agen, “Havyth mekenes  
and pacyens, and ye schal have gret mede in hevyn therfor.” So yed he awey fro hir.  
Than stode sche lokyng owt at a wyndown, tellyng many good talys to hem that wolde  
heryn hir, in so meche that women wept sor and seyde gret hevynes of her  
hertys, “Alas, woman, why schalt thu be brent?” Than sche preyid the good wyfe of the  
3085 hows to gevyn hir drynke, for sche was evyl for thryste. And the good wife seyde hir  
husbond had born awey the key, wherfor sche myth not comyn to hir ne gevyn hir  
drynke. And than the women tokyn a leddyr and set up to the wyndown and govyn hir  
a pynte of wyn in a potte and toke hir a pece, besechyng hir to settyn awey the potte  
prevly and the pece that whan the good man come he myth not aspye it.

54

3090 The seyd creatur, lying in hir bed the next nyth folwyng, herd wyth hir bodily erys  
a lowde voys clepyng, “Margery.” Wyth that voys sche woke, gretly aferyd, and,  
  
**3065 Me ovrthynkyth**, I regret. **3071 yedyn**, went. **3085 for sche was evyl for thryste**, she  
was badly off for thirst. **3087 leddyr**, ladder. **3088 pynte of wyn . . . hir a pece**, a pint of wine  
in a pot and took her a wine cup. **3091 clepyng**, calling.

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lying stille in sylens, sche mad hir preyerys as devoutly as sche cowde for the tyme.  
And sone owr merciful Lord ovyrall present, comfortyng hys unworthy servawnt, seyd  
unto hir, “Dowtyr, it is mor plesyng unto me that thu suffyr despitys and scornys,  
3095 schamys and reprevys, wrongys and disesys than yif thin hed wer smet of thre tymes  
on the day every day in sevyn yer. And therfor, dowtyr, fere the nowt what any man  
can seyn onto the, but in myn goodnes and in thy sorwys that thu hast suffryd therin  
hast thu gret cawse to joyn, for, whan thu comyst hom into hevyn, than schal every  
3100 sorwe turnyn the to joye.” On the next day sche was browte into the chapetylhows of  
Beverlé, and ther was the Erchebischop of Yorke and many gret clerkys wyth hym,  
prestys, chanowns, and seculer men. Than seyd the Erchebischop to the seid creatur,  
“What, woman, art thou come agen? I wolde fayn be delyveryd of the.” And than a  
3105 preste browt hir forth befor hym, and the Erchebischop seyd, alle that wer present  
heryng, “Serys, I had this woman befor me at Cowode, and ther I wyth my clerkys  
examynd hir in hir feyth and fond no defawte in hir. Forthermor, serys, I have sithyn  
that tyme spokyn wyth good men whech holdyn hir a parfyte woman and a good  
woman. Notwythstandyng al this I gaf on of my men five shillings to ledyn hir owt of  
this cuntré for qwietyng of the pepil. And, as thei wer goyng in her jurné, they wer  
3110 takyn and arestyd, my man put in preson for hir, also hir gold and hir sylver was takyn  
away fro hir wyth hir bedys and hir ryng, and sche is browt her agen befor me. Is her  
any man can sey any thyng agens hir?” Than other men seyd, “Her is a frer can meche  
thing agens hir.” The frer cam forth and seyd that sche dispravyd alle men of holy  
chirche and mech ylle langage he uttryd that tyme of hir. Also he seyd that sche schulde  
3115 a be brent at Lynne, had hys ordyr, that was Frer Prechowrys, ne be. “And, syr, sche  
seyth that sche may wepyn and han contricyon whan sche wil.” Than cam tho too men  
whech had arestyd hir, seyng wyth the frer that sche was Combomis dowtyr and was  
sent to beryn lettrys abowtyn the cuntré. And thei seydyn sche had nowt ben at Jerusa-  
lem ne in the Holy Lond ne on other pilgrimage, liche as sche had ben in trewth. Thei

3093 **sone**, soon. 3095 **disesys**, troubles. 3098 **joyn**, rejoice. 3099 **chapetylhows**, chapter-  
house. 3101 **chanowns**, canons. 3102 **delyveryd**, delivered. 3104 **Cowode**, Cawood, York-  
shire. 3112 **dispravyd**, disparaged. 3113–14 **that sche schulde a be brent . . . ne be**, that she  
should have been burnt at Lynn had his Order, that of the Dominicans, not been there. 3116  
**Combomis dowtyr**, probably a corruption of Cobham’s daughter, thus a reference to Sir John  
Oldcastle, the Lollard who had escaped from the Tower and remained in hiding from 1413 to  
1417.

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denied al trewth and meynteyned the wrong, as many other had don beforne. Whan  
3120 thei had seyd inow a gret while and a long tyme, thei wer in pes. Than seyd the  
Erchebisshop to hir, "Woman, what seyst thou herto?" Sche seyd, "My Lorde, save  
yowr reverens, it arn lesyngys alle the wordys that thei sey." Than seyde the  
Erchebisshop to the frer, "Frer, the wordys arn non heresye; thei arn slawnderows  
wordys and erroneows." "My Lord," seyde the frer, "sche can hir feyth wel inow.  
3125 Nevyrthelesse, my Lord of Bedforthe is wroth wyth hir, and he wyl han hir." "Wel  
frer," seyde the Erchebisshop, "and thu schalt ledyn hir to hym." "Nay, ser," seyde the  
frer, "it fallyth not for a frer to ledyn a woman abowtyn." "And I wille not," seyde the  
Erchebisshop, "that the Duke of Bedforde be wroth wyth me for hir." Than seyde the  
Erchebisshop to hys men, "Takyth hede to the frer tyl I wyl have hym agen," and  
3130 comawndy an other man to kepyn the seyde creatur also tyl he wolde have hir agen  
an other tyme whan he lykyde. The sayd creatur preyde hym of hys lordschip that  
sche schulde not be putte amongs men, for sche was a manrys wyfe. And the  
Erchebisshop seyde, "Nay, thu schalt non harm han." Than he that was chargyd wyth  
3135 hir toke hir be the hand and led hir hom to hys hows and dede hir sittyn wyth hym at  
mete and drynke, schewyng hir goodly cher. Thedyr comyn many prestys and other  
men eftsonys to se hir and spekyn wyth hir, and meche pepil had gret compassyon that  
sche was so evyl ferd wyth. In schort tyme aftyr, the Erchebisshop sent for hir, and  
sche cam into hys halle. Hys meny was at mete, and sche was ledde into hys chawmbyr  
evyn to hys beddys syde. Than sche, obeyng, thankyd hym of hys gracyows lordschip  
3140 that he had schewyd to hir befortyme. "Ya, ya," seyd the Erchebisshop, "I am wers  
enformyd of the than evyr I was beforne." Sche seyd, "My Lord, yyf it lyke yow to  
examyn me, I schal ben aknowe the trewth, and, yf I be fowndyn gylty, I wyl abeyn  
yowr correccyon." Than cam forth a Frer Prechowr which was suffragan wyth the  
Erchebisshop, to whom the Erchebisshop seyde, "Now, ser, as ye seyde to me whan  
3145 sche was not present, sey now whil sche is present." "Schal I so?" seyde the suffragan.  
"Ya," seyde the Erchebisshop. Than seyde the suffragan to the seyde creatur, "Dam-  
sel, thu wer at my Lady Westmorlond." "Whan, sir?" seyde sche. "At Estern," seyd  
the suffragan. Sche, not replying, seyd, "Wel, ser?" Than seyd he, "My Lady hir owyn

**3122 lesyngys**, lies. **3124 can**, knows. **3137 ferd wyth**, fared with, treated. **3142 ben aknowe**,  
confess. **3143 suffragan**, suffragan, assistant. **3147 my Lady Westmorlond**, Joan de Beau-  
fort, daughter of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and Catherine Swynford; wife of Ralph  
Neville, Earl of Westmorland.

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person was wel plesyd wyth the and lykyd wel thy wordys, but thu cownseledyst my  
3150 Lady Greystokke to forsakyn hir husbonde, that is a barownys wyfe and dowtyr to my  
Lady of Westmorlonde, and now hast seyd inow to be brent for." And so he multiplied  
many schrewyd wordys befor the Erchebisshop; it is not expedient to rehersyn hem.  
At the last sche seyde to the Erchebisshop, "My Lord, yf it be yowr wille, I saw not  
my Lady Westmorlond this too yer and mor. Sir, sche sent for me er I went to Jerusa-  
3155 lem and, yyf it lyke yow, I wyl gon ageyn to hir for recorde that I mevyd no sweche  
mater." "Nay," seyde thei that stodyn abowtyn, "late hir be putte in preson, and we schal  
sendyn a lettyr to the worsheful lady, and, yyf it be trewth that sche seyth, late hir go  
qwite wythowtyn dawnger." And sche seyde sche was ryth wel apayd that it wer so.  
Than seyde a gret clerke whech stood a lytyl besyden the Erchebisshop, "Putte hir  
3160 forty days in preson and sche schal lovyn God the bettyr whyl sche levyth." The  
Erchebisshop askyd hir what tale it was that sche telde the Lady of Westmorlonde  
whan sche spak wyth hir. Sche seyde, "I telde hir a good tale of a lady that was  
dampmyd for sche wolde not lovyn hir enmiis and of a baly that was savyd for he  
lovyd hys enmys and forgaf that thei had trespassyd agen hym, and yet he was heldyn  
3165 an evyl man." The Erchebisshop seyd it was a good tale. Than seyd hys styward and  
many mo wyth hym, crying wyth a lowde voys to the Erchebisshop, "Lord, we prey  
yow late hir go hens at this tyme, and, yf evyr sche come ageyn, we schal bren hyre  
owrself." The Erchebisshop seyde, "I leve ther was nevyr woman in Ingland so ferd  
wyththal as sche is and hath ben." Than he seyde to the sayde creatur, "I wote not what  
3170 I schal don wyth the." Sche seyde, "My Lord, I pray yow late me have yowr lettyr  
and yowr seyl into recorde that I have excusyd me ageyn myn enmys and no thynge is  
attyd ageyns me, neithyr herrowr ne heresy that may ben prevyd upon me, thankyd be  
owr Lord, and John, yowr man, agen to bryngyn me ovyr the watyr." And the  
Erchebisshop ful goodly grawntyd hir al hir desyr, owr Lord rewarde hym hys mede,  
3175 and delveryd hyr purs wyth hir ryng and hir bedys whech the Dukys men of Bedforth  
had takyn fro hir beforne. The Erchebisshop had gret merveyl wher sche had good to  
gon wyth abowtyn the cuntré, and sche seyde good men gaf it hir for sche schulde prey  
for hem. Than sche, knelyng down, receyved hys blissyng and toke hir leve wyth ryth

**3149–50 my Lady Greystokke**, Elizabeth, daughter of Joan de Beaufort by her first husband;  
wife of John de Graystoke. **3158 qwite**, free; **ryth wel apayd**, right well satisfied. **3163 baly**,  
bailiff. **3167 hens**, hence. **3171 seyl**, seal. **3172 attyd**, charged; **herrowr**, error. **3176 good**,  
goods, money.

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glad cher, goyng owt of hys chambyr. And the Erchebischops mene preyd hir to prey  
3180 for hem, but the styward was wroth, for sche lowgh and made good cher, seying to  
hir, "Holy folke schulde not lawghe." Sche seyd, "Ser, I have gret cawse for to lawghe,  
for the mor schame I suffyr and despite, the meryar may I ben in owr Lord Jhesu  
Crist." Than sche cam down into the halle, and ther stood the Frere Prechowr that had  
3185 cawsyd hir al that wo. And so sche passyd forth wyth a man of the Erchebisop,  
beryng the lettyr whech the Erchebisop had grawntyd hir for a recorde, and he  
browt hir to the watyr of Humbyr, and ther he toke hys leve of hir, returnyng to  
hys lord and beryng the sayd lettyr wyth hym agen, so was sche left alone  
wythowtyn knowlache of the pepyl. Al the forseyd disese fel hir on a Fryday,  
thankyd be God of alle.

55

3190 Whan sche was passyd the watyr of Humbyr, anon sche was arrestyd for a loller and  
ledde to presonwarde. Ther happyd to be a person whech had seyn hir beforne the  
Erchebisop of Yorke and gate hir leve to gon wher sche wolde and excusyd hir  
agen the baly and undirtoke for hir that sche was no loller. And so sche scapyd awey  
in the name of Jhesu. Than met sche wyth a man of London and hys wife wyth hym.  
3195 And so went sche forth wyth hem tyl sche cam to Lyncolne, and ther sufferd sche  
many scornys and many noyful wordys, answeryng agen in Goddys cawse wythowtyn  
any lettyng, wysly and discretly that many men merveyled of hir cunnyng. Ther wer  
men of lawe seyd unto hir, "We han gon to scole many yerys, and yet arn we not  
sufficient to answeryn as thu dost. Of whom hast thu this cunnyng?" And sche seyd,  
3200 "Of the Holy Gost." Than askyd thei, "Hast thu the Holy Gost?" "Ya, serys," seyd  
sche, "ther may no man sey a good worde wythowtyn the gyft of the Holy Gost, for  
owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyd to hys disciplys, 'Stody not what ye schal sey, for it schal  
not be yowr spiryt that schal spekyn in yow, but it schal be the spiryt of the Holy  
Gost.'" And thus owr Lord gaf hir grace to answer hem, worschepyd mote he be.  
3205 Another tyme ther cam gret lordys men unto hir, and thei sworyn many gret othys,  
seying, "It is don us to wetyn that thu canst tellyn us whethyr we schal be savyd er

**3186 watyr of Humbyr**, i.e., Humber River. **3193 baly**, bailiff; **scapyd**, escaped. **3196 noyful**,  
annoying. **3197 lettyng**, hindrance. **3206 It is don us to wetyn**, It is given us to know.

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damnyd.” Sche seyd, “Ya, forsothe can I, for, as long as ye sweryn swech horrybyl othis and brekyn the comawndment of God wetyngly as ye do and wil not levyn your synne, I dar wel say ye schal be damnyd. And, yyf ye wil be contrite and schrevyn of 3210 your synne, wilfully don penawnce and levyn it whil ye may, in wil no mor to turne agen therto, I dar wel say ye schal be savyd.” “What, canst thou noon otherwise tellyn us but thus?” “Serys,” sche seyd, “this is ryth good, me thynkyth.” And than thei went awey fro hir. Aftyr this sche cam homward agen til sche cam at West Lynne. Whan sche was ther, sche sent aftyr hir husbonde into Lynne Bischop, aftyr Maystyr Robert, 3215 his confessowr, and aftyr Maistyr Aleyn, a doctowr of dyvinité, and telde hem in parcel of hyr tribulacyon. And sithyn sche telde hem that sche myth not comyn at hom at Lynne Bischop unto the tyme that sche had ben at the Erchebischop of Cawntyrbery for hys lettyr and hys seal. “For, whan I was befor the Erchebischop of Yorke,” sche seyd, “he wolde geve no credens to my wordys inasmeche as I had not my lordys 3220 lettyr and seal of Cawntyrbery. And so I behestyd hym that I schulde not comyn in Lynne Bischop tyl I had my lordys lettyr and the seal of Cawntyrbury.” And than sche toke hir leve of the sayd clerkys, askyng her blissyng, and passyd forth wyth hir husbonde to London. Whan sche cam ther, sche was sped of hir lettyr anon of the Erchebischop of Cawntirbury. And so sche dwellyd in the cité of London a long tyme 3225 and had ryth good cher of many worthy men. Sithyn sche cam unto Elywarde for to a comyn hom into Lynne, and sche was three myle fro Ely, ther cam a man rydyng aftyr a gret spedē and arrestyd hir husband and hir also, purposyng to ledyn hem bothyn into preson. He cruelly rebukyd hem and alto revylyd hem, rehersyng many reprevows wordys. And at the last sche preyde hir husbonde to schewyn hym my Lordys lettyr of 3230 Cawntirbery. Whan the man had redde the lettyr, than he spak fayr and goodly unto hem, seying, “Why schewyd me not your lettyr befor?” And so thei partyd awey fro hym and than comyn into Ely and fro thens hom into Lynne, wher sche suffryd meche despite, meche reprefe, many a scorne, many a slawndyr, many a bannying, and many a cursyng. And on a tyme a rekles man, litil chargyng hys owyn schame, wyth wil and 3235 wyth purpose kest a bolful of watyr on hir hevyd comyng in the strete. Sche, no thyng

3208 **wetyngly**, knowingly; **levyn**, leave. 3217 **Erchebischop of Cawntyrbery**, Henry Chichele, who succeeded Thomas Arundel as Archbishop of Canterbury (1414–43). 3219 **credens**, credence. 3225 **unto Elywarde**, unto Ely. 3235 **kest a bolful . . . in the strete**, cast a bowlful of water on her head as she came down the street.

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mevyd therwyth, seyd, “God make yow a good man,” heyly thankynge God therof, as sche dede of many mo other tymes.

56

Afftyward God ponyschyd hir wyth many gret and divers sekenes. Sche had the flyx a long tyme tyl sche was annoyntyd, wenying to a be deed. Sche was so febyl that sche myth not heldyn a spon in hir hand. Than owr Lord Jhesu Crist spak to hir in hir sowle and seyd that sche schulde not dey yet. Than sche recuryd agen a lytyl while. And anon aftyr sche had a gret sekenes in hir hevyd and sithyn in hir bakke that sche feryd to a lost hir witte therthorw. Aftyrwarde, whan sche was recuryd of alle thes sekenessys, in schort tyme folwyd an other sekenes whech was sett in hir ryth syde, duryng the 3240 terme of eight yer, saf eight wokys, be divers tymes. Sumtyme sche had it onys in a weke contunyng sumtyme thirty owrys, sumtyme twenty, sumtyme ten, sumtyme eight, sumtyme four, and sumtyme two, so hard and so scharp that sche must voydyn that was in hir stomak as bittyr as it had ben galle, neythyr etyng ne drynkyng whil the sekenes enduryd but evyr gronyng tyl it was gon. Than wolde sche sey to owr Lorde, 3245 “A, blysful Lord, why woldist thu becomyn man and suffyr so meche peyne for my synnes and for alle mennys synnes that schal be savyd, and we arn so unkende, Lord, to the, and I, most unworthy, can not suffyr this lityl peyne? A, Lord, for thy gret peyn have mercy on my lityl peyne; for the gret peyne that thu suffredyst gef me not so meche as I am worthy, for I may not beryn so meche as I am worthy. And, yyf thu 3250 wilte, Lord, that I ber it, sende me pacyens, for ellys I may not suffyr it. A, blisful Lord, I had levyr suffyr alle the schrewyd wordys that men myth seyn of me and alle clerkys to prechyn agens me for thy lofe, so it were no hyndryng to no mannys sowle, than this peyne that I have. For schrewyd wordys to suffyr for thi lofe it hirte me ryth nowt, Lord, and the werlde may takyn no thyng fro me but worschep and worldly 3255 good, and be the worschip of the werlde I sett ryth nowt. And alle maner of goodys and worschepys and alle maner of lovys in erthe, I prey the, Lord, forbede me, namely alle tho lovys and goodys of any erdly thyng whech schulde disres my lofe agens the, er lesse my meryte in hevyn; and alle maner of lovys and goodys whech thu knowist 3260

3239 **flyx**, flux, dysentery. 3240 **spon**, spoon. 3241 **dey**, die; **recuryd**, recovered. 3247 **voydyn**, void.  
3256 **levyr**, rather; **shrewyd**, sharp. 3262 **disres**, decrease; **agens**, towards. 3263 **lesse**, lessen.

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in thy Godheed schulde encresyn my love to the, I prey the, grawnt me for thy mercy to  
3265 thin evyrestyng worschep." Sumtyme, notwythstondyng the sayd creatur had gret  
bodily sekenes, yet the Passyon of owr merciful Lord Crist Jhesu wroot so in hir  
sowle that for the tyme sche felt not hir owyn sekenes but wept and sobbyd in the  
mend of owr Lordys Passyon as thow sche seyn hym wyth hir bodily eye sufferyng  
peyne and passyon beforne hir. Sithyn, whan eight yer wer passyd, hir sekenes scapyd  
3270 that it cam not weke be weke as it dede beforne, but than encresyd hir cryes and hir  
wepyngys in so meche that prestys durst not howselyn hir opynly in the chirche but  
prevyly in the priowrys chapel at Lenne fro the peplys audiens. And in that chapel  
sche had so hy contemplacyon and so meche dalyawns of owr Lord, inasmeche as  
sche was putte owt of chirche for hys lofe, that sche cryed what tyme sche schulde ben  
3275 howselyd as yyf hir sowle and hir body schulde a partyd asundyr, so that tweyn men  
heldyn hir in her armys tyl hir cryng was cesyd, for sche myth not beryn the habundawns  
of lofe that sche felt in the precyows sacrament, whech sche stedfastly belevyd was  
very God and man in the forme of breed. Than owr blisful Lord seyde unto hir mende,  
"Dowtyr, I wil not han my grace hyd that I geve the, for the mor besy that the pepil is  
3280 to hyndrynt it and lette it, the mor schal I spredyn it abrood and makyn it knowyn to  
alle the worlde."

57

Than it happyd ther cam an other monke to Lynne at the tyme of remownyng, as  
custom was amongys hem, whech lovd not the sayd creatur ne wolde suffryn hir to  
comyn in her chapel as sche had do befor that he cam thedir. Than the priowr of  
3285 Lynne, Dawn Thomas Hevingham, metyng wyth the sayd creatur and Maistyr Robert  
Spryngolde, whech was hir confessowr that tyme, preyd hem to holdyn hym excusyd  
thei sche wer no mo howselyd in hys chapel, "For ther is comyn," he seyd, "a newe  
brothyr of myn whech wil not comyn in owr chapel as long as sche is therin. And  
therfor provydith yow an other place, I pray yow." Maistyr Robert answeryd, "Syr,

**3269 scapyd**, went away. **3276 habundawns**, abundance. **3282 at the tyme of remownyng**, at  
the time of removing, day when clergy within a district moved to new locations. **3285 Thomas  
Hevingham**, Thomas Hevingham, prior of St. Margaret's. **3285–86 Robert Spryngolde**, par-  
ish priest of St. Margaret's and Margery's principal confessor.

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3290 we must than howselynhir in the chirche; we may not chesyn, for sche hath my lordys  
lettyr of Cawntyrbry and hys seel, in the whech we arn comawndyd be vertu of  
obedyens to heryn hir confessyon and ministryn to hir the sacrament as oftyn as we  
ben reqwiryd." Than was sche howselyd aftyr this tyme at the hy awter in Seynt  
Margarety Chirche, and owr Lord visited hir wyth so gret grace whan sche schulde ben  
3295 howselyd that sche cryed so lowde that it myth ben herd al abowte the chirche and  
owte of the chirche as sche schulde a deyid therwyth that sche myth not receyvyn the  
sacrament of the prestys handys, the preyst turnyng hym ageyn to the awter wyth the  
preciows sacrament, til hir crying was cesyd. And than he, turnyng ageyn to hir, schulde  
minystyr hir as hym awte to do. And thus it happyd many a tyme whan sche schulde ben  
3300 howselyd. And sumtyme sche schulde wepyn ful softly and stilly in receyvyng of the  
preciows sacrament wythowtyn any boystownsnes as owr Lord wolde visityn hir wyth  
hys grace. On a Good Fryday, as the sayd creatur behelde preystys knelyng on her  
kneys and other worschepful men wyth torchys brennyng in her handys befor the  
Sepulcre, devoutly representyng the lamentabyl deth and doolful beryng of owr Lord  
3305 Jhesu Crist aftyr the good custom of Holy Cherch, the mende of owr Ladiis sorwys  
whech sche suffryd whan sche behelde hys precyows body hangyng on the Crosse  
and sithyn beriid befor hir syght sodeynly occupiid the hert of this creatur, drawyng hir  
mende al holy into the Passyon of owr Lord Crist Jhesu, whom sche behelde wyth hir  
3310 gostly eye in the syght of hir sowle as verily as thei sche had seyn hys precyows body  
betyn, scorgyd, and crucifyed wyth hir bodily eye, whech syght and gostly beheldyng  
wrowt be grace so fervently in hir mende, wowndyng hir wyth pité and compassyon,  
that sche sobbyd, roryd, and cryed, and, spredyng hir armys abrood, seyd wyth lowde  
voys, "I dey, I dey," that many man on hir wonderyd and merveyled what hir eyled.  
And the mor sche besiid hir to kepyn hir fro criyng, the lowdar sche cryed, for it was  
3315 not in hir powyr to take it ne levyn it but as God wolde send it. Than a preyst toke hir  
in hys armys and bar hir into the priowrys cloistyr for to latyn hir takyn the eyr,  
supposyng sche schulde not ellys han enduryd, hir labowr was so greet. Than wex  
sche al blew as it had ben leed and swet ful sor. And this maner of crying enduryd the  
terme of ten yer, as it is wretyn befor. And every Good Friday in alle the forseyd

3299 **awte**, ought. 3304 **Sepulcre**, place sanctioned in church for the reserved sacrament.  
3310 **betyn**, beaten. 3311 **wowndyng**, wounding; **pité**, pity. 3313 **what hir eyled**, what ailed  
her. 3316 **bar**, bore; **priowrys cloistyr**, prior's cloister. 3318 **blew . . . leed**, blue as if she were  
lead; **swet**, sweated.

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3320 yerys sche was wepyng and sobbyng five er six owrys togedyr and therwyth cryed ful lowde many tymes so that sche myth not restreyn hir therfro, whech madyn hir ful febyl and weyke in hir bodily mytys. Sumtyme sche wept on Good Fryday an owr for the synne of the pepil, havyng mor sorwe for ther synnys than for hir owyn, inasmeche as owr Lorde forgaf hir hir owyn synne er sche went to Jerusalem. Nevrthelesse sche  
3325 wept for hir owyn synnes ful plentyuowsly whan it plesyd owr Lord to visityn hir wyth hys grace. Sumtyme sche wept an other owr for the sowlys in Purgatory; an other owr for hem that weryn in myschefe, in poverté, er in any disese; an other owr for Jewys, Sarasinys, and alle fals heretikys that God for hys gret goodnes schulde puttyn awey her blyndnes that thei myth thorw hys grace be turnyd to the feyth of Holy  
3330 Chirche and ben children of salvacyon. Many tymes, whan this creatur schulde makyn hir preyerys, owr Lord seyd unto hir, "Dowtyr, aske what thu wylt, and thu schalt have it." Sche seyd, "I aske ryth nowt, Lord, but that thu mayst wel gevyn me, and that is mercy whech I aske for the pepil synnys. Thu seyst oftyntymes in the yer to me that thu hast forgovyn me my synnes. Therfor I aske now mercy for the synne of the pepil,  
3335 as I wolde don for myn owyn, for, Lord, thu art alle charité, and charité browt the into this wretched worlde and cawsyd the to suffyr ful harde peynys for owr synnys. Why schulde I not than han charité to the pepyl and desiryn forgevenes of her synnes? Blyssed Lorde, me thynkyth that thu hast schewyd ryth gret charité to me, unworthy wreich.  
Thu art as gracyows to me as thei I wer as clene a mayden as any is in this worlde and  
3340 as thow I had nevir synned. Therfor, Lorde, I wolde I had a welle of teerys to constreyn the wyth that thu schuldist not takyn uttyr venjawns of mannys sowle for to partyn hym fro the wythowtyn ende, for it is an hard thyng to thynkyn that any erdry man schulde evyr do any synne whertherow he schulde be departyd fro thi gloryows face wythowtyn ende. Yf I myth as wel, Lorde, gevyn the pepyl contricyon and wepyng  
3345 as thu gevyst me for myn owyn synnes and other mennys synnys also and as wel as I myth gevyn a peny owt of my purse, sone schulde I fulfille mennys hertys wyth contricyon that thei myth sesyn of her synne. I have gret merveyl in myn hert, Lord, that I, whech have ben so synful a woman and the most unworthy creatur that evyr thu schewesthi mercy onto in alle this werlde, that I have so gret charité to myn evyn cristen  
3350 sowlys that me thynkyth, thu thei had ordeynd for me the most schamful deth that

3320 **owrys**, hours. 3322 **febyl and weyke**, feeble and weak; **mytys**, might. 3332 **I aske . . . gevyn me**, I ask nothing, Lord, but that which you may give me. 3340 **constreyn**, constrain, compel. 3341 **to partyn**, to separate.

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evyr myth any man suffyr in erde, yet wolde I for gevyn it hem for thi lofe, Lord, and han her sowlys savyd fro evyrlestyng dampnacyon. And therfor, Lord, I schal not sesyn, whan I may wepyn, for to wepyn for hem plentyuowsly, spedē yyf I may. And, yyf thu wylt, Lord, that I sese of wepyng, I prey the take me owt of this world. What  
3355 schulde I don therin but yyf I myth profityn? For, thow it wer possibyl that al this world myth be savyd thorw the teerys of myn eyne, I wer no thank worthy. Therfor alle preysyng, al honowr, al worshep mot ben to the Lord. Yyf it wer thy wille, Lord, I wolde for thi lofe and for magnyfying of thi name ben hewyn as smal as flesch to the potte.”

58

3360 On a tyme, as the forseyd creatur was in hir contemplacyon, sche hungryd ryth sor aftyr Goddys word and seyd, “Alas, Lord, as many clerkys as thu hast in this world, that thu ne woldyst sendyn me on of hem that myth fulfillyn my sowle wyth thi word and wyth redyng of Holy Scriptur, for alle the clerkys that prechyn may not fulfillyn, for me thynkyth that my sowle is evyr alych hungry. Yyf I had gold inow, I wolde  
3365 gevyn every day a nobyl for to have every day a sermown, for thi word is mor worthy to me than alle the good in this werld. And therfor, blyssed Lord, rewe on me, for thu hast takyn awey the ankyr fro me whech was to me synguler solas and conforte and many tymes refreshyd me wyth thin holy worde.” Than answeryd owr Lord Jhesu Cryst in hir sowle, seying, “Ther schal come on fro fer that schal fulfillyn thi desyr.” So,  
3370 many day aftyr this answer, ther cam a preste newly to Lynne whech had nevyr knowyn hir befor, and, whan he sey hir gon in the stretys, he was gretly mevyd to speke wyth hir and speryd of other folke what maner woman sche was. Thei seydyn thei trustyd to God that sche was a ryth good woman. Aftyrward the prest sent for hir, preyng hir to come and spekyn wyth hym and wyth hys modyr, for he had hiryd a chawmbyr for  
3375 hys modyr and for hym, and so they dwellyd togodyr. Than the sayd creatur cam to wetyn hys wille and spak wyth hys modyr and wyth hym and had ryth good cher of hem bothyn. Than the prest toke a boke and red therin how owr Lord, seyng the cité

3354 **sese**, cease. 3358 **hewyn**, hewn, chopped; **flesch**, meat. 3364 **alych**, equally. 3366 **rewē on me**, take pity on me. 3369 **on fro fer**, one from afar. 3371 **sey**, saw. 3372 **speryd**, inquired.

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of Jerusalem, wept therupon, rehersyng the myschevys and sorwys that schulde comyn therto, for sche knew not the tyme of hyr visitacyon. Whan the sayd creatur herd  
3380 redyn how owr Lord wept, than wept sche sor and cryed lowde, the preyste ne hys modyr knowyng no cawse of hyr wepyng. Whan hir crying and hir wepyng was cesyd, thei joyyd and wer ryth mery in owr Lord. Sithyn sche toke hir leve and partyd fro hem at that tyme. Whan sche was gon, the preste seyd to hys modyr, “Me merveylyth mech of this woman why sche wepit and cryth so. Nevyrtheles me thynkyth sche is  
3385 a good woman, and I desyre gretly to spekyn mor wyth hir.” Hys modyr was wel plesyd and cownselyd that he schulde don so. And aftyrwardys the same preyste loyvd hir and trustyd hir ful meche and blissed the tyme that evyr he knew hir, for he fond gret gostly confort in hir and cawsyd hym to lokyn meche good scriptur and many a good doctowr whech he wolde not a lokyd at that tyme had sche ne be. He red to hir  
3390 many a good boke of hy contemplacyon and other bokys, as the Bybyl wyth doctowrys therupon, Seynt Brydys boke, Hyltons boke, Boneventur, *Stimulus Amoris*, *Incendium Amoris*, and swech other. And than wist sche that it was a spirit sent of God whech seyd to hir, as is wretyn a lityl beforne, whan sche compleynyd for defawte of redyng, thes wordys, “Ther schal come on fro fer that schal fulfillyn thi desyr.” And thus sche  
3395 knewe be experiens that it was a ryth trewe spiryt. The forseyd preste red hir bokys the most part of seven yer er eight yer to gret encres of hys cunnyng and of hys meryte, and he suffryd many an evyl worde for hyr lofe inasmeche as he red hir so many bokys and supportyd hir in hir wepyng and hir crying. Aftyrwardys he wex benefysyd and had gret cur of sowle, and than lykyd hym ful wel that he had redde  
3400 so meche beforne.

59

Thus, thorw heryng of holy bokys and thorw heryng of holy sermownys, sche evyr encresyd in contemplacyon and holy meditacyon. It wer in maner unpossibyl to writyn

**3380 redyn**, read. **3388 to lokyn**, to examine. **3390–92 the Bybyl wyth . . . Incendium Amoris**, a vernacular Bible, probably the Wycliffite translation, which Archbishop Thomas Arundel had forbidden for private reading by lay people in the *Constitutions* of 1409. For other texts, see notes to p. 51. **3398–99 wex benefysyd . . . cur of sowle**, received a benefice and had great spiritual charge of souls.

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al the holy thowtys, holy spechys, and the hy revelacyons whech owr Lord schewyd unto hir, bothyn of hirselfe and of other men and women, also of many sowlys, sum  
3405 for to ben savyd and sum for to ben dampnyd, and was to hir a gret ponyschyng and a scharp chastisyng. For to knowyn of tho that schulde be savyd sche was ful glad and joyful, for sche desyred in as meche as sche durst alle men to be savyd. And, whan owr Lord schewyd to hir of any that schulde be dampnyd, sche had gret peyn. Sche wolde not heryn it ne belevyn that it was God that schewyd hir swech thyngys and put  
3410 it owt of hir mende as mech as sche myth. Owr Lord blamyd hir therfor and badde hir belevyn that it was hys hy mercy and hys goodnesse to schewyn hir hys prevy cownselfys, seying to hir mende, "Dowtyr, thu must as wel heryn of the dampnyd as of the savyd." Sche wolde gevyn no credens to the cownsel of God but rathyr levyd it was sum evyl spiryt for to deceyvyn hir. Than for hir fowardnes and hir unbelieve  
3415 owr Lord drow fro hir alle good thowtys and alle good mendys of holy spechys and dalyawns and the hy contemplacyon whech sche had ben usyd to befortyme, and suffyrd hir to have as many evyl thowtys as sche had beforne of good thowtys. And this vexacyon enduryd twelve days togedyr. And, lyche as befortyme sche had four owrys of the fornoon in holy spechys and dalyawns wyth owr Lord, so had sche now as  
3420 many owrys of fowle thowtys and fowle mendys of letchery and alle unclennes as thow sche schulde a be comown to al maner of pepyl. And so the devyl bar hyr on hande, dalying unto hir wyth cursyd thowtys liche as owr Lord dalyid to hir beforntyme with holy thowtys. And, as sche beforne had many gloryows visyonys and hy contemplacyon in the manhood of owr Lord, in owr Lady, and in many other holy  
3425 seyntys, ryth evyn so had sche now horybyl syghtys and abhominabyl, for any thyng that sche cowde do, of beheldyng of mennys membrys and swech other abhominacyons. Sche sey as hir thowt veryly dyvers men of religyon, preystys, and many other, bothyn hethyn and Cristen comyn befor hir syght that sche myth not enchewyn hem ne puttyn hem owt of hir syght, schewyng her bar membrys unto hir. And therwyth the devyl  
3430 bad hir in hir mende chesyn whom sche wolde han fyrst of hem alle and sche must be comown to hem alle. And he seyd sche lykyd bettyr summe on of hem than alle the other. Hir thowt that he seyd trewth; sche cowde not sey nay; and sche must nedys don hys byddyng, and yet wolde sche not a don it for alle this worlde. But yet hir

3409 **heryn**, hear. 3413 **levyd**, believed. 3414 **fowardnes**, boldness. 3415 **mendys**, thoughts.  
3420 **fowle**, evil. 3421 **schulde a be comown**, should have been common. 3421–22 **bar hyr on hande**, accused her. 3426 **mennys membrys**, men's sexual organs. 3428 **enchewyn**, avoid.

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thowt that it schulde be don, and hir thowt that thes horrybyl syghtys and cursyd mendys  
3435 wer delectabyl to hir ageyn hir wille. Wher sche went er what so sche dede, thes  
cursyd mendys abedyn wyth hir. Whan sche schulde se the sacrament, makyn hir prayerys,  
er don any other good dede, evyr swech cursydnes was putte in hir mende. Sche was  
schrevyn and dede al that sche myth, but sche fonde no relesyng tyl sche was ner at  
dispeyr. It can not be wretyn that peyn that sche felt and the sorwe that sche was inne.  
3440 Than sche seyd, “Alas, Lord, thu hast seyd befortyme that thu schuldyst nevyr forsake  
me. Wher is now the sothfastnes of thy word?” And anon aftyr cam hir good awngel  
unto hir, seying, “Dowtyr, God hath not forsakyn the ne nevyr schal forsake the, as he  
hath behyte the, but, for thu belevyst not that it is the spiryt of God that spekyth in thi  
sowle and schewyth the hys prevy cownseleys of summe that schul ben savyd and summe  
3445 that schal ben dampnyd, therfor God chastisyd the on this wise and maner, and this  
chastisyg schal enduryn twelve days tyl thu wyl belevyn that it is God whech spekyth  
to the and no devyl.” Than sche seyd to hir awngel, “A, I prey the, prey for me to my  
Lord Jhesu Crist that he wyl vowchesafe to takyn fro me thes cursyd thowtys and  
spekyn to me as he dede befortyme, and I schal makyn a behest to God that I schal  
3450 belevyn that it is God whech that hath spokyn to me afortyme, for I may no lengar  
duryn this gret peyne.” Hyr awngel seyd ageyn to hir, “Dowtyr, my Lord Jhesu wyl  
not take it awey fro the tyl thu have suffyrd it twelve days, for he wyl that thu knowe  
therby whethyr it is bettyr that God speke to the er the devyl. And my Lord Crist Jhesu  
is nevyr the wrothar wyth the, thei he suffyr the to felyn this peyne.” So sche suffryd  
3455 that peyn tyl twelve days wer passyd, and than had sche as holy thowtys, as holy  
mendys, and as holy desyrys, as holy spechys and dalyawns of owr Lord Jhesu Crist  
as evyr sche had beforne, owr Lord seying to hir, “Dowtyr, beleve now wel that I am no  
devyl.” Than was sche fylled wyth joye, for sche herd owr Lord spekyn to hir as he  
was wone to don. Therfor sche seyd, “I schal belevyn that every good thowt is the  
3460 speche of God, blyssed mote thu Lord be that thu deynyst not to comfortyn me ageyn.  
I wold not, Lord, for al this world suffryd swech an other peyne as I have suffryd thes  
twelve days, for me thowt I was in helle, blyssed mote thu be that it is passyd. Therfor,  
Lord, now wyl I lyn stille and be buxom to thi wille; I pray the, Lord, speke in me  
what that is most plesawns to the.”

3434 mendys, thoughts. 3435 **er what so sche dede**, or whatever she did. 3441 sothfastnes, truth. 3454 wrothar, angrier; thei, though. 3458–59 **as he was wone to don**, as he was wont to do. 3460 **thu deynyst not**, you do not scorn.

3465 The good prest, of whom it is wretyn befor, the wheche was hir lystere, fel in gret sekenes, and sche was steryd in hir sowle for to kepyn hym in Goddys stede. And, whan sche faylde swech as was nedful for hym, sche went abowtyn to good men and good women and gate swech thyng as was necessary unto hym. He was so seke that men trustyd no thyng to hys lyfe, and hys sekenes was long contunyng. Than on a  
3470 tyme, as sche was in the chirche heryng hir messe and preyid for the same prest, owr Lord seyd to hir that he schulde levyn and faryn ryth wel. Than was sche steryd to gon to Norwych to Seynt Stefenys Chirche wher is beriid the good vicary, whech deyd but lityl befor that tyme, for whom God schewyd hy mercy to hys pepil, and thankyn hym for recuryng of this preyste. Sche toke leve of hir confessowr, goyng forth to Nor-  
3475 wiche. Whan sche cam in the chirch yerd of Seynt Stefyn, sche cryed, sche roryd, sche wept, sche fel down to the grownd, so fervently the fyer of lofe brent in hir hert. Sithyn sche ros up agen and went forth wepyng into the chirche to the hy awter, and ther sche fel down with boistows sobbyngys, wepyngys, and lowde cryes besyden the grave of the good vicary, al ravyschyd wyth gostly comfort in the goodnes of owr  
3480 Lord that wroot so gret grace for hys servawnt whech had ben hir confessowr and many tymes herd hir confessyon of al hir levyng, and ministryd to hir the precyous sacrament of the awter divers tymes. And in so meche was hir devocyon the mor incresyd that sche sey owr Lord werkyn so special grace for swech a creatur as sche had ben conversawnt wyth in hys lyfetyme. Sche had so holy thowtys and so holy  
3485 mendys that sche myth not mesuryn hir wepyng ne hir crying. And therfor the pepil had gret merveyl of hir, supposyng that sche had wept for sum fleschly er erdry affeccyon, and seyd unto hir, “What eylith the woman? Why faryst thus wyth thiself? We knew hym as wel as thu.” Than wer prestys in the same place whech knew hir maner of werkyn, and thei ful charitefully led hir to a taverne and dede hir drynkyn  
3490 and made hir ful hy and goodly cher. Also ther was a lady desyred to have the sayd

**3465 lystere**, reader. **3466–67 sche was steryd . . . nedful for hym**, she was stirred in her soul to take care of him in God's service. And, when she lacked anything that was necessary for him. **3471 levyn**, live. **3472 Seynt Stefenys Chirche wher is beriid the good vicary**, i.e., Richard Caistyr (d. 1420), vicar of St. Stephens. **3474 recuryng**, the recovery. **3482 divers**, diverse. **3488 hym**, i.e., Richard Caistyr. The people misunderstood the nature of Margery's tears. **3489 dede hir drynkyn**, caused her to drink.

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creature to mete. And therfor, as honeste wolde, sche went to the cherch ther the lady  
herd hir servyse, wher this creature sey a fayr ymage of owr Lady clepyd a pyté. And  
thorw the beholdyng of that peté hir mende was al holy occupied in the Passyon of owr  
Lord Jhesu Crist and in the compassyon of owr Lady, Seynt Mary, be whech sche was  
3495 compellyd to cryn ful lowde and wepyn ful sor, as thei sche schulde a deyd. Than cam  
to hir the ladys preste seying, “Damsel, Jhesu is ded long sithyn.” Whan hir crying was  
cesyd, sche seyd to the preste, “Sir, hys deth is as fresch to me as he had deyd this  
same day, and so me thynkyt it awt to be to yow and to alle Cristen pepil. We awt  
evyr to han mende of hys kendnes and evyr thynkyn of the dolful deth that he deyd for  
3500 us.” Than the good lady, heryng her communicacyon, seyd, “Ser, it is a good exampyl  
to me, and to other men also, the grace that God werkynth in hir sowle.” And so the  
good lady was hir avoket and answeryd for hir. Sithyn sche had hir hom wyth hir to  
mete and schewyd hir ful glad and goodly chere as long as sche wold abydyn ther.  
And sone aftyr sche cam hom ageyn to Lenne, and the forseyd preyste, for whom sche  
3505 went most specialy to Norwich, whech had redde hir abowte seven yer, recuryd and  
went abowte wher hym lykyde, thankyd be almythy God for hys goodnes.

**61**

Than cam ther a frer to Lenne whech was holdyn an holy man and a good prechowr.  
Hys name and hys perfeccyon of prechyg spred and sprong wondyr wyde. Ther cam  
good men to the sayd creature of good charité and seyd, “Margery, now schal ye han  
3510 prechyg anow, for ther is comyn on of the most famows frerys in Inglond to this  
towne, for to be her in convent.” Than was sche mery and glad and thankyd God wyth  
al hir hert that so good a man was comyn to dwellyn amongys hem. In schort tyme  
aftyr he seyd a sermoun in a chapel of Seynt Jamys in Lenne, wher was meche pepyl  
gadyrd to heryn the sermoun. And, er the frer went to the pulpit, the parisch preste of  
3515 the same place wher he schulde prechyn went to hym and seyd, “Ser, I prey yow, beth  
not displesyd. Her schal comyn a woman to yowr sermoun the whech oftyn tymes,  
whan sche herith of the Passyon of owr Lord er of any hy devocyon, sche wepit,  
sobbith, and cryeth, but it lestith not longe. And therfor, good ser, yyf sche make any

**3491 ther**, there (where). **3492 pyté**, pity, depiction of Mary with the dead Jesus. **3495 thei**,  
though. **3498 awt**, ought. **3502 avoket**, advocate. **3518 lestith**, lasts.

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noyse at yowr sermown, suffyr it paciently and beth not abaschyd therof." The good  
3520 frer went forth to sey the sermown and seyd ful holily and ful devoutly and spak  
meche of owr Lordys Passyon that the seyd creatur myth no lengar beryn it. Sche kept  
hir fro crying as long as sche myth, and than at the last sche brast owte wyth a gret cry  
and cryid wondyr sor. The good frere suffyrd it paciently and seyd no word therto at  
that tyme. In schort tyme aftyr he prechyd ageyn in the same place. The seyd creatur  
3525 beyng present, and, beheldyng how fast the pepyl cam rennyng to heryn the sermown,  
sche had gret joy in hir sowle, thynkyng in hir mende, "A, Lord Jhesu, I trowe, and thu  
wer here to prechyn thin owyn persone, the pepyl schulde han gret joy to heryn the. I  
prey the, Lorde, make thi holy word to sattelyn in her sowlys as I wolde that it schulde  
3530 don in myn, and as many mict be turnyd be hys voys as schulde ben be thy voys yyf thu  
prechedist thyselfe." And wyth swech holy thowtys and holy mendys sche askyd  
grace for the pepyl that tyme, and sithyn, what thorw the holy sermown and what  
thorw hir meditacyon, grace of devocyon wrowt so sor in hir mende that sche fel in a  
boystows wepyng. Than seyd the good frer, "I wolde this woman wer owte of the  
3535 chirche; sche noyith the pepil." Summe that weryn hir frendys answeryd agen, "Sir,  
have hir excusyd. Sche may not withstand it." Than meche pepil turnyd agen hir and  
wer ful glad that the good frer held agen hir. Than seyd summe men that sche had a  
devyl wythinne hir. And so had thei seyd many tymys beforne, but now thei wer mor  
bolde, for hem thowt that her opinyon was wel strengthyd er ellys fortifyed be this  
good frer. Ne he wolde not suffyr hir to her hys sermown les than sche wolde levyn  
3540 hir sobbyng and hir crying. Ther was than a good preyste whech had red to hir mech  
good scriptur and knew the cawse of hir crying. He spak to an other good preyste, the  
whech had knowyn hir many yerys, and telde hym hys conseyt, how he was purposyd  
to gon to the good frer and assayn yyf he mythmekyn hys hert. The other good  
preyste seyd he wolde wyth good wyl gon wyth hym to getyn grace yyf he myth. So  
3545 thei went, bothe preystys togedyr, and preyid the good frer as enterly as thei cowde  
that he wolde suffyr the sayd creatur quyetly to comyn to hys sermown and suffyr hir  
paciently yyf sche happyd to sobbyn er cryen as other good men had suffyrd hir  
before. He seyd schortly agen, yyf sche come in any cherch wher he schulde prechyn  
and sche made any noyse as sche was wone to do, he schulde speke scharply ageyn hir,

3522 **hir**, herself; **brast**, burst. 3526 **I trowe, and thu**, I believe if you. 3528 **sattelyn**, settle;  
her, their. 3529 **mict**, might. 3534 **noyith**, annoys. 3539 **her**, hear; **les**, unless; **levyn**, stop.  
3543 **and assayn yyf he myth mekyn hys hert**, and try to humble his heart.

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3550 he wolde not suffyrn hir to crye in no wyse. Sithyn a worsheful doctowr of divinité,  
a White Frer, a solem clerk and elde doctowr, and a wel aprevyd, whech had knowyn  
the sayd creatur many yerys of hir lyfe and belevyd the grace that God wroot in hir,  
toke wyth hym a worthy man, a bacheler of lawe, a wel growndyd man in scriptur and  
long exercisyd, whech was confessowr to the sayd creatur, and wentyn to the sayd frer  
3555 as the good preystys dedyn beforne and sentyn for wyne to cheryn hym wyth, preyng  
hym of hys charité to favyr the werkys of owr Lord in the sayd creatur and grawntyn  
hir hys benevolens in supportyng of hir yyf it happyd hir to cryen er sobbyn whyl he  
wer in hys sermown. And thes worthy clerkys telde hym that it was a gyft of God and  
that sche cowde not have it but whan God wolde geve it, ne sche myth not wythstande  
3560 it whan God wolde send it, and God schulde wythdrawe it whan he wilde, for that had  
sche be revelacyon, and that was unknowyn to the frer. Than he, neyther gevynge  
credens to the doctowrys wordys ne the bachelerys, trustyng mech in the favour of  
the pepil, seyd he wolde not favowr hir in hir crying for nowt that any man myth sey  
er do, for he wolde not levyn that it was a gyft of God. But he seyd, yyf sche myth not  
3565 wythstond it whan it cam, he levyd it was a cardiakyl er sum other sekenesse, and, yyf  
sche wolde be so aknowyn, he seyd, he wold have compassyon of hir and steryn the  
pepil to prey for hir, and undyr this condicion he wolde han paciens in hir and suffyr  
hir to cryen anow, that sche schulde sey that it was a kendly seknes. And hirself knew  
wel be revelacyon and be experiens of werkyng it was no sekenes, and therfor sche  
3570 wolde not for al this world sey otherwyse than sche felt. And therfor thei myth not  
acordyn. Than the worschepful doctowr and hir confessowr cownseled hir that sche  
schulde not come at hys sermown, and that was to hir a gret peyne. Than went another  
man, a worschepful burgeys, the whech in fewe yerys aftyr was meyr of Lenne, and  
preyd hym as the worthy clerkys had don beforne, and he was answeryd as thei worn.  
3575 Than was sche chargyd be hir confessowr that sche schulde not comyn ther he prechyd,  
but whan he prechyd in o chirche sche schulde gon into another. Sche had so mech  
sorwe that sche wist not what sche myth do, for sche was putte fro the sermown  
whech was to hir the hyest comfort in erth whan sche myth heryn it, and ryth so the  
contrary was to hir the grettest peyne in erthe whan sche myth not heryn it. Whan sche  
3580 was alone be hirself in on cherch and he prechyng the pepil in an other, sche had as  
lowde and as mervelyows cryis as whan sche was amongys the pepil. It was yerys that

3551 **White Frer**, White (Carmelite) Friar; **aprevyd**, approved. 3565 **cardiakyl**, heart disease.  
3568 **that**, if; **kendly**, natural. 3575 **ther**, where.

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sche myth not be suffyrd to come at hys sermown for that sche cryed so whan it  
plesyd owr Lord to gyfe hir mende and very beholdingyng of hys bittyr Passyon. But  
3585 sche was not excludyd fro non other clerkys prechyg, but only fro the good frerys, as  
is seyd befor, notwythstondyng in the menetyme ther prechyd many worschepful  
doctorys and other worthy clerkys, bothyn religyows and seculerys, at whoys  
sermownys sche cryid ful lowde and sobbyd ful boystowsly many tymes and ofte.  
And yet thei suffyrd it ful paciently, and summe whech had spokyn wyth hir befor  
3590 and haddyn knowlach of hir maner of levyng excusyd hir to the pepil whan thei herdyn  
any rumowr er grutchyng agens hir.

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Affyr on Seynt Jamys Day the good frere prechyd in Seynt Jamys chapel yerd at  
Lenne — he was as that tyme neythyr bacheler ne doctowr of divinté — wher was  
meche pepil and gret audiens, for he had an holy name and gret favour of the pepyl, in  
so meche that summe men, yyf thei wiste that he schulde prechyn in the cuntré, thei  
3595 wolde go wyth hym er ellys folwyn hym fro town to town, so gret delite thei had to  
heryn hym and so, blissed mote God ben, he prechyd ful holily and ful devoutly.  
Nevyrthelesse as this day he prechyd meche ageyn the seyd creatur, not expressyng  
hir name, but so he expleytyd hys conseytys that men undirstod wel that he ment hir.  
Than was ther mech remowr among the pepil, for many men and many women trustyd  
3600 hir and lovd hir ryth wel and wer ryth hevy and sorweful for he spak so meche ageyn  
hir as he dede, desiryng that thei had not an herd hym that day. Whan he herd the  
murmowr and grutchyng of the pepil, supposyng to be geynseyd an other day of hem  
that weryn hir frendys, he, smityng hys hand on the pulpit, seyd, “Yyf I here any mor  
3605 thes materys rehersyd, I schal so smytyn the nayl on the hed,” he seyd, “that it schal  
schamyn alle hyr mayntenowrys.” And than many of hem that pretendyd hir frenschep  
turnyd abakke for a lytyl veyn drede that thei haddyn of hys wordys and durst not wel

3598 expleytyd hys conseytys, explained his thoughts. 3599 remowr, rumor. 3602 murmowr  
and grutchyng, murmur and complaining; geynseyd, gainsayed, contradicted. 3604–05 I  
schal so smytyn . . . maytenowrys, I shall so smite the nail on the head (i.e., speak severely)  
that it shall shame all her supporters.

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spekyn wyth hir, of the whech the same preyste was on that afterward wrot this boke  
and was in purpose nevir to a levyd hir felyngys aftyr. And yet owr Lord drow hym  
agen in schort tyme, blissed mote he ben, that he lovd hir mor and trustyd mor to hir  
3610 wepyng and hir crying than evyr he dede befor, for aftyrward he red of a woman  
clepyd Maria de Oegines and of hir maner of levynge, of the wondirful swetnesse that  
sche had in the word of God heryng, of the wondirful compassyon that sche had in hys  
Passyon thynkyng, and of the plentyuows teerys that sche wept, the whech made hir  
so febyl and so weyke that sche myth not endur to beheldyn the crosse, ne heryn owr  
3615 Lordys Passyon rehersyd, so sche was resolvyd into terys of ptyé and compassyon. Of  
the plentyuows grace of hir teerys he treyth specyalyn in the boke befor wretyn the  
eighteenth capitulo that begynneth, “*Bonus es, domine, sperantibus in te,*” and also in  
the nineteenth capitulo wher he tellyth how sche, at the request of a preyste that he  
schulde not be turbelyd ne distrawt in hys messe wyth hir wepyng and hir sobbyng,  
3620 went owt at the chirche dor, wyth a lowde voys crying that sche myth not restreyn hir  
therfro. And owr Lord also visityd the preyste beyng at messe wyth swech grace and  
wyth sweche devocyon whan he schulde redyn the Holy Gospel that he wept wondirly  
so that he wett hys vestiment and ornamentys of the awter and myth not mesuryn hys  
wepyng ne hys sobbyng, it was so habundawnt, ne he myth not restreyn it ne wel  
3625 stande therwyth at the awter. Than he levyd wel that the good woman, whech he had  
beforn lityl affeccyon to, myth not restreyn hir wepyng, hir sobbyng, ne hir cryng,  
whech felt meche mor plente of grace than evyr dede he wythowtyn any comparison.  
Than knew he wel that God gaf hys grace to whom he wolde. Than the preste whech  
wrot thes tretys thorw steryng of a worshepful clerk, a bacheler of divinité, had seyn  
3630 and red the mater befor wretyn meche mor seryowslech and expressiowslech than it  
is wretyn in this tretys (for her is but a lityl of the effect therof, for he had not ryth cler  
mende of the sayd mater whan he wrot this tretys, and therfor he wrot the lesse therof)

**3607–08 of the whech . . . felyngys aftyr**, among whom was the same priest who afterwards  
wrote this book and had purposed never to have believed her feelings thereafter. **3608 drew**,  
**drew**. **3611 Maria de Oegines**, Marie d’Oignies (c. 1177–1213), whose devotion to Christ and  
service for others made her one of the most important exemplars of female piety. Jacques de  
Vitry, her contemporary, friend, and confessor, wrote her life. **3615 ptyé**, pity. **3617 capitulo**,  
chapter; “*Bonus es, domine, sperantibus in te,*” He is good, Lord, whose hope is in you.  
**3619 turbelyd**, troubled; **distrawt**, distraught. **3621 beyng at messe**, being at mass, i.e., when  
he was at Mass. **3623 mesuryn**, restrain.

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than he drow ageyn and inclined mor sadly to the sayd creatur, whom he had fled and  
enchewyd thorw the frerys prechyg, as is beforne wretyn. Also the same preyste red  
3635 aftyward in a trety whech is clepyd “The Prykke of Lofe,” the second chapitulo that  
Boneaventur wrot of hymselfe thes wordys folwyng, “A, Lord, what schal I mor noysen  
er cryen? Thu lettyst and thu comyst not, and I, wery and ovyrcome thorw desyr,  
begynne for to maddyn, for lofe governyth me and not reson. I renne wyth hasty  
3640 cowrs wher that evyr thu wylte. I bowe, Lord, thei that se me irkyn and rewyn, not  
knowyng me drunkyn wyth thi lofe. Lord, thei seyn ‘Lo, yen wood man cryeth in the  
strety,’ but how meche is the desyr of myn hert thei parceyve not.” And capitulo  
*Stimulo Amoris* and *capitulo ut supra*. He red also of Richard Hampol, hermyte, in  
*Incendio Amoris* leche mater that mevyd hym to gevyn credens to the sayd creatur.  
Also, Elizabeth of Hungry cryed wyth lowde voys, as is wretyn in hir trety. And  
3645 many other whech had forsakyn hir thorw the frerys prechyg repentyd hem and  
turnyd agen unto hir be processe of tyme, notwithstandingyng the frer kept hys opinyon.  
And alwey he wolde in hys sermown have a parte ageyn hir, whethyr sche wer ther er  
not, and cawsyd mech pepil to demyn wol evyl of hir many day and long. For summe  
seyd that sche had a devyl wythinne hir, and summe seyd to hir owyn mowth that the  
3650 frer schulde a drevyn to develys owt of hir. Thus was sche slawnderyd, etyn, and  
knawyn of the pepil for the grace that God wroot in hir of contricyon, of devocyon,  
and of compassyon, thorw the gyft of whech gracy Sche wept, sobbyd, and cryid ful sor

3633 **drow ageyn**, drew again; **sadly**, wisely. 3634 **enchewyd**, eschewed, avoided. 3635 “**The Prykke of Lofe**,” the fourteenth-century devotional work, *Stimulus Amoris*, falsely attributed to St. Bonaventure. 3636–37 **A, Lord . . . cryen?**, A, Lord, of what shall I make the most noise or (of what shall I) cry? 3637 **lettyst**, tarry. 3638 **for to maddyn**, to go mad. 3639 **thei that se me irkyn and rewyn**, those who see me are irked by me and pity me. 3640–41 **yen wood man . . . in the strety**, yon mad man cries in the streets. 3641 **how meche**, how great; **parceyve**, perceive. 3642 *Stimulo Amoris*, *Stimulus Amoris*; **Richard Hampol**, Richard Rolle of Hampole, the mid fourteenth-century mystic and writer. 3643 *Incendio Amoris*, the Latin mystical work by Richard Rolle which was translated into English as the *Fire of Love* by Richard Misyn in 1435. 3644 **Elizabeth of Hungry**, Elizabeth of Hungary (1207–31), the thirteenth-century saint, whose tears of devotion formed a key element of her legend, a legend that was current in England in the fifteenth century. 3648 **demyn**, think. 3650–51 **slawnderyd, etyn, and knawyn**, slandered, eaten, and gnawed.

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ageyn hir wyl, sche myth not chesyn, for sche had levar a wept softly and prevyly than opynly yyf it had ben in hyr power.

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3655 Than summe of hir frendys cam to hir and seyd it wer mor ese to hir to gon owt of the town than abdyn therin, so meche pepyl was ageyn hir. And sche seyd sche schulde abdyn ther as long as God wolde. “For her,” sche seyd, “in this town have I synned. Therfor it is worthy that I suffyr sorwe in this town ther ageyn. And yet have I not so meche sorwe ne schame as I have deservyd, for I have trespasyd agens God. I thank  
3660 almythy God what that evyr he sendith me, and I pray God that al maner of wikkydnes that any man schal seyn of me in this world may stonde into remissyon of my synnys, and any goodnesse that any man schal seyn of the grace that God werkynth in me may turnyn God to worschep and to preysyng and magnifying of hys holy name wythowtyn ende, for al maner of worschep longith to hym, and al despite, schame, and reprefe  
3665 longyth to me, and that have I wel deservyd.” An other tyme hyr confessowr cam to hir into a chapel of owr Lady, clepyd the Jesyne, seying, “Margery, what schal ye now do? Ther is no mor agen yow but the mone and seven sterrys. Anethe is ther any man that heldith wyth yow but I alone.” Sche seyd to hir confessowr, “Ser, beth of a good conforte, for it schal ben ryth wel at the last. And I telle yow trewly my Lord Jhesu  
3670 gevith me gret conforte in my sowle, and ellys schulde I fallyn in dispeyr. My blisful Lord Crist Jhesu wil not latyn me dyspeyryng for noon holy name that the good frer hath, for my Lord tellyth me that he is wroth wyth hym, and he seyth to me it wer bettyr he wer nevyr born, for he despisith hys werkys in me.” Also owr Lord seyd to hir, “Dowtyr, yyf he be a preyste that despisith the, knowyng wel wherfor thu wepist  
3675 and cryist, he is acursyd.” And on a tyme, as sche was in the priowrys cloystyr and durst not abdyn in the cherch for inqwieting of the pepil wyth hir crying, owr Lord seyd unto hir beyng in gret hevynes, “Dowtyr, I bydde the gon ageyn into cherch, for I schal takyn awey fro the thy criyng that thu schalt no mor cryin so lowde ne on that maner wyse as thu hast don beforne thei thu woldist.” Sche dede the comawndment of

**3666 a chapel . . . the Jesyne**, a chapel of our Lady called the Gesine, the chapel in St. Margaret’s Church in which stood a picture of the birth of Jesus. See Gibson, p. 64. **3667 Anethe**, Hardly. **3676 inqwieting**, disturbing.

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3680 owr Lord and telde hir confessowr lich as sche felt, and it fel in trewth as sche felt.  
Sche cryed no mor aftyr so lowde ne on that maner as sche had don befor, but sche  
sobbyd wondirly aftyr and wept as sor as evyr sche dede befor, sumtyme lowde and  
sumtyme stille, as God wolde mesur it hys selfe. Than meche pepil levyd that sche  
durst no lengar cryen for the good frer prechyd so ageyn hir and wold not suffyr hir in  
3685 no maner. Than thei heldyn hym an holy man and hir a fals feynyd ypcrite. And, as  
summe spoke evyl of hir aforn for sche cryed, so sum spoke now evyl of hir for sche  
cryid not. And so slawndir and bodily angwisch fel to hir on every syde, and al was  
encresyng of hir gostly comfort. Than owr mercyful Lord seyd unto hys unworthy  
servawnt, “Dowtyr, I must nedys comfortyn the, for now thu hast the ryth wey to  
3690 hevyn. Be this wey cam I to hevyn and alle my disciplys, for now thu schalt knowe the  
bettir what sorwe and schame I suffyrd for thy lofe, and thu schalt have the mor  
compassyon whan thu thynkyst on my Passyon. Dowtyr, I have telde the many tymys  
that the frer schulde seyn evyl of the. Therfor I warne the that thu telle hym not of the  
prevy cownsel whech I have schewyd to the, for I wille not that he here it of thy  
3695 mowth. And, dowtyr, I telle the forsothe he schal be chastised scharply. As hys name is  
now, it schal ben throwyn down and thin schal ben reyzed up. And I schal makyn as  
many men to lofe the for my lofe as han despisyd the for my lofe. Dowtyr, thu schalt be  
in cherch whan he schal be wythowtyn. In this chirche thu hast suffyrd meche schame  
and reprefe for the gyftys that I have govyn the and for the grace and goodnes that I have  
3700 wrowt in the, and therfore in this cherche and in this place I schal ben worschepyd in  
the. Many a man and woman schal seyn it is wel sene that God lovyd hir wel. Dowtyr, I  
schal werkyn so mech grace for the that al the werld schal wondry and merveylyn of  
my goodnes.” Than the sayd creatur seyd unto our Lord wyth gret reverens, “I am not  
worthy that thu schuldist schewyn sweche grace for me. Lord, it is anow to me that thu  
3705 safe my sowle fro endles dampnacyon be thi gret mercy.” “It is my worschep, dowtyr,  
that I schal do, and therfore I wil that thu have no wyl but my wyl. The lesse prise that  
thu settyst be thyselfe, the mor prise set I be the, and the bettir wil I lovyn the, dowtyr.  
Loke thu have no sorwe for erdry good. I have asayd the in poverté, and I have chas-  
tised the as I wole myselfe, bothe wythinne forth in thi sowle and wythowte forth  
3710 thorw slawndyr of the pepil. Lo, dowtyr, I have grawntyd the thin owyn desyr, for thu  
schuldist non other purgatory han but in this werld only. Dowtyr, thu seyst oftyn to  
me in thi mende that riche men han gret cawse to lovyn me wel, and thu seyst ryth

**3704** *anow*, enough. **3705** *safe*, save. **3706** *prise*, price. **3708** *asyd*, assayed, tested.

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soth, for thu seyst I have govyn hem meche good wherwyth thei may servyn me and lovyn me. But, good dowtyr, I prey the, love thu me wyth al thyn hert, and I schal gevyn  
3715 the good anow to lovyn me wyth, for hevyn and erde schulde rathyr faylyn than I schulde faylyn the. And, yyf other men faylyn, thu schalt not faylyn. And, thow alle thy frendys forsake the, I schal nevyr forsakyn the. Thu madist me onys stiward of thin howsholde and executor of alle thy good werkys, and I schal be a trewe styward and a trewe executor unto the, fulfilling of al thi wil and al thy desyr. And I schal  
3720 ordeyn for the, dowtyr, as for myn owyn modyr and as for myn owyn wyfe."

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The creatur seyd unto hir Lord Crist Jhesu, "A, blisful Lord, I wolde I knew wherin I myth best love the and plesyn the and that my love wer as swet to the as me thynkyth that thy love is unto me." Than owr swete Lord Jhesus, aweryng hys creatur, seyd,  
3725 "Dowtyr, yyf thou knew how swet thy love is unto me, thou schuldist nevyr do other thyng but lovyn me wyth al thyn hert. And therfor beleve wel, dowtyr, that my lofe is not so swet to the as thy lofe is to me. Dowtyr, thou knowist not how meche I lofe the, for it may not be knowyn in this werld how meche it is, ne be felt as it is, for thou schuldist faylyn and brestyn and nevyr enduryn it for the joye that thou schuldist fele. And therfor I mesur it as I wil to thi most ese and comfort. But, dowtyr, thou schalt wel  
3730 knowyn in an other worlde how meche I loyed the in erde, for ther thou schalt han gret cawse to thankyn me. Ther thou schalt se wythowtyn ende every good day that evyr I gaf the in erth of contemplacyon, of devocyon, and of al the gret charité that I have govyn to the to the profyte of thyn evyn cristen. For this schal be thy mete whan thou comyst hom into hevyn. Ther is no clerk in al this world that can, dowtyr, leryn the  
3735 bettyr than I can do, and, yyf thou wilt be buxom to my wyl, I schal be buxom to thy wil. Wher is a bettyr charité than to wepyn for thi Lordys lofe? Thu wost wel, dowtyr, that the devyl hath no charité, for he is ful wroth wyth the and he myth owt hurtyn the, but he schal not deryn the saf a lityl in this world for to makyn the afeerd sumtyme, that thou schuldist preyn the myghtilier to me for grace and steryn thy charité the mor  
3740 to meward. Ther is no clerk can spekyn agens the lyfe whech I teche the, and, yyf he

3715 **faylyn**, fail. 3728 **faylyn and brestyn**, fail and burst. 3734 **leryn**, learn, i.e., teach. 3738 **deryn**, harm. 3739 **preyn**, pray. 3740 **to meward**, toward me.

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do, he is not Goddys clerk; he is the develys clerk. I telle the ryth forsothe that ther is no man in this world, yyf he wolde suffyr as meche despite for my lofe wilfully as thu hast don and clevyn as sor unto me, not willyng for anythyng that may be do er seyd agen hym forsakyn me, but I schal far ryth fayr wyth hym and be ryth gracyowse unto  
3745 hym, bothyn in this worlde and in the other.” Than seyd the creatur, “A, my derworthy Lord, this lyfe schuldist thu schewyn to religiows men and to preistys.” Owr Lord seyd agen to hir, “Nay, nay, dowtyr, for that thyng that I lofe best thei lofe not, and that is schamys, despitis, scornys, and reprevys of the pepil, and therfor schal thei not have this grace. For, dowtyr, I telle the, he that dredith the schamys of the world may not  
3750 parfytely lovyn God. And, dowtyr, undyr the abyte of holynes is curyd meche wykkydnes. Dowtyr, yyf thu sey the wikkynes that is wroot in the werld as I do, thu schuldist have gret wondyr that I take not uttyr venjawns on hem. But, dowtyr, I spar for thy lofe. Thu wepist so every day for mercy that I must nedys grawnt it the, and wil not the pepil belebyn the goodnes that I werke in the for hem. Nevyrthelesse, dowtyr,  
3755 ther schal come a tyme whan thei schal be ryth fayn to belebyn the grace that I have govyn the for hem. And I schal sey to hem whan thei arn passyd owt of this world, ‘Lo, I ordeynd hir to wepyn for hir synnes, and ye had hir in gret despite, but hir charité wolde nevyr sesen for yow.’ And therfor, dowtyr, thei that arn good sowlys schal hly thank me for the grace and goodnes that I have gove the, and thei that arn  
3760 wikkyd schal grutchyn and han gret peyn to suffyr the grace that I schewe to the. And therfor I schal chastisyn hem as it wer for myself.” Sche preyd, “Nay, derworthy Lord Jhesu, chastise no creatur for me. Thu wost wel, Lord, that I desyr no venjawns, but I aske mercy and grace for alle men yyf it be thy wille to grawnt it. Nevyrthelesse, Lord, rathyr than thei schulde ben departyd fro the wythowtyn ende, chastise hem as thu  
3765 wilt thiselfe. It semyth, Lord, in my sowle that thu art ful of charité, for thu seyst thu wilt not the deth of a synful man. And thu seyst also thu wilt alle men ben savyd. Than, Lord, syn thu woldist alle men schulde ben savyd, I must wyl the same, and thu seyst thyself that I must lovyn myn evyn cristen as myn owyn self. And, Lord, thu knowist that I have wept and sorwyd many yerys for I wolde be savyd, and so must I  
3770 do for myn evyn cristen.”

3743 **clevyn as sor**, cleave as closely. 3750 **abyte**, habit; **curyd**, covered. 3752 **spar**, spare (them). 3755 **fayn**, fain, eager. 3760 **grutchyn**, grudge, complain.

Owr Lord Jhesu Crist seyde unto the sayd creatur, “Dowtyr, thu schal wel seen whan  
thu art in hevyn wyth me that ther is no man dampnyd but he that is wel worthy to be  
dampnyd, and thu schalt holdyn the wel plesyd wyth alle my werkys. And therfor, dowtyr,  
thank me hyly of this gret charité that I werke in thyn hert, for it is myself, almythy  
3775 God, that make the to wepyn every day for thyn owyn synnes, for the gret compassyon  
that I geve the of my bittyr Passyon and for the sorwys that my modyr had her in erde,  
for the angwischys that sche suffryd and for the teerys that sche wept, also, dowtyr,  
for the holy martyres in hevyn (whan thu heryst of hem, thu gevist me thankyngys  
wyth crying and wepyng for the grace that I have schewyd to hem, and, whan thu  
3780 seest any lazerys, thu hast gret compassyon of hem, yeldyng me thankyngys and  
preysyngys that I am mor favorabyl to the than I am to hem), and also, dowtyr, for the  
gret sorwe that thu hast for al this world that thu myghtyst helpyn hem as wel as thu  
woldist helpyn thiself bothe gostly and bodily, and forthermor for the sorwys that thu  
hast for the sowlys in purgatory that thu woldist so gladly that thei wer owt of her  
3785 peyn that thei mythyn preysyn me wythowtyn ende. And al this is myn owyn goodnes  
that I geve to the, wherfor thu art meche bowndyn to thankyn me. And nevrthelesse  
yet I thank the for the gret lofe thu hast to me and for thu hast so gret wyl and so gret  
desyr that alle men and women schulde lovyn me ryth wel, for, as thu thynkyst, holy and  
unholie alle thei wolde have good to levyn wyth as is leful unto hem, but alle wyl not  
3790 besyn hem to love me as thei do to geten hem temperal goodys. Also, dowtyr, I thank  
the for thu thynkyst so long that thu art owt of my blyssed presens. Forthermor, I  
thank the, dowtyr, specyalys for thow mayst suffyr no man to breke my  
comawndementys ne to sweryn be me but yyf it be a gret peyne to the and for thu art  
alwey redy to undyrnemyn hem of her sweryng for my lofe. And therfor hast thu  
3795 suffyrd many a schrewyd word and many a repref, and thu schalt therfor han many a joy  
in hevyn. Dowtyr, I sent onys Seynt Powyl unto the for to strengthyn the and comfortyn  
the that thu schuldyst boldly spekyn in my name fro that day forward. And Seynt  
Powle seyd unto the that thu haddyst suffyrd mech tribulacyon for cawse of hys

3776 **her in erde**, here on earth. 3780 **lazerys**, lepers. 3789 **good to levyn wyth**, “levyn” can  
mean either “live” or “believe”; hence, “good” might refer to either spiritual or material goods;  
**leful**, permissible, lawful. 3790 **besyn hem**, busy themselves. 3791 **owt**, out, away from.  
3794 **undyrnemyn**, rebuke.

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wrytyng, and he behyte the that thu schuldist han as meche grace ther agens for hys  
3800 lofe as evyr thu haddist schame er reprefe for hys lofe. He telde the also of many joys of  
hevyn and of the gret lofe that I had to the. And, dowtyr, I have oftyntymes seyd to the  
that ther is no seynt in hevyn but yyf thou wilt speke wyth hym he is redy to the to  
comfortyn the and spekyn to the in my name. Myn awngelys arn redy to offyrm thyn  
3805 holy thowtys and thi preyerys to me and the terys of thyn eyne also, for thi terys arn  
awngelys drynk, and it arn very pymtent to hem. Therfor, my derworthy dowtyr, be  
not yrke of me in erde to syttyn alone be thiself and thynkyn of my lofe, for I am not  
yrke of the and my mercyful eye is evyr upon the. Dowtyr, thou mayst boldly seyn to  
me ‘*Jhesus est amor mes*,’ that is to seyn, ‘Jhesu is my lofe.’ Therfor, dowtyr, late  
3810 me be al thy lofe and al the joy of thyn hert. Dowtyr, yyf thou wilt bethynk the wel, thou  
hast rith gret cawse to lofe me abovyn al thyng for the gret gyftys that I have govyn the  
befortyme. And yet thou hast an other gret cawse to lovyn me, for thou hast thi wil of  
chastité as thu wer a wedow, thyn husband levynge in good hele. Dowtyr, I have drawe  
the lofe of thin hert fro alle mennys hertys into myn hert. Sumtyme, dowtyr, thou thowtyst  
3815 it had ben in a maner unpossybyl for to ben so, and that tyme suffyrdyst thou ful gret  
peyne in thin hert wyth fleschly affeccyonys. And than cowdyst thou wel cryen to me,  
seyng, ‘Lord, for alle thi wowndys smert, drawe al the lofe of myn hert into thyn  
hert.’ Dowtyr, for alle thes cawsys and many other cawsys and benefetys whech I  
have schewyd for the on this half the see and on yon half the see, thou hast gret cawse  
to lovyn me.

66

3820 “Now, dowtyr, I wyl that thu ete flesch agen as thu wer won to don, and that thu be  
buxom and bonowr to my wil and to my byddyng and leve thyn owyn wyl and bydde  
thy gostly fadyrs that thei latyn the don aftyr my wyl. And thu schalt have nevyrthelesse  
grace, but so meche the mor, for thu schalt han the same mede in hevyn as thow thu  
3825 fastydyst stille aftyr thin owyn wyl. Dowtyr, I badde the fyrist that thu schuldist leevyn  
flesch mete and non etyn, and thu hast obeyd my wyl many yerys and absteynd the

3805 **pymtent**, sweetened and spiced wine. 3806 **yrke**, weary. 3812 **hele**, health. 3816–17  
‘**Lord, . . . into thyn hert.**’ This couplet is repeated later, in chapter 88. 3821 **bonowr**, gentle,  
obedient. 3824 **fastydyst**, fasted.

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aftyr my cownsel. Therfor now I bydde the that thu resort ageyn to flesch mete." The sayd creatur with reverent drede, seyd, "A, blisful Lord, the pepil, that hath knowyn of myn abstinenſ so many yerys and seeth me now retornyn and etyn flesch mete, thei wil have gret merveyl and, as I suppose, despisyn me and scornyn me therfor." Owr  
3830 Lord seyd to hir agen, "Thu schalt non heed takyn of her scornys but late every man sey what he wyl." Than went sche to hir gostly fadrys and told hem what owr Lord had seyd unto hir. Whan hir gostly faderys knew the wyl of God, thei chargyd hir be vertu of obediens to etyn flesch mete as sche had don many yerys befor. Than had sche many a scorne and meche repreſe for sche eete flesch ageyn. Also sche had mad a vow  
3835 to fastyn o day in the weke for worschep of owr Lady whyl sche had levyd, whech vow sche kept many yerys. Owr Lady, aperyng to hir sowle, bad hir gon to hir confessor and seyin that sche wolde han hir dischargyd of hir vow that sche schulde ben mythy to beryn hir gostly labowrys, for wythowtyn bodily strength it mytyn not ben enduryd. Than hir confessowr, seyng be the eye of disresyon it was expedient to  
3840 be do, comawndyd hir be the vertu of obediens to etyn as other creaturys dedyn mesurably wher God wolde sche had hir fode. And hir grace was not disresyd but rathar encresyd, for sche had levar a fastyd than an etyn yyf it had ben the wyl of God. Forthermor owr Lady seyd to hir, "Dowtyr, thu art weyke inow of wepyng and of crying, for tho makyn the febyl and weyke anow. And I kan the mor thank to etyn thi  
3845 mete for my loſe than to fastyn, that thu mayſt endury thy perfeccyon of wepyng."

67

On a tyme ther happyd to be a gret fyer in Lynne Bischop, whech fyer brent up the gylde halle of the Trinité and in the same town, an hydows fyer and grevows ful lekely to a brent the parysch cherch dedicate in the honowr of Seynt Margarete, a solempne place and rychely honowryd, and also al the town, ne had grace ne myracle ne ben.  
3850 The seyd creatur beyng ther present and seyng the perel and myschef of al the towne, cryed ful lowde many tymes that day and wept ful habundawntly, preyng for grace

**3838 mythy**, mighty, able. **3841 fode**, food; **disresyd**, decreased. **3842 an**, have. **3844 tho**, those (weeping and crying); **the mor thank**, thank you more. **3846 gret fyer**, the Guild Hall in Lynn was burned on January 23, 1420–21 (?). **3847 hydows**, hideous. **3849 ne had grace ne myracle ne ben**, had there not been grace nor miracle.

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and mercy to alle the pepil. And, notwythstondyng in other tymes thei myth not enduryn hir to cryen and wepyn for the plentyuows grace that owr Lord wroot in hir, as this day for enchewyng of her bodily perel thei myth suffyr hir to cryen and wepyn as  
3855 mech as evyr sche wolde, and no man wolde byddyn hir cesyn but rathyrs preyn hir of contynuacyon, ful trustyng and belevyng that thorw hir crying and wepyng owr Lord wolde takyn hem to mercy. Than cam hir confessowr to hir and askyd yyf it wer best to beryn the sacrament to the fyer er not. Sche seyd, “Yys, ser, yys, for owr Lord Jhesu Crist telde me it schal be ryth wel.” So hir confessowr, parisch preste of Seynt  
3860 Margarety Cherche, toke the precyows sacrament and went beforne the fyer as devoutly as he cowde and sithyn browt it in ageyn to the cherche, and the sparkys of the fyer fleyn abowte the cherch. The seyd creatur, desiryng to folwyn the precyows sacrament to the fyre, went owt at the cherch dor, and, as sone as sche beheld the hedows flawme of the fyr, anon sche cryed wyth lowde voys and gret wepyng, “Good Lorde,  
3865 make it wel.” Thes wordys wroot in hir mende inasmeche as owr Lord had seyd to hir beforne that he schulde makyn it wel, and therfor sche cryed, “Good Lord, make it wel and sende down sum reyn er sum wedyr that may thorw thi mercy qwenchyn this fyre and esyn myn hert.” Sithyn sche went ageyne into the cherch, and than sche beheld how the sparkys comyn into the qwer thorw the lantern of the cherch. Than had sche  
3870 a newe sorwe and cryed ful lowde ageyn for grace and mercy wyth gret plenté of terys. Sone aftyr, comyn into hir three worschepful men wyth whyte snow on her clothys, seying unto hir, “Lo, Margery, God hath wroot gret grace for us and sent us a fayr snowe to qwenchyn wyth the fyr. Beth now of good cher and thankyth God therfor.” And with a gret cry sche gaf preysyng and thankynge to God for hys gret  
3875 mercy and hys goodnes, and specyalys for he had seyd to hir beforne that it schulde be ryth wel whan it was ful unlykely to ben wel, saf only thorw myrakyl and specyal grace. And now sche saw it was wel in dede, hir thowt that sche had gret cawse to thankyn owr Lord. Than cam hir gostly fadys unto hir and seyd he belevyd that God grawntyd hem for hir preyerys to be delyveryd owt of her gret perellys, for it myth not  
3880 be, wythowtyn devout preyerys, that the eyr beyng brygth and cler schulde be so sone chongyd into clowdys and derkys and sendyn down gret flakys of snow, thorw the whech the fyr was lettyd of hys kendly werkynge, blyssed mote owr Lord ben. Notwythstondyng the grace that he schewyd for hir, yet, whan the perellys wer sesyd,

**3865 wroot**, worked. **3869 qwer**, choir; **lantern**, open structure upon a roof to give light to the interior. **3876 myrakyl**, miracle. **3882 lettyd**, hindered; **hys kendly**, its natural. **3883 sesyd**, ceased.

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sum men slawndyrd hir for sche cryed, and sum seyden to hir that owr Lady cried  
3885 nevyr, "Why crye ye on this maner?" And sche seyd for sche myth non otherwise do.  
Than sche fled the pepil that sche schulde geve hem non occasyon into the priowrys  
cloistyr. Whan sche was ther, sche had so gret mende of the Passyon of owr Lord  
Jhesu Crist and of hys precyows wowndys and how dere he bowt hir that sche cryed  
and roryd wondirfully so that sche myth be herd a gret wey and myth not restreyne  
3890 hyrsself therfro. Than had sche gret wondyr how owr Lady myth suffyr er dur to see  
hys precyows body ben scorgyd and hangyd on the crosse. Also it cam to hir mende  
how men had seyd to hirself beforne that owr Lady, Cristys owyn modyr, cryed not as  
sche dede, and that cawsyd hir to seyn in hir crying, "Lord, I am not thi modir. Take  
awaye this peyn fro me, for I may not beryn it. Thi passyon wil sle me." So ther cam a  
3895 worschepful clerk forby hir, a doctowr of divinité, "I had levyr than twenty pownde  
that I myth han swech a sorwe for owr Lordys Passyon." Than the sayd doctowr sent  
for hir ther he was to come and speke with hym, and sche wyth good wyl went to hym  
wyth wepyng terys to hys chambyr. The worthy and worschepful clerk dede hir drynkyn  
and made hir ryth good cher. Sithyn he ledde hir to an awter and askyd what was the  
3900 skylle that sche cryed and wept so sor. Than sche teld hym many gret cawsys of hir  
wepyng and yet sche teld hym of no revelacyon. And he seyd sche was mech bowndyn  
to lovyn owr Lord for the tokenys of lofe that he schewyd to hir in divers wysys.  
Aftyrward ther cam a persun that had takyn degré in scole wheche schuld prechyn bothe  
for non and aftyr non. And, as he prechyd ful holily and devoutly, the sayd creatur  
3905 was mevyd be devocyon in hys sermown, and at the last sche brast owt wyth a crye.  
And the pepil began to grutchyn wyth hir crying, for it was in the tyme that the good  
frer prechyd ageyn hir, as is wretyn beforne, and also er than owr Lord toke hir crying  
fro hir. For, thow the mater be wretyn beforne this, nevrthelesse it fel aftyr this. Than  
the persun cesyd a lityl of hys prechynge and seyd to the pepil, "Frendys, beth stille and  
3910 grutchith not wyth this woman, for iche of yow may synne deedly in hir and sche is  
nowt the cawse but yowr owyn demyng, for, thow this maner of werkynge may seme  
bothe good and ylle, yet awt ye for to demyn the best in yowr hertys, and I dowt it not  
it is ryth wel. Also I dar wel say it is a ryth gracyows gyft of God, blissed mote he be."  
Than the pepil blissyd hym for hys goodly wordys and wer the mor steryd to beleven

3890 **dur**, endure. 3895 **levyr**, rather. 3898 **dede hir drynkyn**, caused her to drink. 3899  
**awter**, altar. 3900 **skylle**, reason. 3902 **wysys**, manners, ways. 3904 **for non**, forenoon. 3911  
**demyng**, deeming, thinking. 3912 **awt**, ought.

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3915 hys holy werkys. Aftyrward, whan the sermown was endyd, a good frend of the seyd  
creatuer met wyth the frer whech had prechyd so sor ageyn hir and askyd how hym  
thowt be hir. The frer, answeryng scharply ageyn, seyd, “Sche hath a devyl wythinne  
hir,” no thyng mevyd fro hys opynyon but rathyr defendyng hys errowr.

**68**

Sone aftyr ther was at Lynne holdyn the chapetyl of the Frer Prechowrys, and  
3920 thedir comyn many worschepful clerkys of that holy ordyr of whech it longyth on to  
seyn a sermown in the parisch cherch. And ther was come amongys other to the sayd  
chapetyl a worschepful doctowr whech hite Maistyr Custawns, and he had knowyn  
the forseyd creatuer many yerys befor. Whan the creatuer herd seyn that he was comyn  
3925 thedyr, sche went to hym and schewyd hym why sche cryed and wept so sor, to wetyn  
yyf he myth fyndyn any defawte in hir crying er in hir wepyng. The worschepful  
doctowr seyd to hir, “Margery, I have red of an holy woman whom God had govyn  
gret grace of wepyng and crying as he hath don onto yow. In the cherch ther sche  
dwellyd was a preyste whech had no conseyt in hir wepyng and cawsyd hir thorw hys  
3930 steryng to gon owte of the cherche. Whan sche was in the cherch yerd, sche preyd  
God that the preyst myth have felyng of the grace that sche felt as wistly as it lay not  
in hir powyr to cryen ne wepyn but whan God wolde. And so sodeynly owr Lord sent  
hym devocyon at hys messe that he myth not mesuryn hymself, and than wolde he no  
more despisyn hir aftyr that but rathyr comfortyn hir.” Thus the sayde doctowr,  
3935 confermyng hir crying and hir wepyng, seyd it was a gracyows and a specyal gyft of  
God, and God was hly to be magnifyed in hys gyft. And than the same doctowr went  
to an other doctowr of divinité whech was assygned to prechyn in the parisch cherche  
befor al the pepil, prayng hym that yyf the sayd creatuer cryid er wept at hys sermown  
that he wolde suffyr it mekely and no thyng ben abaschyd therof ne not spekyn ther  
ageyns. So aftirward, whan the worschepful doctowr schulde prechyn and worthily was  
3940 browt to the pulpit, as he began to prechyn ful holily and devoutly of owr Ladiis

**3919 chapetyl of the Frer Prechowrys**, chapter (provincial assembly) of the Dominicans.  
**3920 it longyth on**, one was obliged. **3928 conseyt**, thought, (good) opinion. **3929 steryng**,  
stirring. **3930 wistly**, certainly. **3940–41 owr Ladiis Assumpsyon**, the assumption of the  
body of the blessed Virgin into heaven.

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Assumpson, the sayd creatur, lyftyd up in hir mende be hy swetnesse and devocyon, brast owt wyth a lowde voys and cryid ful lowde and wept ful sor. The worschepful doctowr stod stille and suffyrd wol mekely tyl it was cesyd and sithyn seyd forth hys sermowne to an ende. At aftynoon he sent for the same creatur into place ther he was  
3945 and mad hir rith glad cher. Than sche thankyd hym for hys mekenes and hys charité that he schewyd in supportacyon of hir crying and hir wepyng befor noon at hys sermown. The worschepful doctowr seyd ageyn to hir, “Margery, I wold not a spokyn ageyn yow thow ye had cryid tyl evyn. And ye wolde comyn to Norwich, ye schal be rith wolcom and han swech cher as I can make yow.” Thus God sent hir good  
3950 maystyrsclep of this worthy doctowr to strengthyn hir ageyn hir detractorys, worschepid be hys name. Aftirward in Lenton prechyd a good clerk, a Frer Austyn, in hys owyn hows at Lynne, and had a gret audiens, wher that tyme was the sayd creatur present. And God of hys goodnes enspired the frer to prechyn mech of hys Passyon so  
3955 compassyfly and so devoutly that sche myth not beryn it. Than fel sche down wepyng and crying so sor that meche of the pepil wondryd on hir and bannyd and cursyd hir ful sor, supposyng that sche myth a left hir crying yyf sche had wolde, inasmech as the good frer had so prechyd ther ageyn, as is befforn wretyn. And than this good man that prechyd as now at this tyme seyd to the pepil, “Frendys, beth stille, ye wote ful lityl what sche felyth.” And so the pepil cesyd and was stille and herd up the sermown  
3960 wyth qwyet and rest of body and sowle.

69

Also on a Good Fryday at Seynt Margarety Chirch the priowr of the same place and the same town, Lynne, schuld prechyn. And he toke to hys teme, “Jhesu is ded.” Than the sayd creatur, al wowndyd wyth pité and compassyon, cryid and wept as yyf sche had seyn owr Lord ded wyth hir bodily eye. The worschepful priowr and doctowr  
3965 of divinité suffyrd hir ful mekely and no thyng mevyd ageyn hir. An other tyme Bischop Wakeryng, Bischop of Norwich, prechyd at Lynne in the seyd cherch of Seynt Margarete, and the forseyd creatur cryid and wept ful boystowsly in the tyme of hys

3943 **wol**, well. 3946 **supportacyon**, support. 3950 **maystyrsclep**, lordship, victory. 3954 **compassyfly**, compassionately. 3961 **the priowr**, Thomas Hevingham, see chapter 57. 3962 **teme**, theme. 3965–66 **Bischop Wakeryng**, John Wakering, Bishop of Norwich, 1416–25.

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sermown, and he suffyrd it ful mekely and paciently and so dede many a worthy clerk,  
bothyn reguler and seculer, for ther was nevyr clerk prechyd opynly ageyn hir crying  
3970 but the Grey Frer, as is wretyn beforne. So owr Lord of hys mercy, liche as he had  
promysyd the seyd creatur that he schulde evyr provydyn for hir, steryng the spiritys of  
tweyn good clerkys the whech longe and many yerys had knowyn hir conversacyon  
and al hir perfeccyon, made hem mythy and bolde to spekyn for hys party in excusyng  
3975 the seyd creatur, bothyn in the pulpit and besyden wher thei herd any thyng mevyd  
agen hir, strengthyng her skyllys be auctoriteys of Holy Scriptur sufficiently, of whech  
clerkys on was a White Frer, a doctowr of divinité. The other clerk was a bacheler of  
lawe canon, a wel labowrd man in scriptur. And than sum envyows personys  
compleynyd to the Provincyal of the White Frerys that the sayd doctowr was to  
3980 conversawnt wyth the seyd creatur, forasmuch as he supportyd hir in hir wepyng and  
in hir crying and also enformyd hir in qwestyons of Scriptur whan sche wolde any  
askyn hym. Than was he monischyd be vertu of obediens that he schulde no mor spekyn  
wyth hir ne enformyn hir in no textys of Scriptur, and that was to hym ful peynful, for,  
as he seyd to sum personys, he had levar a lost an hundryd pownd, yyf he had an had  
it, than hir communicacyon, it was so gostly and fruteful. Whan hir confessowr  
3985 perceyvyd how the worthy doctowr was chargyd be obediens that he schulde not spekyn  
ne comownyn wyth hir, than he for to excludyn al occasyon warnyd hir also be vertu  
of obediens that sche schulde no mor gon to the frerys, ne spekyn wyth the sayd doctowr,  
ne askyn hym no qwestyons as sche had don beforne. And than thowt sche ful gret  
sweme and hevynes, for sche was put fro mech gostly comfort. Sche had levar a lost  
3990 any erdry good than hys comunycacyon, for it was to hir gret encres of vertu. Than  
long aftyrward it happyd hir goyng in the strete to metyn wyth the seyd doctowr and  
non of hem spak o word to other. And than sche had a gret cry wyth many teerys.  
Aftyr, whan sche cam to hir meditacyon, sche seyd in hir mende to owr Lord Jhesu  
Crist, "Alas, Lord, why may I no comfort han of this worschepful clerk, the whech  
3995 hath knowyn me so many yerys and oftyn tymes strengthyd me in thi lofe? Now hast  
thu, Lord, takyn fro me the ankyr, I trust to thi mercy, the most special and synguler  
comforte that evyr I had in erde, for he evyr lovd me for thy lofe and wold nevyr  
forsakyn me for nowt that any man cowd do er seye whylys he levyd. And Maistyr  
Aleyn is putt fro me and I fro hym. Syr Thomas Andrew and Syr John Amy arn

**3978 the Provincyal of the White Frerys**, Thomas Netter, elected provincial prior of the English Carmelites in 1414. **3989 sweme**, sorrow. **3997 erde**, earth.

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4000 benefysed and owt of town. Maistyr Robert dar unethys spekyn wyth me. Now have I  
in a maner no comfort neithyr of man ne of childe." Owr merciful Lord Crist Jhesu,  
answeryng in hir mende, seyd, "Dowtyr, I am mor worthy to thy sowle than evyr was  
the ankyr and alle tho whech thu hast rehersyd er alle the werld may be, and I schal  
comfortyn the myself, for I wolde spekyn to the oftynar than thu wilt latyn me. And,  
4005 dowtyr, I do the to wetyn that thu schalt spekyn to Maistyr Aleyn ageyn as thu hast don  
beforn." And than owr Lord sent be provysyon of the priowr of Lynne a preste to ben  
kepar of a chapel of owr Lady, clepyd the Jesyn, wythinne the Cherch of Seynt  
Margarete, whech preyst many tymes herd hir confessyon in the absens of hyr princi-  
pal confessowr. And to this preyst sche schewyd al hir lyfe as ner as sche cowde fro  
4010 hir yong age, bothe hir synnes, hyr labowrys, hir vexacyons, hir contemplacyons, and  
also hir revelacyons and swech grace as God wroot in hir thorw hys mercy, and so  
that preyste trustyd ryth wel that God wroot ryth gret grace in hir.

70

On a tyme God visited the forseyd doctowr, Maystyr Aleyn, wyth gret sekenes that  
no man hith hym no lyffe that saw hym. And so it was told the sayd creatur of hys  
4015 sekenes. Than sche was ful hevy for hym, and specialy for as meche as sche had be-  
revelacyon that sche schulde spekyn wyth hym ageyn as sche had don beforne, and,  
yyf he had deyd of this sekenes, hir felyng had not ben trewe. Therfor sche ran into the  
qwer at Seynt Margarety Chirche, knelyng down beforne the Sacrament and seying  
on this wise, "A, Lord, I prey the, for alle goodnes that thu hast schewyd to me and as  
4020 wistly as thu lovyst me, late this worthy clerk nevyr deyin tyl I may spekyn wyth hym  
as thu hast behite me that I schulde do. And thu, gloriows Qwen of Mercy, have mende  
what he was wont to seyn of the in hys sermownys. He was wont to seyin, Lady, that  
he was wel blissyd that had yow to hys frend, for, whan ye preyid, alle the cumpany of  
hevyn preyd wyth yow. Now for the blisful lofe that ye had to yowr Sone, late hym  
4025 levyn tyl the tyme that he hath leve to speke wyth me and I wyth hym, for now we arn  
put asundyr be obediens." Than sche had answer in hir sowle that he schulde not dey

4000 **benefysed**, have benefices, ecclesiastical livings or curacies; **dar unethys**, dare never.

4002 **worthy**, precious. 4004 **oftynar**, more often. 4007 **Jesyn**, see p. 151. 4014 **hith**, promised.

4025 **levyn**, live. 4026 **be obediens**, by obedience (to the will of figures of spiritual authority).

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befor the tyme that sche had leve to speke wyth hym and he wyth hir as thei had don  
yerys beforne. And, as owr Lord wolde, in schort tyme aftyr the worthy clerk recuryd  
and went abowtyn heyl and hool and had leve of hys sovereyn to spekyn wyth the  
4030 sayd creatur. And sche had leve of hir confessowr to spekyn wyth hym. So it happyd  
the forseyd doctowr schulde dinyn in towne wyth a worshipful woman whech had  
takyn the mentyl and the ryng, and he sent for the sayd creatur to comyn and spekyn  
wyth hym. Sche, havyng gret merveyl therof, toke leve and went to hym. Whan sche  
cam into the place wher he was, sche myth not spekyn for wepyng and for joy that  
4035 sche had in owr Lord, inasmeche as sche fonde hir felyng trewe and not deceyvabyl  
that he had leve to spekyn to hir and sche to hym. Than the worschepful doctowr seyd  
to hir, "Margery, ye ar wolcome to me, for I have long be kept fro yow, and now hath  
owr Lord sent yow hedyr that I may spekyn wyth yow, blissed mote he be." Ther was  
a dyner of gret joy and gladnes, meche mor gostly than bodily, for it was sawcyd and  
4040 sawryd wyth talys of Holy Scriptur. And than he gaf the sayd creatur a peyr of knyvys  
in tokyn that he wolde standyn wyth hir in Goddys cawse, as he had don beforne tyme.

71

On a day ther cam a preyst to the sayd creatur whech had gret trust in hir felyngys  
and in hir revelacyons, desyryng to prevyn hem in divers tymes, and preyid hir to prey  
to owr Lord that sche myth have undirstondyng yyf the priowr of Lynne, whech was  
4045 good maistyr to the sayd preyst, schulde be remownyd er not and, as sche felt, makyn  
hym trewe relacyon. Sche preyid for the forseyd mater, and, whan sche had answer  
therof, sche telde the preyste that the priowr of Lynne hys maistyr schulde be clepyd  
hom to Norwich and an other of hys brethyr schulde be sent to Lynne in hys stede. And  
so it was in dede. But he that was sent to Lynne abood ther but a lityl while er than he  
4050 was clepyd hom to Norwych ageyn, and he that had ben priowr of Lynne beforne was  
sent ageyn to Lynne and dwellyd ther wel abowtyn four yer tyl he deyd. And in mene

**4029 heyl and hool**, hale and whole; **leve**, leave, permission. **4031 dinyn**, dine. **4032 mentyl and the ryng**, mantle and ring of chastity, i.e., while continuing to live in the world. **4039–40 sawcyd and sawryd**, sauced and savored (flavored). **4040 peyr of knyvys**, pair of knives. **4045 remownyd**, removed. **4047 clepyd**, called. **4049 he that was sent to Lynne**, John Derham, who briefly succeeded Thomas Hevingham.

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tyme the seyd creatur had oftyn felyng that he the whech was last clepyd hom to Norwich and abood but lityl while at Lynne schulde yet ben priowr of Lynne agen. Sche wolde geve no credens therto inasmeche as he had ben ther and was in lityl tyme  
4055 clepyd hom ageyn. Than, as sche went on a tyme in the White Frerys Cherch at Lynne up and down, sche felt a wondyr swet savour and an hevynly that hir thowt sche myth a levyd therby wythoutyn mete or drynke yyf it wolde a contynuyd. And in that tyme owr Lord seyd unto hir, “Dowtyr, be this swet smel thu mayst wel knowyn that ther schal in schort tyme be a newe priowr in Lynne, and that schal ben he whech was last  
4060 remownd thens.” And sone aftyr the elde priowr deyid, and than owr Lord seyd to hir as sche lay in hir bed, “Dowtyr, as loth as thu art to levyn my steryngys, yet schal thu se hym of whom I schewyd the beforne priowr of Lynne er this day sevenyth.” And so owr Lord rehersyd hir this mater ech day the sevenyth tyl sche sey it was so in dede, and than was sche ful glad and joyful that hir felyng was trew. Sithyn, whan this  
4065 worshopful man was comyn to Lynne and had dwellyd ther but lytil while, whech was a wol worschepful clerk, a doctowr of divinité, he was poyntyd for to gon ovyr the see to the Kyng into Frawnce and other clerkys also of the worthyest in Ynglond. Than a preyste that had an offyce undyr the sayd priowr cam to the forseyd creatur and besechyd hir to have this mater in mende whan God wolde mynstyr hys holy dalyawnce to hir  
4070 sowle and wetyn in this mater whethyr the priowr schulde gon ovyr the se er not. And so sche preyid to have undirstondyng of this mater, and sche had answer that he schulde not gon. Nevrthelesse he wend hymself to a gon and was al purveyd therfor and wyth gret hevynes had takyn leve of hys frendys, supposyng nevr to a comyn ageyn, for he was a ful weyk man and a febyl of complexion. And in the menetyme the kyng deyid,  
4075 and the priowr bood at hom. And so hir felyng was trewe wythoutyn any deceyte. Also it was voysyd that the Bischop of Wynchestyr was ded, and notwythstandyng sche had felyng that he levyd. And so it was in trewth. And so had sche felyng of many mo than be wretyn whech owr Lord of hys mercy revelyd to hir undirstondyng, thow sche wer unworthy of hir meritys.

**4061 as loth as thou art to levyn my steryngys**, as loath as you are to believe my stirrings.  
**4062 er this day sevenyth**, within the week. **4063 rehersyd hir**, repeated to her. **4070 wetyn in this mater**, learn in this matter. **4073–74 for he was . . . of complexion**, for he was a weak man with a feeble complexion (constitution). **4074 the kyng deyid**, Henry V died on August 31, 1422. **4075 bood**, abode. **4076 Bischop of Wynchestyr**, Henry Beaufort, half-brother to Henry IV.

4080 So be processe of tyme hir mende and hir thowt was so joynyd to God that sche nevyr forgate hym but contynualy had mende of hym and behelde hym in alle creaturys. And evyr the mor that sche encresyd in lofe and in devocyon, the mor sche encresyd in sorwe and in contrycyon, in lownes, in mekenes, and in the holy dreed of owr Lord, and in knowlach of hir owyn frelté, that, yyf sche sey a creatur be ponischyd er scharply  
4085 chastisyd, sche schulde thynkyn that sche had ben mor worthy to ben chastisyd than that creatur was for hir unkyndnes ageyns God. Than schulde sche cryen, wepyn, and sobbyn for hir owyn synne and for the compassyon of the creatur that sche sey so ben ponischyd and scharply chastisyd. Yyf sche sey a prince, a prelat, er a worthy man of state and degré whom men worschepyd and reverensyd wyth lownes and mekenes, anon hir  
4090 mende was refreschyd into owr Lord, thynkyng what joy, what blysse, what worschep and reverens he had in hevyn amongys hys blyssyd seyntys, syn a deedly man had so gret worschep in erth. And most of alle whan sche sey the precyows sacrament born abowte the town wyth lyte and reverens, the pepil knelyng on her kneys, than had sche many holy thowtys and meditacyons, and than oftyntymys schulde sche cryin and roryn as thow sche schulde a brostyn for the feyth and the trost that sche had in the precyows sacrament. Also the sayd creatur was desiryd of mech pepil to be wyth hem at her deying and to prey for hem, for, thow thei lovd not hir wepyng ne hir crying in her lyfe tyme, thei desiryd that sche schulde bothyn wepyn and cryin whan thei schulde deyin, and so sche dede. Whan sche sey folke be anoyntyd, sche had many holy thowtys,  
4095 4100 many holy meditacyons, and, yyf sche saw hem deyin, hir thowt sche saw owr Lord deyin and sumtyme owr Lady, as owr God wolde illumyn hir gostly syth of undirstondyng. Than schulde sche cryin, wepyn, and sobbyn ful wondirfully as sche had beheldyn owr Lord in hys deying er owr Lady in hir deying. And sche thowt in hir mende that God toke many owt of this worlde whech wolde a levyd ful fawyn, “And I,  
4105 Lord,” thowt sche, “wolde ful fawyn comyn to the, and aftyr me thu hast no yernyng,” and swech thowtys encresyd hir wepyng and hir sobbyng. On a tyme a worscheful lady sent for hir for cawse of comownyng, and, as thei weryn in her comunycacyon,

**4083 lownes**, lowness. **4084 frelté**, frailty. **4091 deedly**, mortal. **4093 wyth lyte**, with candles.

**4095 a brostyn**, have burst. **4102 as sche**, as if she. **4104 whech wolde a levyd ful fawyn**, who would fain have lived. **4105 and aftyr me . . . yernyng**, and after me you have no yearning.

**4107 for cawse of comownyng**, in order to talk with her.

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the lady gaf to hir a maner of worship and preysyng, and it was to hir gret peyne to have any preysyng. Nevrthelesse anoon sche offryd it up to owr Lord, for sche desyrid  
4110 no preysyng but hys only, wyth a gret cry and many devout terys. So ther was neithyr worschep ne preysyng, lofe ne lakkyng, schame ne despite that myth drawyn hir lofe fro God, but, aftyr the sentens of Seynt Powle, “To hem that lovyn God al thyng turnyth into goodnes,” so it ferd wyth hir. What that evyr sche sey er herd, alwey hir lofe and hir gostly affeccyon encresyd to owr Lordward, blissyd mot he ben, that  
4115 wroot swech grace in hir for many mannys profyte. An other tyme ther sent for hir an other worschepful lady that had meche meny abowtyn hir, and gret worschep and gret reverens was don unto hir. Whan the sayd creatur behelde alle hir mené abowtyn hir and the gret reverens and worschep that was don hir, sche fel on a gret wepyng and cryid therwyth rith sadly. Ther was a prest herd how sche cryid and how sche wept,  
4120 and he was a man not savowryng gostly thyngys, bannyd hir ful fast, seying unto hir, “What devyl eylith the? Why wepist so? God geve the sorwe.” Sche sat stille and answeryd no word. Than the lady had hir into a gardeyn be hemself aloone and preyd hir to tellyn why sche cryid so sor. And than sche, supposyng it was expedient for to do, telde hir in parcel of the cawse. Than the lady was ille plesyd wyth hir prest that  
4125 had so spokyn ageyns hir and lovd hir ryth wel, desiryng and preying hir to abydyn stille wyth hir. Than sche excusyd hir and seyd sche myth not acordyn wyth the aray and the governawns that sche say ther among hir mené.

73

On the Holy Thursday, as the sayd creatur went processyon wyth other pepil, sche saw in hir sowle owr Lady, Seynt Mary Mawdelyn, and the twelve apostelys. And than  
4130 sche beheld wyth hir gostly eye how owr Lady toke hir leve of hir blysful Sone, Crist Jhesu, how he kyssed hir and alle hys apostelys and also hys trewe lover, Mary

**4112–13** “To hem that . . . into goodnes,” Romans 8:28. **4117** *mené*, supporters, followers, flock. **4124** *telde hir in parcel of the cawse*, told her part of the reason. **4126** *sche myth not acordyn wyth*, might not feel easy with; **aray**, array, clothing. **4127** *say*, saw. **4128** **Holy Thursday**, Thursday of Holy Week, the beginning of the intense period of prayer and ritual that ended in Easter; **went processyon**, went in procession. **4129** **Mary Mawdelyn**, Mary Magdalene.

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Mawdelyn. Than hir thowt it was a swemful partyng and also a joyful partyng. Whan sche beheld this sygth in hir sowle, sche fel down in the feld among the pepil. Sche cryid, sche roryd, sche wept as thou sche schulde a brostyn therwith. Sche myth not mesuryn hirself ne rewlyn hirselfe, but cryid and roryd that many man on hir wonderyd.

4135 But sche toke non heed what ony man seyd ne dede, for hir mende was occupyid in owr Lord. Sche felt many an holy thowt in that tyme whech sche cowde nevyr aftyr. Sche had forgetyn alle erdry thyngys and only ententyd to gostly thyngys. Hir thowt that al hir joy was ago. Sche sey hyr Lord steyn up into hevyn, for sche cowde not forberyn hym in erde. Therfor sche desiryd to a gon wyth hym, for al hir joy and al hir blysse was in hym and sche knew wel that sche schulde nevyr han joy ne blys tyl sche come to hym. Swech holy thowtys and swech holy desirys cawsyd hir to wepyn, and the pepil wist not what hir eylyd. An other tyme the seyd creatur beheld how owr Lady was, hir thowt, in deying and alle the apostelys knelyng beforne hir and askyng grace. Than 4140 sche cryid and wept sor. The apostelys comawndyd hir to cesyn and be stille. The creatur answeryd to the apostelys, “Wolde ye I schulde see the Modyr of God deyin and I schulde not wepyn? It may not be, for I am so ful of sorwe that I may not wythstonde it. I must nedys cryin and wepyn.” And than sche seyd in hir sowle to owr Lady, “A, blyssyd Lady, prey for me to your Sone that I may come to yow and no lengar be teriid 4145 fro yow, for, Lady, this is al to gret a sorwe for to be bothe at your sonys dethe and at your deth and not deyin wyth yow but levyn stille alone and no comfort han wyth me.” Than owr gracyows Lady answeryd to hir sowle, behestyng hir to prey for hir to hir sone, and seyd, “Dowtyr, alle thes sorwys that thu hast had for me and for my 4150 blissyd sone schal turne the to gret joye and blys in hevyn wythowtyn ende. And dowt the not, dowtyr, that thu schalt comyn to us ryth wel and be ryth wolcome whan thu comyst. But thu mayst not comyn yet, for thu schalt comyn in ryth good tyme. And, dowtyr, wete thu wel thu schalt fyndyn me a very modyr to the to helpyn the and socowr the as a modyr owyth to don hir dowtyr and purchasyn to the grace and vertu. And the same pardon that was grawntyd the befor tyme, it was confermyd on Seynt Nicholas 4155 Day, that is to seyn plenowr remissyon, and it is not only grawntyd to the but also to 4160

4132 **swemful**, sorrowful. 4134 **schulde a brostyn**, should have burst. 4134–35 **Sche myth . . . rewlyn hirselfe**, She might not measure herself nor rule (control) herself. 4138 **ententyd**, attended. 4139 **steyn up**, rise up. 4139–40 **for sche . . . in erde**, in spite of the fact she could not relinquish him on earth. 4149 **be teriid**, be held back. 4155 **dowt**, doubt. 4158 **to the**, for you. 4159–60 **Seynt Nicholas Day**, there are no accounts in the *Book of St. Nicholas’ Day*. 4160 **plenowr remissyon**, full forgiveness.

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alle tho that belevyn and to alle tho that schul belevyn into the worldys ende that God lovyth the and schal thankyn God for the. Yyf thei wyl forsakyn her synne and ben in ful wylle no more to turnyn ageyn thereto but ben sory and hevy for that thei have do and wil don dew penawnce therfor, thei schal have the same pardon that is grawntyd to 4165 thiselfe, and that is alle the pardon that is in Jerusalem as was grawntyd the whan thu wer at Rafnys," as is beforne wretyn.

74

The sayd creatur on a day, heryng hir messe and revolvyng in hir mende the tyme of hir deth, sor syhyng and sorwyng for it was so long delayd, seyd on this maner, "Alasse, Lord, how long schal I thus wepyn and mornyn for thy lofe and for desyr of thy presens?" Owr Lord answeryd in hir sowle and seyd, "Al this fifteen yer." Than seyd sche, "A, Lord, I schal thynkyn many thowzend yerys." Owr Lord answeryd to hir, "Dowtyr, thu must bethynkyn the of my blissyd modyr that levd aftyr me in erth fifteen yer, also Seynt John the Evangelyst, and Mary Mawdelyn, the whech lovd me rith hly." "A, blysful Lord," seyd sche, "I wolde I wer as worthy to ben sekry of thy lofe as Mary Mawdelyn was." Than seyd owr Lord, "Trewly, dowtyr, I love the as wel, and the same pes that I gaf to hir the same pes I geve to the. For, dowtyr, ther is no seynt in hevyn displesyd thow I love a creatur in erde as mech as I do hem. Therfor thei wil non otherwyse than I wil." Thus owr mercyful Lord Crist Jhesu drow hys creatur unto hys lofe and to mynde of hys passyon that sche myth not duryn to beheldyn 4170 a lazer er an other seke man, specialy yyf he had any wowndys aperying on hym. So sche cryid and so sche wept as yyf sche had sen owr Lord Jhesu Crist wyth hys wowndys bledyng. And so sche dede in the syght of hir sowle, for thorw the beheldyng of the seke man hir mende was al takyn into owr Lord Jhesu Crist. Than had sche gret mornyng and sorwyng for sche myth not kyssyn the lazerys whan sche sey hem er met wyth hem in the stretys for the lofe of Jhesu. Now gan sche to lovyn that sche had most hatyd befor tyme, for ther was no thyng mor lothal ne mor abhomynabyl to hir whil 4175 sche was in the yerys of werldly prosperit  than to seen er beheldyn a lazer, whom a lazer, leper. 4180 4185 that, those. 4186 lothal, hateful.

4166 **Rafnys**, i.e., Margery's stay at Rafnys when she went to Jerusalem and there received plenary remission for her sins. 4174 **to ben sekry**, to be sure. 4179 **duryn**, endure. 4180 **lazer**, leper. 4185 **that**, those. 4186 **lothal**, hateful, hateful.

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now thorw owr Lordys mercy sche desyryd to halsyn and kyssyn for the lofe of Jhesu  
whan sche had tyme and place convenient. Than sche told hir confessowr how gret  
4190 desyre sche had to kyssyn lazerys, and he warnyd hir that sche schulde kyssyn no men,  
but, yyf sche wolde algatys kyssyn, sche schuld kyssyn women. Than was sche glad, for  
sche had leve to kyssyn the seke women and went to a place wher seke women dwellyd  
whech wer ryth ful of the sekenes and fel down on hir kneys beforne hem, preyng hem  
that sche myth kyssyn her mowth for the lofe of Jhesu. And so sche kyssyd ther two  
4195 seke women with many an holy thowt and many a devowt teir, and, whan sche had  
kyssyd hem and telde hem ful many good wordys and steryd hem to mekenes and  
pacyens that thei schulde not grutchyn wyth her sekenes but hly thankyn God therfor  
and thei schulde han gret blysse in hevyn thorw the mercy of owr Lord Jhesu Crist, than  
the oo woman had so many temptacyons that sche wist not how sche myth best be  
4200 governyd. Sche was so labowryd wyth hir gostly enmy that sche durst not blissyn hir  
ne do no worschep to God for dred that the devyl schuld a slain hir. And sche was  
labowryd wyth many fowle and horibyl thowtys, many mo than sche cowde tellyn.  
And, as sche seyd, sche was a mayde. Therfor the sayd creatur went to hir many  
tymys to comfortyn hir and preynd for hir, also ful specialy that God schulde strength  
4205 hir ageyn hir enmye, and it is to beleven that he dede so, blissyd mote he ben.

75

As the sayd creatur was in a chirch of Seynt Margaret to sey hir devocyonys, ther  
cam a man knelyng at hir bak, wryngyng hys handys and schewyng tokenys of gret  
hevynes. Sche, parceyvyng hys hevynes, askyd what hym eflyd. He seyd it stod ryth  
hard wyth hym, for hys wyfe was newly delyveryd of a childe and sche was owt hir  
mende. “And, dame,” he seyth, “sche knowyth not me ne non of hir neyborwys. Sche  
roryth and cryith so that sche makith folk evyl afeerd. Sche wyl bothe smytn and  
bityn, and therfor is sche manykyld on hir wristys.” Than askyd sche the man yyf he  
wolde that sche went wyth hym and sawe hir, and he seyd, “Ya, dame, for Goddyns

**4188 halsyn**, embrace. **4189–90 how gret desyre . . . lazerys**, how great a desire she had to  
kiss lepers. **4191 algatys**, anyhow. **4194 her**, their. **4199 oo**, one. **4202 horibyl thowtys**,  
horrible thoughts. Kempe draws here upon the ancient and false link between leprosy and  
lechery. **4211 evyl afeerd**, terribly afraid. **4212 manykyld**, manacled.

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lofe." So sche went forth wyth hym to se the woman. And, whan sche cam into the  
4215 hows, as sone as the seke woman that was alienyd of hir witte saw hir, sche spak to hir  
sadly and goodly and seyd sche was ryth wolcome to hir. And sche was ryth glad of  
hir comyng and gretly comfortyd be hir presens, "For ye arn," sche seyd, "a ryth good  
woman, and I behelde many fayr awngelys abowte yow, and therfor, I pray yow, goth  
not fro me, for I am gretly comfortyd be yow." And, whan other folke cam to hir, sche  
4220 cryid and gapyd as sche wolde an etyn hem and seyd that sche saw many develyts  
abowtyn hem. Sche wolde not suffyrn hem to towchyn hir be hyr good wyl. Sche  
roryd and cryid so bothe nyth and day for the most part that men wolde not suffyr hir  
to dwellyn amongys hem, sche was so tediows to hem. Than was sche had to the  
forthest ende of the town into a chambyr that the pepil schulde not heryn hir cryin. And  
4225 ther was sche bowndyn handys and feet wyth chenys of yron that sche schulde smytyn  
nobody. And the sayd creatur went to hir iche day onys er twyis at the lest wey, and,  
whyl sche was wyth hir, sche was meke anow and herd hir spekyn and dalyin wyth  
good wil wythoutyn any roryng er crying. And the sayd creatur preyid for this woman  
every day that God schulde, yf it were hys wille, restoryn hir to hir wittys ageyn. And  
4230 owr Lord answeryd in hir sowle and seyd, "Sche schulde faryn ryth wel." Than was  
sche mor bolde to preyin for hir recuryng than sche was beforne, and iche day, wepyng  
and sorwyng, preyid for hir recur tyl God gaf hir hir witte and hir mende agen. And  
than was sche browt to chirche and purifiid as other women be, blyssed mote God  
ben. It was, as hem thowt that knewyn it, a ryth gret myrakyl, for he that wrot this  
4235 boke had nevir befor that tyme sey man ne woman, as hym thowt, so fer owt of hirself  
as this woman was ne so evyl to rewlyn ne to governyn, and sithyn he sey hir sad and  
sobyrs anow, worschip and preysyng be to owr Lord wythoutyn ende for hys hy mercy  
and hys goodnes that evyr helpith at nede.

It happyd on a tyme that the husbonde of the sayd creatur, a man in gret age passyng

4215 **alienyd**, aliened, out. 4220 **gapyd**, gaped. 4223 **tediows**, irritating. 4227 **meke**, meek.  
4230 **faryn**, fare. 4231 **recuryng**, recovering. 4233 **purifiid as other women be**, The reference  
is to the ceremony of "churching" or purification which occurred some weeks after  
childbirth and signified a woman's re-entry into parish life. 4235 **sey**, seen. 4236 **sey**, saw.

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4240 thre scor yer, as he wolde a comyn down of hys chambyr bar foot and bar legge, he slederyd er ellys faylyd of hys fotyng and fel down to the grownd fro the gresys, and hys hevyd undyr hym grevowsly brokyn and bresyd, in so meche that he had in hys hevyd five teyntys many days whil hys hevyd was in holyng. And, as God wold, it was knowyn to summe of hys neybawrys how he was fallyn downe of the gresys,  
4245 peraventur thorw the dene and the luschyng of hys fallyng. And so thei comyn to hym and fowndyn hym lying wyth hys hevyd undir hym, half on lyfe, al rowyd wyth blood, nevyr lyke to a spokyn wyth prest ne with clerk but thorw hy grace and myracle. Than the sayd creatur, hys wife, was sent for, and so sche cam to hym. Than was he takyn up and hys hevyd was sowyd, and he was seke a long tyme aftyr, that men wend  
4250 that he schulde a be deed. And than the pepil seyd, yyf he deyd, hys wyfe was worthy to ben hangyn for hys deth, forasmeche as sche myth a kept hym and dede not. They dwellyd not togedyr, ne thei lay not togedyr, for, as is wretyn beforne, thei bothyn wyth on assent and wyth fre wil of her eithyr haddyn mad avow to levyn chast. And therfor to enchewyn alle perellys thei dwellyd and sojowryd in divers placys wher no suspicyon  
4255 schulde ben had of her incontinens, for first thei dwellyd togedir aftyr that thei had mad her vow, and than the pepil slawndryd hem and seyd thei usyd her lust and her likyng as thei dedyn beforne her vow makyng. And, whan thei wentyn owt on pilgrimage er to se and spekyn wyth other gostly creaturys, many evyl folke whos tongys wer her owyn, faylyng the dread and lofe of owr Lord Jhesu Crist, demtyn and seydyn that  
4260 thei went rathyrs to woodys, grovys, er valeys to usyn the lust of her bodiis that the pepil schuld not aspyin it ne wetyn it. They, havyng knowlach how prone the pepil was to demyn evyl of hem, desiryng to avoydyn al occasyon, in as mech as thei myth goodly, be her good wil and her bothins consentyng, thei partyd asundyr as towchyngh to her boord and to her chambrys, and wentyn to boord in divers placys. And this was

4240 **thre scor yer**, sixty years. 4241 **slederyd**, slipped; **fotyng**, footing; **gresys**, steps. 4242 **bresyd**, bruised. 4243 **teyntys**, rolls of soft material for distending wounds; **holyn**, healing. 4245 **dene**, din, noise; **luschn**, rushing. 4246 **rowyd**, streaked. 4254 **enchewyn**, avoid; **perellys**, perils; **sojowryd**, sojourned. 4255 **incontinens**, incontinence (to their vow of chastity). 4258–59 **many evyl folke . . . Jhesu Crist**, many evil folks whose tongues were their own, lacking the dread of and love for our Lord Jesus Christ. 4259 **demtyn**, thought. 4260 **to usyn . . . her bodiis**, to use, in the sense of sexual use, their physical desires. 4261 **aspyn**, spy; **wetyn**, know. 4263 **be her . . . consentyng**, by their good will and mutual consent. 4264 **boord**, meals.

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4265 the cawse that sche was not wyth hym and also that sche schulde not be lettyd fro hir contemplacyon. And therfor, whan he had fallyn and grevowsly was hurt, as is seyd beforne, the pepil seyd, yyf he deyid, it was worthy that sche schulde answeryn for hys deth. Than sche preyid to owr Lord that hir husband myth levyn a yer and sche to be deliveryd owt slawndyr yyf it wer hys plesawns. Owr Lord seyd to hir mende, “Dowtyr,  
4270 thu schalt have thi bone, for he schal levyn and I have wrowt a gret myrakyl for the that he was not ded. And I bydde the take hym hom and kepe hym for my lofe.” Sche seyd, “Nay, good Lord, for I schal than not tendyn to the as I do now.” “Yys, dowtyr,” seyd owr Lord, “Thu schalt have as meche mede for to kepyn hym and helpyn hym in hys nede at hom as yyf thu wer in chirche to makyn thi preyerys. And thu hast seyd many  
4275 tymys that thu woldist fawyn kepyn me. I prey the now kepe hym for the lofe of me, for he hath sumtyme fulfillyd thi wil and my wil bothe, and he hath mad thi body fre to me that thu schuldist servyn me and levyn chast and clene, and therfor I wil that thu be fre to helpyn hym at hys nede in my name.” “A, Lord,” seyd sche, “for thi mercy grawnt me grace to obeyn thi wil and fulfille thi wil and late nevyr my gostly enmys  
4280 han no powyr to lett me fro fulfilling of thi wil.” Than sche toke hom hir husband to hir and kept hym yerys astyr as long as he levyd and had ful mech labowr wyth hym, for in hys last days he turnyd childisch agen and lakkyd reson that he cowd not don hys owyn esement to gon to a sege, er ellys he wolde not, but as a childe voydyd his natural digestyon in hys lynyn clothys ther he sat be the fyre er at the tabil, whethyr it  
4285 wer, he wolde sparyn no place. And therfor was hir labowr meche the mor in waschynge and wryngynge and hir costage in firyng and lettyd hir ful meche fro hir contemplacyon that many tymys sche schuld an yrkyd hir labowr saf sche bethowt hir how sche in hir yong age had ful many delectabyl thowtys, fleschly lustys, and inordinat lovys to hys persone. And therfor sche was glad to be ponischyd wyth the same persone and toke it  
4290 mech the mor esily and servyd hym and helpyd hym, as hir thowt, as sche wolde a don Crist hymself.

**4265 lettyd**, hindered. **4270 bone**, boon, request. **4275 fawyn**, fain, gladly. **4282–83 don hys owyn . . . to a sege**, could not relieve himself by going to a stool. **4286 costage in firyng**, expenditure in making fires. **4287 an yrked**, have begrudged him; **saf**, except.

Whan the seyd creatur had first hyr wondirful cryis and on a tyme was in gostly dalyawns wyth hir sovereyn Lord Crist Jhesu, sche seyd, "Lord, why wilt thou gyf me swesch crying that the pepil wondryth on me therfor and thei seyn that I am in gret perel, for, as thei seyn, I am cawse that many men synne on me. And thou knowist, Lord, that I wolde gevyn no man cawse ne occasyon of synne yyf I myth, for I had levar, Lord, ben in a preson of ten fadom depe ther to cryin and wepyn for my synne and for alle mennys synnys and specialy for thy lofe al my lyf tyme than I schulde gevyn the pepil occasyon to synnyn on me wilfully. Lord, the worlde may not suffyr me to do thy wil ne to folwyn aftyr thi steryng, and therfor I prey the, yyf it be thy wil, take thes cryingys fro me in the tyme of sermownys that I cry not at thin holy prechyg and late me havyn hem be myself alone so that I be not putt fro heryng of thin holy prechyg and of thin holy wordys, for grettar peyn may I not suffyr in this worlde than be put fro thi holy worde heryng. And, yyf I wer in preson, my most peyn schulde be the forberyng of thin holy wordys and of thin holy sermownys. And, good Lord, yyf thou wilst algate that I crye, I prey the geve me it alone in my chambyr as meche as evyr thou wilst and spar me amongys the pepil, yyf it plese the." Owr merciful Lord Crist Jhesu answeryng to hir mende seyd, "Dowtyr, prey not therfor; thou schalt not han thy desyr in this thow my modyr and alle the seyntys in hevyn preye for the, for I schal make the buxom to my wil that thou schalt criyn whan I wil, and wher I wil, bothyn lowde and stille, for I teld the, dowtyr, thou art myn and I am thyn, and so schalt thou be wythowtyn ende. Dowtyr, thou seist how the planetys ar buxom to my wil, that sumtyme ther cum gret thundirkakkys and makyn the pepil ful sor afeerd. And sumtyme, dowtyr, thou seest how I sende gret levenys that brennyn chirchys and howsys. Also sumtyme thou seest that I sende gret wyndys that blowyn down stepelys, howsys, and trees owt of the erde and doth mech harm in many placys, and yet may not the wynd be seyn but it may wel be felt. And ryth so, dowtyr, I fare wyth the myth of my Godheed; it may not be seyn wyth mannys eye, and yyt it may wel be felt in a sympil sowle wher likyth to werkyn grace, as I do in thi sowle. And, as sodeynly as the levyn comith fro hevyn, so sodeynly come I into thy sowle, and illumyn it wyth the lyght of grace and of

**4297 fadom**, fathoms. **4299 to synnyn on me wilfully**, to sin willfully on account of me. **4306 algate**, rather, prefer. **4310 buxom**, obedient. **4312 planetys**, planets. **4313 thundirkakkys**, thunder claps. **4314 levenys**, lightning bolts. **4315 stepelys**, steeples. **4318 yyt**, yet.

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undirstandyng, and sett it al on fyr wyth lofe, and make the fyr of lofe to brenne therin  
and purgyn it ful clene fro alle erdly filth. And sumtyme, dowtyr, I make erdedenys  
for to feryn the pepil that thei schulde dredyn me. And so, dowtyr, gostly have I don  
wyth the and wyth other chosyn sowlys that schal ben savyd, for I turne the erthe of her  
4325 hertys upsodown and make hem sore afeerd that thei dredyn venjawnce schulde fallyn  
on hem for her synnys. And so dedist thu, dowtyr, whan thu turnedist fyrst to me, and  
it is nedful that yong begynnarys do so, but now, dowtyr, thu hast gret cawse to lovyn  
me wel, for the parfyte charité that I gyf the puttyth away al drede fro the. And, thow  
other men settyn lityl be the, I sett but the mor prys be the. As sekry as thu art of the  
4330 sunne whan thu seest it schynyn bryghtly, ryth so sekry art thu of the lofe of God at al  
tyme. Also, dowtyr, thu wost wel that I send sumtyme many gret reynys and scharp  
schowerys, and sumtyme but smale and softe dropis. And ryth so I far wyth the, dowtyr,  
whan it likyth me to spekyn in thi sowle; I gyf the sumtyme smale wepyngys and soft  
teerys for a tokyn that I lofe the, and sumtyme I geve the gret cryis and roryngys for to  
4335 makyn the pepil aferd wyth the grace that I putte in the into a tokyn that I wil that my  
modrys sorwe be knowyn by the that men and women myth have the mor compassyon  
of hir sorwe that sche suffyrd for me. And the thryd tokyn is this, dowtyr, that what  
creatuer wil takyn as mech sorwe for my passyon as thu hast don many a tyme and wil  
sesyn of her synnys that thei schal have the blys of hevyn wythowtyn ende. The ferth  
4340 tokyn is this: that any creatuer in erthe, haf he be nevyr so horrybyl a synner, he thar  
nevyr fallyn in dispeyr yyf he wyl takyn exemplil of thy levynge and werkyn sumwhat  
theraftyr as he may do. Also, dowtyr, the fifte tokyn is that I wil thu knowe in thiself  
be the gret peyne that thu felist in thyn hert whan thu cryist so sor for my lofe that it schal  
be cawse thu schalt no peyn felyn whan thu art comyn owt of this worlde and also that  
4345 thu schalt have the lesse peyn in thy deying, for thu hast so gret compassyon of my  
flesche I must nede have compassyon of thi flesch. And therfor, dowtyr, suffyr the  
pepil to sey what thei wil of thi crying, for thu art nothyng cawse of her synne. Dowtyr,  
the pepil synnyd on me, and yet was I not cawse of her synne." Than sche seyd, "A,  
Lord, blissyd mote thu be, for me thynkyth thu dost thiself al that thu biddist me don.  
4350 In Holy Writte, Lord, thu byddyst me lovyn myn enmys, and I wot wel that in al this  
werld was nevyr so gret an enmye to me as I have ben to the. Therfor, Lord, thei I wer  
slayn an hundryd sithys on a day, yyf it wer possibyl, for thy love, yet cowde I nevyr

**4322 erdedenys**, earthquakes. **4329 prys**, price. **4340–41 he thar nevyr fallyn in dispeyr**, he  
will never fall into despair because of it (his past). **4351 thei**, though. **4352 sithys**, times.

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yeldyn the the goodnes that thu hast schewyd to me.” Than answeryd owr Lord to hir and seyd, “I prey the, dowtyr, geve me not ellys but lofe. Thu maist nevyr plesyn me  
4355 bettyr than havyn me evyr in thi lofe, ne thu schalt nevyr in no penawns that thu mayst do in erth plesyn me so meche as for to lovyn me. And, dowtyr, yyf thou wilt ben hey in hevyn wyth me, kepe me alwey in thi mende as meche as thu mayst and forgete me not at thi mete, but thynk alwey that I sitte in thin hert and knowe every thowt that is therin, bothe good and ylle, and that I parceyve the lest thynkyng and twynkelyng of  
4360 thyn eye.” Sche seyd agen to owr Lord, “Now trewly, Lord, I wolde I cowde lovyn the as mych as thu mythist makyn me to lovyn the. Yyf it wer possibyl, I wolde lovyn the as wel as alle the seyntys in hevyn lovyn the and as wel as alle the creaturys in erth myth lovyn the. And I wolde, Lord, for thi lofe be leyd nakyd on an hyrdil, alle men to wonderyn on me for thi love, so it wer no perel to her sowlys, and thei to castyn slory  
4365 and slugge on me, and be drawyn fro town to town every day my lyfetyme, yyf thou wer plesyd therby and no mannys sowle hyndryd, thi wil mote be fulfillyd and not myn.”

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Many yerys on Palme Sonday, as this creatur was at the processyon wyth other good pepyl in the chirch yerd and beheld how the preystys dedyn her observawnce,  
4370 how thei knelyd to the sacrament and the pepil also, it semyd to hir gostly sygth as thei sche had ben that tyme in Jerusalem and seen owr Lord in hys manhod receyvyd of the pepil as he was whil he went her in erth. Than had sche so meche swetnes and devocyon that sche myth not beryn it, but cryid, wept, and sobbyd ful boistowsly. Sche had many an holy thowt of owr Lordys passyon and beheld hym in hir gostly  
4375 syght as verily as he had ben aforn hir in hir bodily syght. Therfor myth sche not

**4356** *hey*, high. **4359** *lest*, least. **4363** *hyrdil*, hurdle. **4363–64** **to wonderyn on**, to wonder on, to marvel at. **4364** **so it wer no perel to her sowlys**, as long as it was no peril to their souls, i.e., as long as the sight did not imperil their souls; **slory**, slurry, thin mud. **4365** **slugge**, sludge, slime. **4368** **Palme Sonday**, Palm Sunday, the Sunday before Easter and the beginning of Holy Week. On this Sunday worshippers carrying palms would process out of the church, and then around it, from east to south to west and enter into the church again through the west door behind the priest and the sacrament (Duffy, pp. 23–27).

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wythstondyn wepyng and sobbyng, but sche must nedys wepyn, cryin, and sobbyn  
whan sche beheld hir Savyowr suffyr so gret peynys for hir lofe. Than schulde sche  
preyn for al the pepil that was levynge in erth that thei myth do owr Lord dew worschep  
and reverens that tymys and al tymys and that thei myth ben worthy to heryn and  
4380 undirstondyn the holy wordys and lawys of God and mekely obeyn and trewly fulfillyn  
hem upon her powyr. And it was custom in the place ther sche was dwellyng to have  
a sermown on that day, and than, as a worschepful doctowr of divinité was in the  
pulpit and seyd the sermown, he rehersyd oftyntyme thes wordys, “Owr Lord Jhesu  
langurith for lofe.” Tho wordys wrowt so in hir mende whan sche herd spekyn of the  
4385 parfyte lof that owr Lord Jhesu Crist had to mankynde and how der he bowt us wyth  
hys bittyr Passyon, schedyng hys hert blood for owr redempcyon, and suffyrd so  
schamful a deth for owr salvacyon, than sche myth no lengar kepyn the fir of lofe clos  
wythinne hir brest, but, whethyr sche wolde er not, it wolde aperyn wythowteforth  
swech as was closyd wythinneforth. And so sche cryed ful lowde and wept and sobbyd  
4390 ful sor as thow sche schulde a brostyn for pité and compassyon that sche had of owr  
Lordys passyon. And sumtyme sche was al on a watyr wyth the labowr of the crying,  
it was so lowde and so boistows, and mech pepil wondryd on hir and bannyd hir ful  
fast, suposyng that sche had feynyd hirself for to cryin. And sone aftyr owr Lord  
seyd onto hir, “Dowtyr, this plesith me rith wel, for the mor schame and mor despite  
4395 that thu hast for my lofe, the mor joy schalt thu have wyth me in hevyn, and it is rithful  
that it be so.” Sumtyme sche herd gret sowndys and gret melodiis wyth hir bodily  
erys, and than sche thowt it was ful mery in hevyn and had ful gret languryng and ful  
gret longyng thedyward wyth many a stille mornynge. And than many tymys owr  
Lord Jhesu Crist wolde sey to hir, “Dowtyr, her is this day a fayr pepil, and many of  
4400 hem schal ben ded er this day twelmonyth,” and telde hir befor whan pestilens schulde  
fallyn. And sche fonde it in dede as sche had felt befor, and that strengthyd hir mech  
in the lofe of God. Owr Lord wolde seyn also, “Dowtyr, thei that wil not belewyn the  
goodnes and the grace that I schewe onto the in this lyfe, I schal make hem to knowe the  
trewth whan thei arn dede and owt of this world. Dowtyr, thu hast a good zele of  
4405 charité in that thu woldist alle men wer savyd, and so wolde I. And thei seyn that so  
wolde thei, but thu maist wel se that thei wol not hemself be savyd, for alle thei wil  
sumtyme heryn the word of God, but thei wil not alwey don therafyr, and thei wil not

**4384 langurith**, languishes. **4387 fir**, fire. **4390 a brostyn**, have burst. **4391 al on a watyr**,  
all wet. **4397 languryng**, languishing. **4398 mornynge**, mourning.

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sorwyn hemself for her synnys, ne thei wil suffyr non other to suffir for hem.  
Nevyrthelesse, dowtyr, I have ordeynd the to be a merowr amongys hem for to han  
4410 gret sorwe that thei schulde takyn exemplil by the for to have sum litil sorwe in her  
hertys for her synnys that thei myth therthorw be savyd, but thei lovyn not to heryn of  
sorwe ne of contricyon. But, good dowtyr, do thu thi dever and prey for hem whil thu  
art in this world, and thu schalt have the same mede and reward in hevyn as yyf al the  
werlde wer savyd be thi good wil and thi preyer. Dowtyr, I have many tymys seyd to  
4415 the that many thowsand sowlys schal be savyd thorw thi preyerys, and sum that lyn in  
poynt of deth schal han grace thorw thi meritys and thi preyerys, for thi terys and thi  
preyerys arn ful swet and acceptabil unto me.” Than sche seyd in hir mende to owr  
Lord Jhesu Crist, “A, Jhesu, blissyd mote thu be wythowtyn ende, for I have many a  
gret cawse to thank the and lofe the wyth al myn hert, for it semith to me, Lord, that thu  
4420 art alle charité to the profyte and helth of mannys sowle. A, Lord, I believe that he  
schal be ryth wikke that schal be partyd fro the wythowtyn ende. He schal neithyr welyn  
good, ne do good, ne desiryn good. And therfor, Lord, I thanke the for al goodnes that  
thu hast schewyd onto me, ryth unworthy wretch.” And than on the same Sonday,  
whan the preyste toke the crossestaf and smet on the chirche dor and the dor openyd  
4425 ageyn hym, and than the preyst entryd wyth the sacrament and al the pepil folwyng  
into chirche, than thowt sche that owr Lord spak to the devyl and openyd helle gatys  
confowndyng hym and alle hys oste and what grace and goodnes he schewyd to tho  
sowlis, delyveryng hem fro evyrlestyng preson, mawgre the devyl and alle hys. Sche  
had many an holy thowt and many an holy desyr whech sche cowde nevr tellyn ne  
4430 rehersyn ne hir tunge myth nevr expressyn the habundawnce of grace that sche felt,  
blissyd be owr Lord of alle hys gyftys. Whan thei wer comyn into the cherch and sche  
beheld the preystys knelyng beforne the crucifixe, and, as thei songyn, the preyste  
whech executyd the servyse that day drew up a cloth beforne the crucyfixe thre tymys,

**4409 merowr**, mirror. **4410 for to**, in order to. **4412 dever**, duty. **4416 terys**, tears. **4421–22 welyn good**, will good. **4424 crossestaf**, staff of the cross; **smet on the chirche dor**, smote on the church door, i.e., the point when the Palm Sunday procession entered the church, an entry that at once evoked Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem and his entry into hell’s gates on Holy Saturday. **4427 oste**, host. **4428 mawgre**, in spite of. **4433 drew up a cloth**, All during Lent, the Crucifix was hidden from view by a painted veil suspended on the rood screen. At the climax of the Palm Sunday ceremony the people gathered in front of the rood screen and knelt as the veil was drawn up on the pulleys, the anthem “Ave Rex Noster” was sung, and the priests venerated the Crucifix (Duffy, p. 27).

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every tyme heyar than other, that the pepil schulde se the crucifixe, than was hir mende al  
4435 holy takyn owt of al erly thyngys and set al in gostly thyngys, preying and desyryng  
that sche myth at the last han the ful syght of hym in hevyn whech is bothin God and  
man in oo persone. And than schulde sche al the messe tyme aftyr wepyn and sobbyn  
ful plentyuowsly, and sumtyme among cryin rith fervently, for hir thowt that sche saw  
owr Lord Crist Jhesu as verily in hir sowle wyth hir gostly eye as sche had seyn beforne  
4440 the crucifixe wyth hir bodily eye.

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Than sche beheld in the syght of hir sowle owr blisful Lord Crist Jhesu comyng to  
hys passyonward, and, er he went, he knelyd down and toke hys moderys blissyng.  
Than sche saw hys modyr fallyng down in swownyng befor hir sone, seyng unto hym,  
“Alas, my der Sone, how schal I suffyr this sorwe and have no joy in al this werlde but  
4445 the alone.” “A, der Sone, yyf thu wilt algatys dey, late me deye befor the and late me  
nevyr suffyr this day of sorwe, for I may nevyr beryn this sorwe that I schal han for thi  
deth. I wolde, Sone, that I myth suffir deth for the so that thu schuldist not deyin, yyf  
mannys sowle myth so be savyd. Now, der sone, yyf thu have no rewth of thiself, have  
rewth of thi modyr, for thu wost ful wel ther can no man in al this worlde comfortyn  
4450 me but thu alone.” Than owr Lord toke up hys modyr in hys armys and kissyd hir ful  
swetly and seyde to hyr, “A, blissyd modyr, beth of a good cher and of a good conforte,  
for I have told yow ful oftyn that I must nedys suffyr deth and ellys schulde no man be  
savyd ne nevyr comyn in blisse. And modir, it is my fadyrs wil that it be so, and  
therfor I preye yow late it be yowr wil also, for my deth schal turne me to gret worschep  
4455 and yow and al mankynde to gret joye and profyte whech that trustyn in my passyon  
and werkyn therafyr. And therfor, blissyd modir, ye must abydyn her aftyr me, for in  
yow schal restyn al the feith of Holy Chirch, and be yowr feith Holy Chirch schal encresyn  
in hir feith. And therfor I prey yow, derworthy modyr, cesyth of yowr sorweng, for I  
schal not levyn yow comfortlees. I schal levyn her wyth yow John, my cosyn, to  
4460 comfort yow in stede of me; I schal send myn holy awngelys to comfort yow in erth; and  
I schal comfortyn yow in yowr sowle myn owyn self, for, modir, ye wote wel I have

**4449 rewth**, pity. Much of Kempe's account of Christ's Passion is indebted to Nicholas Love's influential *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*.

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behyte yow the blys of hevyn and that ye ar sekyr therof. A, derworthy modyr, what wolde ye bettyr than ther I am kyng ye for to be qwen, and alle awngelys and seyntys schal be buxom to yowr wil. And what grace ye aske me I schal not denye yowr desyr. I  
4465 schal gevyn yow powyr ovyr the develys that thei schal be aferd of yow and ye not of hem. And also, my blissyd modyr, I have seyd to yow befor tyme that I schal comyn for yow myn owyn self whan ye schal passyn owt of this world wyth alle myn awngelys and alle myn seyntys that arn in hevyn and bryng yow befor my fadryr wyth al maner of musyk, melody, and joy. And ther schal I sett yow in gret pees and rest wythowtyn ende.  
4470 And ther schal ye be corownyd as for Qwen of Hevyn, as for lady of al the worlde, and as for Empres of Helle. And therfor, my derworthy modyr, I pray yow blissyth me and late me go do my fadrys wille, for therfor I cam into this worlde and toke flesch and blood of yow." Whan the sayd creatur beheld this gloriows syght in hir sowle and saw how he blissyd hys modyr and hys modyr hym, and than hys blissyd modyr myth not  
4475 spekyn o word mor to hym but fel down to the grownde, and so thei partyd asundyr, hys modyr lying stille as sche had ben ded, than the sayd creatur thowt sche toke owr Lord Jhesu Crist be the clothys and fel down at hys feet, preyng hym to blissyn hir, and therwyth sche cryid ful lowde and wept rith sor, seying in hir mende, "A, Lord, wher schal I become? I had wel levar that thu woldist sle me than latyn me abydyn in  
4480 the worlde wythowtyn the, for wythowtyn the I may not abydyn her, Lord." Than answeryd owr Lord to hir, "Be stille, dowtyr, and rest wyth my modyr her and comfort the in hir, for sche that is myn owyn modyr must suffyr this sorwe. But I schal come ageyn, dowtyr, to my modyr and comfortyn hir and the bothyn and turnyn al yowr sorwe into joye." And than hir thowt owr Lord went forth hys wey, and sche went to  
4485 owr Lady and seyd, "A, blissyd Lady, risith up and late us folwe yowr blissyd sone as long as we may se hym that I may lokyn inow upon hym er he deye. A, der Lady, how may yowr hert lestyn and se your blisful sone se al this wo? Lady, I may not dur it, and yyt am I not hys modyr." Than owr Lady answeryd and seyd, "Dowtyr, thu herist wel it wil non otherwise be, and therfor I must nedys suffyr it for my sonys lofe." And  
4490 than hir thowt that thei folwyd forth aftyr owr Lord and sey how he mad hys preyeris

4479 **wel levar**, far rather. 4481 **her**, here. 4486–87 **how may yowr ... sone se al this wo?**, how may your heart endure and see your blissful son see all this woe? 4487 **dur**, endure. 4488 **yyt**, yet.

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to hys fadry in the Mownt of Olyvete and herdyn the goodly answer that cam fro hys fadry and the goodly answer that he gaf hys fadry ageyn. Than sche sey how owr Lord went to hys discipulys and bad hem wakyn; hys enmys wer ner. And than com a gret multitude of pepil wyth meche lyght and many armyd men wyth stavys, swerdys, and polexis to sekyn owr Lord Jhesu Crist. Owr merciful Lord as a meke lombe seying onto hem, “Whom seke ye?” Thei answeryd wyth a scharp spiryt, “Jhesu of Nazareth.” Owr Lord seyd agen, “*Ego sum.*” And than sche sey the Jewys fallyn down on the grownde, thei mowt not stondyn for drede, but anon thei resun ageyn and sowtyn as thei had don befor. And owr Lord askyd, “Whom seke ye?” And thei seyd ageyn, “Jhesu of Nazareth.” Owr Lord answeryd, “I it am.” And than anon sche sey Judas come and kyssyn owr Lord, and the Jewys leyd handys upon hym ful violentlyche. Than had owr Lady and sche meche sorwe and gret peyn to se the lombe of innocencye so contemptiblly be haldyn and drawyn wyth hys owyn pepil that he was specialy sent unto. And aswithe the sayd creatur beheld wyth hir gostly eye the Jewys putting a cloth befor owr Lordys eyne, betyng hym and bofetyng hym in the hevyd and bobynghym befor hys swete mowth, cryng ful cruelly unto hym, “Telle us now how smet the.” Thei sparid not to spittyn in hys face in the most schamful wise that thei cowde. And than owr Lady and sche hyr unworthy handmaydyn for the tyme wept and syhyd ful sor for the Jewys ferd so fowle and so venymowslych wyth hir blisful Lord. And 4505 thei wolde not spare to luggen hys blisful erys and drawyn the her of hys berd. And anon aftyr sche saw hem drawyn of hys clothys and makyn hym al nakyd and sithyn drewyn hym forth aforn hem as it had ben the most malefactowr in al the worlde. And he went forth ful mekely aforn hem al modyr nakyd as he was born to a peler of ston and spak no worde ageyn hem but leet hem do and sey what thei wolde. And ther thei 4510 bowndyn hym to the peler as streyt as thei cowde and beetyn hym on hys fayr white

**4491 Mownt of Olyvete**, Mount of Olives. On the night of the Last Supper, Jesus took the disciples to the Mount of Olives, where he prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane. There, he asked that the cup of suffering be taken from his lips but only if it was God’s will. Shortly thereafter he was betrayed by Judas. See, for example, Mark 14:26-50. **4494 stavys**, staves; **swerdys**, swords. **4495 polexis**, pole-axes. **4497 “Ego sum,”** I am (he). **4498 sowtyn**, sought. **4503 be haldyn and drawyn wyth**, be held and drawn by. **4505 betyng**, beating; **bofetyng**, buffeting; **bobyngh**, striking. **4506–07 how smet the**, who smot you. **4507 wise**, way. **4508 syhyd**, sighed. **4509 ferd**, fared; **venymowslych**, venomously. **4510 luggen**, pull; **erys**, ears; **drawyn**, draw, pull. **4513 peler**, pillar.

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body wyth baleys, wthy whippis, and wthy scorgys. And than hyr thowt owr Lady wept wondir sor. And therfor the sayd creatur must nedys wepyn and cryin whan sche sey swech gostly syghtys in hir sowle as freshly and as verily as yyf it had ben don in dede in hir bodily syght, and hir thowt that owr Lady and sche wer alwey togedyr to se  
4520 owr Lordys peynys. Swech gostly syghtys had sche every Palme Sonday and every Good Fryday, and in many other wise bothe many yerys togedyr. And therfor cryid sche and wept ful sor and suffyrd ful myche despite and repref in many a cuntré. And than owr Lord seyd to hir sowle, “Dowtyr, thes sorwys and many mo suffyrd I for thi lofe, and divers peynys, mo than any man can tellyn in erth. Therfor, dowtyr, thu hast  
4525 gret cawse to lovyn me ryght wel, for I have bowt thi lofe ful der.”

**80**

An other tyme sche saw in hyr contemplacyon owr Lord Jhesu Crist bowndyn to a peler, and hys handys wer bowndyn abovyn hys hevyd. And than sche sey sextene men wthy sextene scorgys, and eche scorge had eight babelys of leed on the ende, and every babyl was ful of scharp prekelys as it had ben the rowelys of a spor. And tho  
4530 men wthy the scorgys madyn comenawnt that ich of hem schulde gevyn owr Lord forty strokys. Whan sche saw this petows syght, sche wept and cryid ryth lowde as yyf sche schulde a brostyn for sorwe and peyne. And, whan owr Lord was alto betyn and scorgyd, the Jewys losyd hym fro the peler and tokyn hym hys crosse for to beryn on hys schuldyr. And than hir thowt that owr Lady and sche went be an other wey for to  
4535 metyn wthy hym, and, whan thei metdyn wthy hym, thei sey hym beryn the hevy crosse wthy gret peyne, it was so hevy and so boystows that unethe he myth bere it. And than owr Lady seyd unto hym, “A, my swete sone, late me help to ber that hevy crosse.” And sche was so weyke that sche myth not but fel down and swownyd and lay stille as it had ben a ded woman. Than the creatur say owr Lord fallyn down by  
4540 hys modyr and comfortyn hir as he myth wthy many swete wordys. Whan sche herd

4516 baleys, scourges. 4525 bowt, bought. 4527 peler, pillar. 4528 babelys, metal tip of a lash; leed, lead. 4529 prekelys, prickles; rowelys, rowels, wheels on spurs having several rotating sharp points; tho, those. 4530 comenawnt, covenant. 4531 petows, piteous. 4533 losyd, loosed. 4535 metyn, meet. 4536 boystows, rough; unethe, scarcely.

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the wordys and sey the compassyon that the modyr had of the sone and the sone of hys  
modyr, than sche wept, sobbyd, and criyd as thow sche schulde a deyid for pité and  
compassyon that sche had of that petows syght and the holy thowtys that sche had in  
the menetyme, the whech wer so sotyl and hevynly that sche cowde nevyr tellen hem  
4545 aftyr so as sche had hem in felyng. Sithyn sche went forth in contemplacyon thorw the  
mercy of owr Lord Jhesu Crist to the place ther he was naylyd to the crosse. And than  
sche sey the Jewys wyth gret violens rendyn of owr Lordys precyows body a cloth of  
sylke, the which was clevyn and hardyd so sadly and streitly to owr Lordys body wyth  
4550 hys precyows blood that it drow away al the hyde and al the skyn of hys blissyd body  
and renewyd hys preciows wowluds and mad the blod to renne down al abowtyn on  
every syde. Than that precyows body aperyd to hir syght as rawe as a thyng that wer  
newe flayn owt of the skyn, ful petows and reful to beholdyn. And so had sche a  
newe sorwe that sche wept and cryid ryth sor. And anon aftyr sche beheld how the  
cruel Jewys leydyn hys precyows body to the crosse and sithyn tokyn a long nayle,  
4555 a row and a boistews, and sett to hys on hand and wyth gret violens and cruelnes thei  
drevyn it thorw hys hande. Hys blisful modyr beheldyng and this creatur how hys  
precyows body schrynyd and drow togedyr wyth alle senwys and veynys in that  
precyows body for peyne that it suffyrd and felt, thei sorwyd and mornyd and syhyd  
ful sor. Than sey sche wyth hyr gostly eye how the Jewys festenyd ropis on the other  
4560 hand, for the senwys and veynys wer so schrynykyn wyth peyne that it myth not come  
to the hole that thei had morkyn therfor, and drowyn theron to makyn it mete wyth the  
hole. And so her peyne and hir sorwe evyr encresyd. And sithyn thei drowyn hys  
blisful feet on the same maner. And than hir thowt in hir sowle sche herd owr Lady  
seyn to the Jewys, “Alas, ye cruel Jewys, why far ye so wyth my swete sone and dede  
4565 he yow nevyr non harm? Ye fille myn hert ful of sorwe.” And than hir thowt the  
Jewys spokyn ageyn boystowsly to owr Lady and put hir away fro hir sone. Than the  
forseyd creatur thowt that sche cryid owt of the Jewys and seyd, “Ye cursyd Jewys,  
why sle ye my Lord Jhesu Crist? Sle me rathyr, and late hym gon.” And than sche

4547 **rendyn of**, rend from. 4548 **sylke**, silk; **the which was . . . owr Lordys body**, which had stuck and hardened completely and tightly to our Lord's body. 4549 **drow**, drew. 4552 **flayn**, flayed. 4555 **a row and a boistews**, rough and huge. 4557 **schrynyd**, shrank; **senwys**, sinews. 4561 **morkyn**, marked. 4564 **ye cruel Jewys**, The anti-Judaism here is similar to but not as intensely expressed as that found in the *N-Town* cycle, another work of East Anglian provenance. For remarks about anti-Judaism as it pertains to the *Book*, see Staley (1994), pp. 68–71.

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wept and cryid passyngly sor that myche of the pepil in the chirche wondryd on hir  
4570 body. And anon sche sey hem takyn up the crosse wyth owr Lordys body hangyng  
theron and madyn gret noyse and gret crye and lyftyd it up fro the erthe a certeyn  
distawnce and sithyn letyn the crosse fallyn down into the morteys. And than owr  
Lordys body schakyd and schoderyd, and alle the joyntys of that blisful body brostyn  
and wentyn asundyr, and hys precyows wowndys ronnyn down wyth reverys of blood  
4575 on every syde. And so sche had evyr mor cawse of mor wepyng and sorwyng. And than sche herd owr Lord hangyng on the crosse seyn thes wordys to hys modyr,  
“Woman, se thy sone of Seynt John, the Evangelist.” Than hir thowt owr Lady fel  
down and swownyd, and Seynt John toke hir up in hys armys and comfortyd hir wyth  
swete wordys as wel as he cowde er myth. The creatur seyd than to owr Lord, as hir  
4580 semyd, “Alas, Lord, thu leevyst her a careful modyr. What schal we now don and how  
schal we beryn this gret sorwe that we schal han for thy lofe?” And than sche herd the too  
theyvs spekyn to owr Lord, and owr Lord seyd to the on thefe, “This day thu schalt ben  
wyth me in paradys.” Than was sche glad of that answer and preiyd owr Lord for hys  
mercy that he wolde ben as gracyows to hir sowle whan sche schulde passyn owt of this  
4585 worlde as he was to the thef; for sche was wers, hir thowt, than any thef. And than hir  
thowt owr Lord comedyd hys spiryt into hys fadrys handys and therwyth he deyid.  
Than hir thowt sche sey owr Lady swownyn and fallyn down and lyn stille as sche had  
ben ded. Than the creatur thowt that sche ran al abowte the place as it had ben a  
mad woman, crying and roryng. And sithyn sche cam to owr Lady and fel down on hir  
4590 kneys beforne hir, seying to hir, “I prey yow, Lady, cesyth of your sorwyng, for your  
sone is ded and owt of peyne, for me thynkyth ye han sorwyd anow. And, Lady, I wil  
sorwe for yow, for your sorwe is my sorwe.” Than hir thowt sche sey Joseph ab  
Arimathy takyn down owr Lordys body of the crosse and leyd it beforne owr Lady on a  
marbil ston. Owr Lady had than a maner of joye whan hir dere sone was takyn down  
4595 of the crosse and leyd on the ston befor hir. And than owr blisful Lady bowyd down to  
hir sonys body and kyssyd hys mowth and wept so plentyuowsly ovyr hys blissyd  
face that sche wesch awey the blod of hys face wyth the terys of hir eyne. And than  
the creatur thowt sche herd Mary Mawdelyn seyn to owr Lady, “I pray yow, Lady,

**4572 morteys**, hole. **4574 reverys**, rivers. **4580 Alas, Lord . . . careful modyr**, Alas, Lord, you leave here a careful (care-filled) mother. **4581 too**, two. **4592–93 Joseph ab Arimathy**, Joseph of Arimethea, who claimed Jesus’ body and helped to bury it.

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gyf me leve to handelyn and kissyn hys feet, for at thes get I grace.” Anon owr Lady  
4600 gaf leve to hir and alle tho that wer ther abowte to do what worship and reverens thei  
wolde to that precyows body. And anon Mary Mawdelyn toke owr Lordys feet and  
owr Ladiis sisterys toke hys handys, the on syster on hand and the other sister an other  
hand; and wept ful sor in kissyng of tho handys and of tho precyows feet. And the  
sayd creatur thowt that sche ran evyr to and fro as it had be a woman wythowtyn  
4605 reson, gretly desyryng to an had the precyows body be hirself alone that sche myth a  
wept anow in presens of that precyows body, for hir thowt that sche wolde a deyid  
wyth wepyng and mornynge in hys deth for love that sche had to hym. And as swythe  
sche saw Seynt John the Evangelist, Joseph of Aramathe, and other frendys of owr  
Lord comyn and woldyn beryn owr Lordys body and preyide owr Lady that sche  
4610 wolde suffyr hem to beriin that precyows body. Owr dolful Lady seyd to hem, “Serys,  
wolde ye takyn awey fro me my Sonys body? I myth nevyr lokyn upon hym inow  
whil he levyd; I pray yow, late me han hym now he is ded, and partith not my sone and  
me asondyr. And, yyf ye welyn algatys beryn hym, I prey yow berith me wyth hym,  
for I may not levyn wythowtyn hym.” And the creatur thowt that thei preyid owr Lady  
4615 so fayr til at the last owr Lady leet hem beryn hir der sone wyth gret worschep and  
wyth gret reverens as longyth to hem to do.

81

Whan owr Lord was beriid, owr Lady fel down in swownyng as sche schulde a comyn  
fro the grave, and Seynt John toke hir up in hys armys and Mary Mawdelyn went on  
the other syde to supportyn and comfortyn owr Lady in as meche as thei cowde er  
4620 myth. Than the sayd creatur, desyryng to abydyn stille be the grave of owr Lord,  
mornyd, wept, and sorwyd wyth lowde crying for tendyrnes and compassyon that  
sche had of owr Lordys deth and many a lamentabyl desyr that God put in hir mende  
for the tyme. Wherfor the pepil wondryd upon hir, havyng gret merveyl what hir  
eylyd, for thei knewe ful litil the cawse. Hir thowt sche wolde nevyr a partyd thens but

**4599 kissyn hys feet**, Margery here asks to venerate the most humble aspect of the body —  
the physical person — of Christ that unites him with us. Traditionally Mary Magdalene is  
pictured at the feet of Jesus, so later (p. 196) Margery assumes the position of the Magdalene  
in venerating Christ’s toes. **4610 beriin, bury.** **4623 merveyl, marvel.** **4624 thens, thence.**

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4625 desiryd to a deyd ther and ben beriid wyth owr Lord. Sithyn the creatur thowt sche sey  
owr Lady gon homward ageyn. And, as sche went, ther comyn many good women  
ageyn hir and seyd, “Lady, us is wo that yowr sone is ded and that owr pepil han don  
hym so meche despite.” And than owr Lady, bowyng down hir hevyd, thankyd hem  
fulmekely wyth cher and wyth contenawnce, for sche myth not spekyn, hir hert was  
4630 so ful of hevynes. Than the creatur thowt, whan owr Lady was comyn hom and was  
leyd down on a bed, than sche mad for owr Lady a good cawdel and browt it hir to  
comfortyn hir, and than owr Lady seyd onto hir, “Do it awey, dowtyr. Geve me no  
mete but myn owyn childe.” The creatur seyd agen, “A, blissyd Lady, ye must nedys  
4635 comfortyn yourself and cesyn of yowr sorwyng.” “A, dowtyr, wher schulde I gon er  
wher schulde I dwellyn wythowtyn sorwe? I telle the certeyn was ther nevyr woman in  
erth had so gret cawse to sorwyn as I have, for ther was nevyr woman in this world bar  
a bettyr childe ne a mekar to hys modyr than my sone was to me.” And hir thowt sche  
herd owr Lady cryin anon wyth a lamentabyl voys and seyd, “John, wher is my sone  
Jhesu Crist?” And Seynt John answeryd agen and seyd, “Der Lady, ye wetyn wel that  
4640 he is ded.” “A, John,” sche seyd, “that is to me a careful reed.” The creatur herd as  
clerly this answer in the undirstondyng of hir sowle as sche schulde undirstondyn o man  
spekyn to an other. And anon the creatur herd Seynt Petyr knokkyng at the dor, and  
Seynt John askyd who was ther. Petyr answeryd, “I, synful Petyr, that hath forsakyn  
my Lord Jhesu Crist.” Seynt John wolde a don hym comyn in, and Petyr wolde not tyl  
4645 owr Lady bad hym comyn in. And than Petyr seyd, “Lady, I am not worthy to comyn  
in to yow,” and was stille wythowtyn the dor. Than Seynt Jon went to owr Lady and  
telde hir that Petyr was so abaschyd that he durst not comyn in. Owr Lady bad Seynt  
John gon ageyn yerne to Seynt Petyr and bid hym comyn in to hir. And than the  
creatuer in hyr gostly syght beheld Seynt Petir comyn beforne owr Lady and fallyn  
4650 downe on hys kneys wyth gret wepyng and sobbyng, and seyd, “Lady, I cry yow  
mercy, for I have forsakyn yowr derworthy sone and my swete maistyr that hath  
lovyd me ful wel, and therfor, Lady, I am nevyr worthy to lokyn on hym ne yow  
neithyr but up yowr gret mercy.” “A, Petyr,” seyd owr Lady, “drede the not, for, thow  
thu have forsakyn my swete sone, he forsoke nevyr the, Petir, and he schal comyn ageyn  
4655 and comfortyn us alle ryth wel, for he behite me, Petir, that he wolde comyn ageyn on  
4627 ageyn, towards. **4631 mad for owr Lady a good cawdel**, made for our Lady a good hot drink.  
On this detail, see Gibson, p. 51. **4640 careful reed**, care-filled counsel, advice. **4643–44 I, synful  
Petyr ... Crist**, I, sinful Peter, who has forsaken my Lord Jesus Christ. **4648 yerne**, quickly.

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the thryd day and comfortyn me. A, Petyr,” seyd owr Lady, “ful long tyme schal I thynke tyl that day comyth that I may se hys blissyd face.” Than owr Lady lay stille on hir bed and herd how that the frendys of Jhesu madyn her compleynt of the sorwe that thei haddyn. And evyr owr Lady lay stille, mornynge and wepyng wyth hevy cher, and  
4660 at the last Mary Mawdelyn and owr Ladys sisterys tokyn her leve of owr Lady for to go byn onyment that thei myth anoyntyn therwyth our Lordys body. Than the creatur left stille wyth owr Lady and thowt a thowsand yer tyl the thryd day cam, and that day sche was wyth owr Lady in a chapel ther owr Lord Jhesu Crist aperyd unto hir and seyd, “*Salve, sancta parens.*” And than the creatur thowt in hir sowle that owr Lady  
4665 seyd, “Art thu my swete sone, Jhesu?” And he seyd, “Ya, my blissyd Modyr, I am yowr owyn sone, Jhesu.” Than he toke up hys blissyd modyr and kissyd hir ful swetly. And than the creatur thowt that sche say owr Lady felyn and tastyn owr Lordys body al abowtyn and hys handys and hys feet yyf ther wer ony sorhed er any peyne. And sche herd owr Lord seyn to hys modyr, “Der Modyr, my peyne is al agoo, and now schal  
4670 I levyn for evyr mo. And, modyr, so schal yowr peyne and yowr sorwe be turnyd into ful gret joye. Modyr, aske what ye wole I schal tellyn yow.” And whan he had suffyrd hys modyr to aske what sche wolde and had awnsweryd to hir questyons, than he seyd, “Modir, be yowr leve I must go spekyn wyth Mary Mawdelyn.” Owr Lady seyd, “It is wel don, for, sone, sche hath ful meche sorwe for yowr absens. And, I prey yow, beth  
4675 not long fro me.” Thes gostly syghtys and undirstondyngys cawsed the creatur to wepyn, to sobbyn, and to cryin ful lowde that sche myth not mesuryn hirself ne restreyn hir therfro on Estern Day and other days whan owr Lord wolde visityn hir wyth hys grace, blissyd and worschepyd mote he ben. And anon aftyr the creatur was in hir contemplacyon wyth Mary Mawdelyn, mornynge and sekynge owr Lord at the grave,  
4680 and herd and sey how owr Lord Jhesu Crist aperyd to hir in lekenes of a gardener, seying, “Woman, why wepist thou?” Mary, not knowyng what he was, al inflawmyd wyth the fyre of lofe, seyd to hym ageyn, “Sir, yyf thou hast awey my Lord, telle me, and I schal takyn hym agen.” Than owr merciful Lord, havyng pité and compassyon of hir, seyd, “Mary.” And wyth that word sche, knowyng owr Lord, fel down at hys feet  
4685 and wolde a kyssyd hys feet, seying, “Maistyr.” Owr Lord seyd to hir, “Towche me not.” Than the creatur thowt that Mary Mawdelyn seyd to owr Lord, “A, Lord, I se wel

**4664** “*Salve, sancta parens,*” Greetings, blessed parent. **4667** **tastyn**, examine. **4668** **sorhed**, soreness. **4680** **and herd and . . . of a gardener**, See John 20:1–18. **4682** **hast awey**, have (taken) away.

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ye wil not that I be so homly wyth yow as I have ben aforn," and mad hevy cher.  
"Yys, Mary," seyd owr Lord, "I schal nevyr forsake the, but I schal evyr be wyth the  
wythowtyn ende." And than owr Lord seyde to Mary Mawdelyn, "Go telle my bretheryn  
4690 and Petyr that I am up reson." And than the creatur thowt that Mary went forth wyth  
gret joye, and that was gret merveyl to hir that Mary enjoyid, for, yf owr Lord had  
seyd to hir as he dede to Mary, hir thowt sche cowde nevyr a ben mery. That was  
whan sche wolde a kissyd hys feet, and he seyd, "Towche me not." The creatur had so  
4695 gret swem and hevynes in that worde that evyr whan sche herd it in any sermown, as  
sche dede many tymys, sche wept, sorwyd, and cryid as sche schulde a deyd for lofe  
and desir that sche had to ben wyth owr Lord.

82

On the Purificacyon Day er ellys Candilmesse Day whan the sayd creatur beheld  
the pepil wyth her candelys in cherch, hir mende was raveschyd into beholdyng of  
owr Lady offeryng hyr blisful sone owr Savyowr to the preyst Simeon in the tempyl,  
4700 as verily to hir gostly undirstondyng as yf sche had be ther in hir bodily presens for  
to an offeryd wyth owr Ladys owyn persone. Than was sche so comfortyd be the  
contemplacyon in hir sowle that sche had in the beholdyng of owr Lord Jhesu Crist  
and of hys blissyd Modyr, of Simeon the preyste, of Joseph, and of other personys that  
ther weryn whan owr Lady was purifyid, and of the hevynly songys that hir thowt  
4705 sche herd whan owr blisful Lord was offeryd up to Symeon that sche myth ful evyl  
beryng up hir owyn candel to the preyst, as other folke dedyn at the tyme of offeryng,  
but went wavering on eche syde as it had ben a dronkyn woman, wepyng and sobbyng  
so sor that unethe sche myth stondyn on hir feet for the fervour of lofe and devocyon  
that God putte in hir sowle thorw hy contemplacyon. And sumtyme sche myth not  
4710 stondyn but fel downe amonge the pepil and cryid ful lowde, that many man on hir  
wonderyd and merveylyd what hir eyled, for the fervour of the spiryt was so meche  
that the body fayld and myth not endur it. Sche had swech holy thowtys and meditacyons  
many tymes whan sche saw women ben purifyid of her childeryn. Sche thowt in hir  
sowle that sche saw owr Lady ben purifiid and had hy contemplacyon in the beheldyng

**4690 up reson**, up risen. **4697 Purificacyon Day**, Feb. 2, the Feast of the Purification, marked by an elaborate procession in which each parishoner carried a candle. See Duffy, pp. 15ff.

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4715 of the women wheche comyn to offeryn wyth the women that weryn purifiid. Hir  
mende was al drawyn fro the erdly thowtys and erdly syghtys and sett al togedyr in  
gostly syghtys, which wer so delectabyl and so devowt that sche myth not in the tyme  
of fervour wythstondyn hir wepyng, hir sobbyng, ne hir crying, and therfor suffyrd  
sche ful mech wonderyng, many a jape and many a scorne. Also whan sche sey  
4720 weddyngs, men and women ben joyned togedyr aftyr the lawe of the chirche, anon  
sche had in meditacyon how owr Lady was joynyd to Joseph and of the gostly joynynge  
of mannys sowle to Jhesu Crist, preying to owr Lord that hir lofe and hir affeccyon  
myth ben joynyd to hym only wythowtyn ende, and that sche myth han grace to obeyn  
hym, lovyn and dredyn hym, worschepyn and preysyn hym, and no thyng to lovyn but  
4725 that he lovyth, ne no thyng to welyn but that he wolde, and evyr to be redy to fulfillyn  
hys wil bothyn nyght and day wythowtyn grutchyng er hevynes, wyth al gladnes of  
spiryt, and many mo holy thowtys an sche evyr cowde rehersyn, for sche had hem not  
of hir owyn stody ne of hir owyn witte, but of hys gyfte whos wisdom is in-  
comprehensibyl to alle creatureys saf only to hem that he chesith and illuminyth mor er  
4730 lesse as he wil hys owyn selfe, for hys wil may not be constreyned, it is in hys owyn  
fre disposicyon. Sche had thes myndys and thes desyrys wyth profownde teerys,  
syhyngys, and sobbyngys, and sumtyme wyth gret boistows cryings as God wolde  
sende it, and sumtyme soft teerys and prevy wythowtyn any boistowsnesse. Sche  
myth neythyr wepyn lowde ne stille but whan God wolde sende it hir, for sche was  
4735 sumtyme so bareyn fro teerys a day er sumtyme half a day and had so gret peyne for  
desyr that sche had of hem that sche wold a govyn al this worlde, yyf it had ben hir, for  
a fewe teerys, er a suffyrd ryth gret bodily peyne for to a gotyn hem wyth. And than,  
whan sche was so bareyn, sche cowde fynde no joye ne no conforte in mete ne drynke  
ne dalyawns but evyr was hevy in cher and in cuntenawnce tyl God wolde send hem  
4740 to hir ageyn, and than was sche mery anow. And, thei so wer that owr Lord wythdrow  
fro hir sumtyme the habundawnce of teerys; yet he wythdrowe not fro hir holy mendys  
ne desyrys of yerys togedyr, for evyr hir mynde and hir desyr was to owr Lord. But hir  
thowt it was no savour ne swetnesse but whan sche myth wepyn, for than sche thowt  
that sche cowde preyin.

4718 **fervour**, fervor. 4725 **welyn**, will. 4733 **prevy**, secret. 4735 **bareyn**, barren. 4737 **er a suffyrd . . . hem wyth**, or would have suffered great bodily pain in order to get tears.

4745      Twelyn preistys which had gret trost in hir maner of crying and wepyng, nevrthelesse thei wer sumtyme in gret dowte whedyr it wer deceyvabyl er not. Forasmeche as sche cryid and wept in the syght of the pepil, thei had a prevy conseyt, hir unwetyng, that thei wolde prevyn whedyr sche cryid for the pepil schulde heryn hir er not. And on a day the preistys cam to hir and askyd yyf sche wolde gon too myle fro  
4750      then sche dwellyd on pilgrimage to a cherch stod in the feld, a good party distawnce fro any other hows, which was dedicate in the honowr of God and Seynt Michael Archawngyl. And sche seyd sche wolde gon wyth hem wyth good wil. Thei toke wyth hem a childe er tweyn and went to the seyd place al in fere. Whan thei had a while mad her preyerys, the sayd creatur had so mech swetnes and devocyon that sche  
4755      myth not kebyn it prevy but brast owt in boistows wepyng and sobbyng and cryid as lowde er ellys lowder as sche dede whan sche was amongys the pepil at hom, and sche cowde not restreyn hirselfe therfro, ne no personys beyng ther present than the tweyn preistys and a childe er tweyn wyth hem. And than, as thei cam homward ageyn, thei mett women wyth childeryn in her armys, and the forseyd creatur askyd yyf ther wer  
4760      any man childe amongys hem, and the women seyd, "Nay." Than was the mende so raveschyd into the childhod of Crist for desir that sche had for to see hym that sche mith not beryn it but fel downe and wept and cryid so sor that it was merveyl to her it. Than the preistys haddyn the mor trust that it was ryth wel wyth hir whan thei herd hir  
4765      cryin in prevy place as wel as in opyn place and in the feld as in the town. Also ther wer nunnys desiryd to have knowlach of the creatur and that thei schulde the mor be steryd to devocyon. Sche was in her chirch at myddenyght to heryn her mateyns, and owr Lord sent hir so hy devocyon and so hy meditacyon and swech gostly comfortys that sche was al inflawmyd wyth the fir of love, the whech encresyd so sor that it brast owt wyth lowde voys and gret crying, that owr Lordys name was the mor magnifiid  
4770      amongys hys servawntys, tho that weryn good, meke, and sympil sowlys and wolde beleven the goodnes of owr Lord Jhesu Crist, that gevith hys grace to whom he wole. And specialy to hem that dowtyn not ne mystrostyn not in her askyng hir crying gretly

**4746–49 whedyr it wer . . . heryn hir er not**, whether it (her weeping) was deceptive or not. Since she cried and wept in the sight of the people, they (the two priests) had a secret plan, without her knowledge, by which they would prove whether she cried in order for the people to hear her or not. **4753 in fere**, together. **4770 tho**, those.

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profityd to encres of merite and of vertu. To hem that litil trostynd and lityl belevyd  
peraventur was litil encres of vertu and of merite. But whethyr the pepil belevyd in hir  
4775 crying er not, hir grace was nevrthelesse but evyr encresyd. And as wel and as goodly  
owr Lord visityd hir on nyght as on day, whan he wolde, and how he wolde, and wher  
he wolde, for sche lakkyd no grace but whan sche dowtyd er mistrostyd the goodnes  
of God, supposyng er dredyng that it was the wyle of hir gostly enmy to enformyn hir  
er techyn hir otherwyse than wer to hir gostly hele. Whan sche supposyd thus er  
4780 consentyd to any swesch thowtys thorw steryng of any man er thorw any evyl spiryt in  
hir mende that wolde many a tyme a don hir left of hir good purpos, had the myghty  
hand of owr Lordys mercy not withstande hys gret malyce, than lakkyd sche grace  
and devocyon and alle good thowtys and alle good mendys, tyl sche was thorw the  
mercy of owr Lord Jhesu Crist compellyd to beleven stedfastly wythowtyn any dowtyng  
4785 that it was God spak in hir and wolde be magnyfied in hir for hys owyn goodnes and  
hir profyte and for the profyte of many other. And, whan sche belevyd that it was God  
and no evyl spiryt that gaf hir so mech grace of devocyon, contricyon, and holy  
contemplacyon, than had sche so many holy thowtys, holy spechys, and dalyawns in  
hir sowle techyng hir how sche schulde lovyn God, how sche schulde worschepyn hym  
4790 and servyn hym, that sche cowde nevr rehersyn but fewe of hem; it wer so holy and  
so hy that sche was abasched to tellyn hem to any creatur, and also it weryn so hy  
abovyn hir bodily wittys that sche myth nevr expressyn hem wyth hir bodily tunge  
liche as sche felt hem. Sche undirstod hem bettyr in hir sowle than sche cowde uttyr  
hem. Yf on of hir confessowrys come to hir whan sche ros up newely fro hir  
4795 contemplacyon er ellys fro hir meditacyon, sche cowde a telde hym meche thyng of  
the dalyawnce that owr Lord dalyid to hir sowle, and in a schort tyme aftyr sche had  
forgetyn the most party therof and ny everydeel.

84

The Abbas of Denney, an hows of nunnys, oftyn tymys sent for the sayd creatur  
that sche schulde come to speke wyth hir and wyth hir sisterys. The creatur thowt sche

4774 **peraventur**, perhaps. 4777 **lakkyd**, lacked. 4781 **a don hir left of hir good purpos**, have  
caused her to leave off her good purpose. 4797 **ny everydeel**, nearly everything. 4798 **Abbas  
of Denney**, Abbess of Denny (Cambridgeshire).

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4800 wolde not gon tyl an other yer, for sche myth evyl duryn the labowr. Than, as sche was  
in hir meditacyon and had gret swetnes and devocyon, owr Lord comawndyd hir to  
gon to Denney and confortyn the ladiis that desyryd to comownyn wyth hir, seying  
on this maner to hir sowle, “Dowtyr, go forth to the hows of Denney in the name of  
Jhesu, for I wole that thu comfort hem.” Sche was loth to gon, for it was pestylens  
4805 tyme, and hir thowt that sche wolde for no good a deyd ther. Owr Lord seyd to hir  
mende agen, “Dowtyr, thu schalt go saf and come saf agen.” Sche went than to a  
worschepful burgeys wyfe, the whech lovyd hir and trostyd hir ryth mech, whos  
husbond lay in gret sekenes, and told the worschepful wife that sche schulde go to  
Denney. The worthy woman wolde that sche schulde not a gon and seyd, “I wolde not,”  
4810 sche seyd, “that myn husbond deyid whil ye wer owt for forty shillings.” And sche  
seyd agen, “Yyf ye wolde geve me an hundryd pownde, I wolde not abydyn at hom.”  
For, whan sche was bodyn in hir sowle for to gon, sche wolde in no wey wythstond it,  
but for anythyng sche wolde forth what that evyr fel. And, whan sche was bodyn ben  
4815 at hom, sche wolde for no thyng gon owte. And than owr Lord telde hir that the  
forseyd burgeys schulde not dey. Than yede she ageyn to the worthy wife and bad hir  
ben of good conforte, for hir husbond schulde levyn and faryn ryth wel and that he  
schulde not dey yet. The good wife was ryth glad and seyd agen to hir, “Now gospel  
mote it ben in yowr mowth.” Sithyn the creatur wolde a sped hir forth as sche was  
4820 comawndyd, and, whan sche cam to the watyrs syde, alle the botys weryn forth to  
Cambrygeward er than sche cam. Than had sche mech hevynes how sche schulde  
fulfillyn owr Lordys biddyg. And anon sche was bodyn in hir sowle that sche schulde  
not ben sory ne hevy, for sche schulde ben ordeynd for wel anow and sche schulde gon  
safe and come saf agen. And it fel so in dede. Than owr Lord mad a maner of thankynge  
4825 to hir, for as meche as sche in contemplacyon and in meditacyon had ben hys modyrs  
maydyn and holbyn to kepyn hym in hys childhod and so forth into the tyme of hys  
deth and seyd unto hir, “Dowtyr, thow schalt han as gret mede and as gret reward wyth  
me in hevyn for thi good servyse and the good dedys that thu hast don in thi mynde  
and meditacyon as yyf thu haddyst don tho same dedys wyth thy bodily wittys  
4830 wythowtyn forth. And also, dowtyr, whan thu dost any servyse to the and to thin  
husbond in mete or drynke er any other thyng that is nedful to yow, to thi gostly  
fadirs, er to any other that thu receyvyst in my name, thu schalt han the same mede in

**4804 pestylens**, pestilence. **4812 bodyn**, bidden. **4813–14 bodyn ben at hom**, bidden stay at home. **4815 yede**, went. **4819 botys**, boats. **4822 ordeynd**, ordained, taken care of.

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hebyn as thow thu dedist it to myn owyn persone er to my blissyd modyr, and I schal thankyn the therfor. Dowtyr, thu seyst that it is to me a good name to be callyd al good, and thu schalt fyndyn that name is al good to the. And also, dowtyr, thu seyst it is  
4835 wel worthy that I be callyd al lofe, and thu schalt wel fyndyn that I am al lofe to the, for I knowe every thowt of thyn hert. And I knowe wel, dowtyr, that thu hast many tymys thowt, yyf thou haddist an had many chirchys ful of nobelys, thu woldist a govyn hem in my name. And also thu hast thowt that thu woldist, yyf thou haddist had good anow,  
4840 a made many abbeys for my lofe for religiows men and women to dwellyn in and a govyn iche of hem hundryd powndys be yer for to ben my servawntys. And thu hast also in thi mende desyryd to han many preistys in the town of Lynne that myth syngyn and redyn nyght and day for to servyn me, worschepyn me, and preysyn and thankyn me for the goodnes that I have don to the in erthe. And therfor, dowtyr, I behote the  
4845 thu schalt have the same mede and reward in hebyn for this good willys and thes good desyrys as yyf thou haddist don hem in dede. Dowtyr, I knowe alle the thowtys of thin hert that thu hast to alle maner men and women, to alle lazerys, and to alle presonerys, and as mech good as thu woldist gevyn hem be yer to serve me wyth I take it as yf it wer don in dede. And, dowtyr, I thanke the for the charité that thu hast to alle lecherous men and women, for thu preyst for hem and wepist many a teir for hem, desyryng that  
4850 I schulde delyvyr hem owt of synne and ben as gracyows to hem as I was to Mary Mawdelyn and that thei myth han as gret lofe to me as Mary Mawdelyn had. And wyth this condicyon thu woldist that every of hem schulde have twenty pownde be yer to lovyn me and preysyn me. And, dowtyr, this gret charité that thu hast in thi preier to hem plesyth me ryth wel. And also, dowtyr, I thanke the for the charité that thu hast in  
4855 thi preyer whan thu preyst for alle Jewys and Sarazenys and alle hethyn pepil that thei schulde comyn to Cristen feith that my name myth be magnyfiid in hem, and for the holy teerys and wepyngys that thu hast wept for hem, preying and desyryng that yyf any preyer myth bryngyn hem to grace or to Cristyndom that I schulde heryn thi preyer for hem yf it wer my wille. Forthermor, dowtyr, I thanke the for the general charité  
4860 that thu hast to alle the pepil that is now in this worlde levynge and to alle tho that arn for to come into this worldys ende, that thu woldist ben hakkyd as smal as flesche to the potte for her lofe so that I wolde be thi deth savyn hem alle fro dampnacyon yyf it plesyd me, for thu seyst oftyn in thy thowt that ther arn inowe in helle and thu woldist

**4838 yyf thou haddist had good anow**, if you had had goods enough. **4849 preyst**, prays. **4861 hakkyd**, hacked; **flesche**, meat.

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that ther schulde nevyr mo men deservyn for to comyn therin. And therfor, dowtyr, for  
4865 alle thes good willys and desyrys thu schalt han ful hy mede and rewarde in hevyn.  
Beleve it ryth wel, and dowt it nevyr a deel, for alle thes gracys ar my gracys, and I  
werke hem in the myself for thu schuldist han the mor mede in hevyn. And I telle the  
trewly, dowtyr, every good thowt and every good desyr that thu hast in thi sowle is the  
speche of God, al yf it be so that thu her me not spekyn to the sumtyme as I do  
4870 sumtyme to thi cler undirstondyng. And therfor, dowtyr, I am as an hyd God in thi  
sowle, and I wythdrawe sumtyme thi teerys and thi devocyon that thu schuldist thynkyn  
in thyself that thu hast no goodnes of thiself but al goodnes comyth of me, and also thu  
schuldist verily wetyn what peyn it is for to forbere me, and how swet it is for to fele me,  
and that thu schuldist be the mor besy for to sekyn me agen, also, dowtyr, for thu schuldist  
4875 knowyn what peyne other men han that wolde felyn me and may not. For ther is many  
a man in erth that, yyf he had but oo day in al hys lyve tyme of swech as thu hast many  
days, he wolde evyr lovyn me the bettyr and thankyn me for that oo day. And thu  
maist not, dowtyr, forberyn me oo day wythowtyn gret peyne. Therfor, dowtyr, thu  
hast gret cawse to lovyn me ryth wel, for it is for no wreth, dowtyr, that I wythdrawe  
4880 sumtyme fro the the felyng of grace and the fervour of devocyon but that thu schuldist  
knowyn ryth wel that thu maist be no ypcryte for no wepyng, for no criyng, for no  
swetnes, for no devocyon, for no mynd of myn passyon, ne for non other gostly grace  
that I geve er send to the. For thes arn not the develys gyftys, but thei arn my gracys  
4885 and my gyftys, and thes arn myn owyn special gyftys that I geve to myn owyn chosyn  
sowlis the wech I knew wythowtyn begynnnyng schulde come to grace and dwellyn  
wyth me withowtyn endyng. For in alle other thyngys thu maist ben an ypcrite yf thu  
wilt, that is to sey, in undirstandyng, in many bedys byddyng, in gret fastyng, in gret  
penawnce doyng wythowtyn forth that men may se it, er in gret almes dedys doyng  
wyth thin handys, er in good wordys spekyng wyth thi mowth. In alle thes, dowtyr, thu  
4890 maist ben an ypcrite yf thu wilte, and thu maist also don hem wel and holily yf thu  
wilt thiselfe. Lo, dowtyr, I have gove the swech a lofe that thu schalt non ypcrite be  
therin. And, dowtyr, thu schalt nevyr lesyn tyme whil thu art occupiid therin, for hoso  
thynkyth wel he may not synnyn for the tyme. And the devyl knowith not the holy  
thowtys that I geve the ne no man in erde knowyth how wel and holily thu art occupiid  
4895 wyth me, ne thiself can not tellyn the gret grace and goodnes that thu felist in me. And

**4866 nevyr a deel**, never at all. **4870 hyd**, hidden. **4873 forbere**, do without. **4879 wreth**,  
wrath. **4887 bedys byddyng**, prayers bidding (saying).

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therfor, dowtyr, thu begilyst bothe the devyl and the worlde wyth thin holy thowtys,  
and it is ryth gret foly to the pepil of the worlde for to demyn thin hert that no man may  
knowyn but God alone. And therfor, dowtyr, I telle the trewly thu hast as gret cawse to  
enjoyin and ben mery in thi sowle as lady er maydyn in this world. My lofe is so mech  
4900 to the that I may not drawyn it fro the, for, dowtyr, ther may non hert thynke ne tunge  
telle the gret love that I have to the, and that I take witnes of my blissyd modyr, of myn  
holy awngelys, and of alle the seyntys in hevyn, for thei alle worschep me for thi lofe  
in hevyn. And so schal I ben worschepyd in erth for thi love, dowtyr, for I wyl have  
the grace that I have schewyd to the in erth knowyn to the worlde that the pepil may  
4905 wonderyn in my goodnes and merveylyn of my gret goodnes that I have schewyd to  
the that hast ben synful, and becawse that I have be so gracyows and mercyful to the,  
thei that ben in the worlde schal not dispeyrin, be thei nevyr so synful, for thei may  
han mercy and grace yyf thei wil hemself.

**85**

On a tyme, as the sayd creatur was knelyng beforne an awter of the cros and seying  
4910 on an oryson, hir eyne wer evyr togedirward as thow sche schulde a slept. And at the last  
sche myth not chesyn; sche fel in a lityl slomeryng, and anon aperyd verily to hir  
syght an awngel al clothyd in white as mech as it had ben a lityl childe beryng an  
howge boke beforne hym. Than seyd the creatur to the childe, er ellys to the awngel,  
“A,” sche seyd, “This is the boke of lyfe.” And sche saw in the boke the Trinité and al  
4915 in gold. Than seyd sche to the childe, “Wher is my name?” The childe answeryd and  
seyd, “Her is thi name at the Trintyté foot wretyn,” and therwyth he was ago, sche wist  
not how. And anon aftyr owr Lord Jhesu Crist spak unto hir and seyde, “Dowtyr, loke  
that thu be now trewe and stedfast and have a good feith, for thi name is wretyn in  
hevyn in the boke of lyfe, and this was an awngel that gaf the comfort. And therfor,  
4920 dowtyr, thu must be ryth mery, for I am ryth besy bothe for none and aftyr none to  
drawe thin hert into myn hert, for thu schuldyst kepyn thi mende altogedyr on me, and  
schal most encresyn thi love to God. For, dowtyr, yyf thou wilt drawyn aftyr Goddys

**4897 to demyn thin hert**, to judge your heart. **4905–06 to the that hast ben synful**, to you  
who have been sinful. **4910 oryson**, prayer; **hir eyne wer evyr togedirward**, her eyes were  
closed. **4913 howge**, huge. **4916 wist**, knew. **4920 for none**, before noon.

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counsel, thou maist not don amys, for Goddys counsel is to be meke, pacient in charité and in chastité. An other tyme, as the creatur lay in hir contemplacyon in a chapel of  
4925 owr Lady, hir mynde was occupid in the Passyon of owr Lord Jhesu Crist, and hyr thowt verily that she saw owr Lord aperyn to hir gostly syght in hys manhood with hys wondys bledyng as fresch as thow he had ben scorgyd beforne hir. And than sche wept and cryid wyth alle the myghtys of hir body, for, yyf hir sorwe wer gret beforne  
4930 this gostly syght, yet it was wel grettar aftyr than it was beforne, and hir love was mor encresyd to owr Lord ward. And than had sche gret wondyr that owr Lord wolde becomyn man and suffyr so grevous peynys for hir that was so unkynde a creatur to hym. An other tyme, as sche was in a chirch of Seynt Margarete in the qwer, beyng in gret swetnes and devocyon wyth gret plenté of teerys, sche askyd owr Lord Jhesu Crist how sche myght best plesyn hym. And he answeryd to hyr sowle, seying, “Dowtyr,  
4935 have mynde of thi wykkydnes and thynk on my goodnes.” Than sche preyd many tymys and oftyn thes wordys, “Lord, for thy gret goodnes have mercy on al my wykkydnes as wistly as I was nevyr so wykkyd as thu art good ne nevyr may be thow I wolde, for thu art so good that thu mayst no bettyr be. And therfor it is gret wondyr that evyr ony man schulde be departyd fro the wythowtyn ende.” Than, as sche lay stille  
4940 in the qwer, wepyng and mornynge for hir synnys, sodeynly sche was in a maner of slep. And anon sche saw wyth hir gostly eye owr Lordys body lying beforne hir, and hys hevyd, as hir thowt, fast be hir wyth hys blissyd face upward, the semeliest man that evyr myth be seen er thowt. And than cam on wyth a baselard knyfe to hir syght and kytt that precyows body al on long in the brest. And anon sche wept wondyr sor,  
4945 havyng more mynde, pité, and compassyon of the passyon of owr Lord Jhesu Crist than sche had beforne. And so every day encresyd hir mynde and hir lofe to owr Lord, blissyd mote he ben, and the mor that hir love encresyd the mor was hir sorwe for synne of the pepil. An other tyme, the seyd creatur beyng in a chapel of owr Lady sor  
4950 wepyng in the mynde of owr Lordys passyon and swech other gracys and goodnes as owr Lord ministryrd to hir mynde, and sodeynly, sche wist not how sone, sche was in a maner of slep. And anon in the syght of hir sowle sche sey owr Lord standyng ryght up ovyr hir so ner that hir thowt sche toke hys toos in hir hand and felt hem, and to hir felyng it weryn as it had ben very flesch and bon. And than sche thankyd God of al, for

4932 **qwer**, choir, i.e., in that part of the church which, during services, is appropriated to the singers. 4935 **have mynde of**, have memory of. 4937 **wistly**, certainly. 4943 **on**, one; **baselard knyfe**, dagger. 4944 **kytt**, cut. 4952 **toos**, toes.

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thorw thes gostly sytys hir affeccyon was al drawyn into the manhod of Crist and  
4955 into the mynde of hys passyon unto that tyme that it plesyd owr Lord to gevyn hir  
undirstondyng of hys inundirstondabyl Godhed. As is wretyn beforne, thes maner of  
visyons and felyngys sche had sone aftyr hir conversyon, whan sche was fully set and  
purposyd to servyn God wyth al hir hert into hir power, and had fully left the worlde,  
and kept the chirche bothe for none and aftyr none, and most specialy in Lent tyme  
4960 whan sche wyth gret instawns and mech preyer had leve of hir husband to levyn chast  
and clene and dede gret bodily penawns er sche went to Jerusalem. But aftyrwardys,  
whan hir husband and sche wyth on assent had mad avow of chastité, as is beforne  
wretyn, and sche had ben at Rome and Jerusalem and suffyrd mech despite and repref  
for hir wepyng and hir criyng, owr Lord of hys hy mercy drow hir affeccyon into hys  
4965 Godhed, and that was mor fervent in lofe and desyr and mor sotyl in undirstondyng  
than was the manhod. And nevrthelesse the fyr of love encresyd in hir, and hir  
undirstondyng was mor illumynyd and hir devocyon mor fervent than it was beforne  
whyl sche had hir meditacyon and hir contemplacyon only in hys manhod, yet had  
4970 sche not that maner of werkynge in crying as sche had beforne, but it was mor sotyl and  
mor softe and mor esy to hir spiryt to beryn and plentyuows in teerys as evyr it was  
beforne. An other tyme, as this creatur was in an hows of the Frer Prechowrys wythinne  
a chapel of owr Lady, stondyng in hir preyerys, hir ey ledys went a lityl togedyr wyth  
4975 a maner of slep, and sodeynly sche sey, hir thowt, owr Lady in the fayrest syght that  
evyr sche say, holdyng a fayr white kerche in hir hand and seying to hir, “Dowtyr, wilt  
thu se my sone?” And anon forth wyth sche say owr Lady han hyr blissyd sone in hir  
hand and swathyd hym ful lytely in the white kerche that sche myth wel beholdyn  
how sche dede. The creatur had than a newe gostly joye and a newe gostly comfort,  
wheche was so mervelyows that sche cowde nevr tellyn it as sche felt it.

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On a tyme owre Lord spak to the sayd creatur whan it plesyd hym, seying to hyr  
4980 gostly undirstondyng, “Dowtyr, for as many tymys as thu hast receyvyd the blissyd  
sacrament of the awter wyth many holy thowtys mo than thu canst rehersyn, for so

**4954 sytys**, sights. **4960 instawns**, urgency. **4965 sotyl**, subtle. **4972 ey ledys**, eye lids.  
**4974 kerche**, kerchief. **4976 swathyd**, swaddled.

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many tymys schalt thu be rewardyd in hevyn wyth newe joyis and new comfortys. And,  
dowtyr, in hevyn schal it be knowyn to the how many days thu hast had of hy  
contemplacyon thorw my gyft in erth. And of alle that it so be that it arn my gyftys and  
4985 my gracys whech I have govyn the, yet schal thu han the same grace and reward in  
hevyn as yyf it weryn of thyn owyn mertytys, for frely I have govyn hem to the. But  
hyly I thanke the, dowtyr, that thu hast suffyrd me to werkyn my wil in the and that  
thu woldist latyn me be so homly wyth the. For in no thyng, dowtyr, that thu myghtyst  
do in erth thu myghtyst no bettyr plesyn me than suffyrn me speke to the in thi sowle,  
4990 for that tyme thu undirstondyst my wyl and I undirstond thi wyl. And also, dowtyr,  
thu clepist my modyr for to comyn into thi sowle and takyn me in hir armys and leyn  
me to hir brestys and gevyn me sokyn. Also, dowtyr, I knowe the holy thowtys and  
the good desyrys that thu hast whan thu receyvyst me and the good charité that thu  
hast to me in the tyme that thu receyvyst my precyous body into thi sowle, and also  
4995 how thu clepist Mary Mawdelyn into thi sowle to wolcomyn me, for, dowtyr, I wot  
wel anow what thu thynkyst. Thu thynkyst that sche is worthiest in thi sowle, and  
most thu trustyst in hir preyerys next my modyr, and so thu maist ryth wel, dowtyr, for  
sche is a ryth gret mene to me for the in the blysse of hevyn. And sumtyme, dowtyr,  
thu thynkyst thi sowle so large and so wyde that thu clepist al the cowrt of hevyn into  
5000 thi sowle for to wolcomyn me. I wot ryth wel, dowtyr, what thu seist, ‘Comyth alle  
twelve apostelys that wer so wel belovyd of God in erde and receyvyth your Lord in  
my sowle.’ Also thu preyest Kateryn, Margarete, and alle holy virginys to wolcomyn  
me in thi sowle. And than thu preyest my blissyd modyr, Mary Mawdelyn, alle apostelys,  
5005 martirys, confessowrys, Kateryne, Margaret, and alle holy virginys that thei schulde  
arayn the chawmbre of thi sowle wyth many fayr flowerys and wyth many swete  
spicys that I myth restyn therin. Ferthermor thu thynkist sumtyme, dowtyr, as thou  
thu haddist a cusdyn of gold, an other of red velvet, the thryd of white sylke in thy  
sowle. And thu thynkist that my Fadyr sittyth on the cusdyn of golde, for to hym is  
apropyrd myght and power. And thu thynkist that I the Secunde Person, thi love and  
5010 thi joy, sytte on the red cusdyn of velvet, for on me is al thi thowte beawse I bowt  
the so der, and thu thynkyst that thu kanst nevyr aqwityn me the lofe that I have

**4991 clepist**, call. **4998 mene**, mean, medium. **5004 confessowrys**, confessors, those who  
have given heroic evidence of their faith in Christ. **5005 arayn**, array. **5007 cusdyn**, cushion.  
**5008–09 is apropyrd**, is given as a property. **5010–11 I bowt the so der**, I bought you so  
dear, i.e., paid your debts on the cross. **5011 aqwityn**, acquit, pay back.

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schewyd the thei thu wer slain a thowsend tymys on the day yyf it wer possibyl for  
my lof. Thus thu thynkist, dowtyr, in thi sowle that I am worthy to syttyn on a red  
cuschyn in rememorawns of the red blood that I schad for the. Morovyr thu thinkist  
5015 that the Holy Gost sittyth on a white cuschyn, for thu thynkist that he is ful of lofe and  
clennesse, and therfor it semyth hym to sittyn on a white cuschyn, for he is gevar of  
alle holy thowtys and chastité. And yet I wot wel inow, dowtyr, that thu thynkyst thu  
maist not worschepyn the Fadyr but thu worschep the Sone, ne thu may not worschep  
5020 the Sone but thu worschep the Holy Gost. And also thu thynkyst sumtyme, dowtyr,  
that the Fadyr is al myghty and al witty and al grace and goodnes, and thu thynkyst the  
same of the Sone that he is al myghty and al witty and al grace and goodnes. And thu  
thynkyst that the Holy Gost hath the same proparteys evyn wyth the Fadyr and the  
Sone, procedyng of hem bothyn. Also thu thynkyst that eche of the three personys in  
Trinité hath that other hath in her Godhed, and so thu belelevyst verily, dowtyr, in thy  
5025 sowle that ther be three dyvers personys and oo God in substawnce, and that eche  
knowyth that other knowyth, and ech may that other may, and eche wil that other wil.  
And, dowtyr, this a very feith and a ryght feyth, and this feith hast thou only of my  
gyfte. And therfor, dowtyr, yf thou wilt bethynk the wel, thou hast gret cawse to lovyn  
me ryth wel and to gevyn me al holy thin hert that I may fully restyn therin as I wil  
5030 myself, for, yyf thou suffyr me, dowtyr, to restyn in thi sowle in erthe, beleve it ryght  
wel that thu schalt restyn wyth me in hevyn wythowtyn ende. And therfor, dowtyr,  
have thu no wondyr thow thu wepe sor whan thu art howselyd and receyvyst my  
blissyd body in forme of breed, for thu preyest to me aforn er thu be howselyd, seying  
to me in thy mende, ‘As wistly, Lord, as thu lovyst me, make me clene fro al synne  
5035 and geve me grace to receyve thi precyows body worthily wyth al maner of worschep  
and reverens.’ And, dowtyr, wete thu wel I her thi preyer, for a bettyr word maist thu  
not sey to my lykyng than ‘as wostly as I love the,’ for than I fulfille my grace in the  
and geve the many an holy thowt, it is unpossibyl to tellyn hem alle. And for the gret  
homlynes that I schewe to the that tyme that thu art mekyl the boldar to askyn me  
5040 grace for thiselfe, for thin husbond, and for thi childryn and thu makyst every Cristen  
man and woman thi childe in thi sowle for the tyme and woldist han as meche grace  
for hem as for thin owyn childeryn. Also thu askyst mercy for thyn husbonde, and thu

**5014 rememorawns**, remembrance. **5016 gevar**, giver. **5022 proparteys**, properties. **5027**  
**very**, true. **5033 aforn**, before. **5034 wistly**, certainly. **5037 wostly**, certainly. **5039 mekyl**,  
much.

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thynkyst that thu art meche beholdyn to me that I have gobyn the swech a man that  
wolde suffryn the levyn chast, he beyng on lyve and in good hele of body. Forsothe,  
5045 dowtyr, thu thynkist ful trewe, and therfore hast thu gret cawse to lovyn me ryth wel.  
Dowtyr, yyf thou knew how many wifys ther arn in this worlde that wolde lovyn me  
and servyn me ryth wel and dewly, yyf thei myght be as frely fro her husbandys as thu  
art fro thyn, thu woldist seyn that thu wer ryght meche beheldyn onto me. And yet ar  
thei putt fro her wyl and suffyr ful gret peyne, and therfor schal thei have ryght gret  
5050 reward in hevyn, for I receyve every good wyl as for dede. Sumtyme, dowtyr, I make  
the to have gret sorwe for thi gostly fadrys synnys in special that he schulde have as ful  
forgevenes of hys synnys as thu woldist have of thyn. And, sumtyme whan thu receyvyst  
the precyows sacrament, I make the to prey for thy gostly fadry on this wyse: that as  
many men and women myth be turnyd be hys prechyg as thu woldist that wer turnyd  
5055 be the teerys of thyn eyne and that myn holy wordys myght sattelyn as sor in her  
hertys as thu woldist that thei schulde sattelyn in thyn hert. And also thu askyst the  
same grace for alle good men that prechyn my word in erth that thei myght profityn to  
alle resonabyl creaturys. And oftyntymys that day that thu receyvyst my precyows  
body thu askyst grace and mercy for alle thi frendys and for alle thin enmyis that evyr  
5060 dede the schame er repref eythyr scornyd the er japyd the for the grace that I werke in  
the and for al this world bothe yong and elde, wyth many teerys sore wepyng and  
sobbyng. Thu hast suffyrd mech schame and meche repref, and therfor schalt thu han ful  
mech blys in hevyn. Dowtyr, be not aschamyd to receyvyn my grace whan I wil geven  
it the, for I schal not ben aschamyd of the that thu schalt ben receyvyd into the blys of  
5065 hevyn, ther to be rewardyd for every good thowt, for every good word, and for every  
good dede, and for every day of contemplacyon, and for alle good desyrys that thu  
hast had her in this world wyth me evyrestyngly as my derworthy derlyng, as my  
blissyd spowse, and as myn holy wife. And therfor drede the not, dowtyr, thow the  
pepil wondyr why thu wepist so sor whan thu receyvyst me, for, yyf thei knew what  
5070 grace I putte in the that tyme, thei schulde rathyrr wondyr that thin hert brost not asundyr.  
And so it schulde yyf I mesuryd not that grace myself, but thu seest wel, dowtyr, thiself,  
that whan thu hast receyvid me into thy sowle thu art in pees and in qwyete and  
sobbist no lengar. And therof the pepil hath gret wondyr, but it thar no wondyr be to  
the, for thu wost wel that I far lyke an husband that schulde weddyn a wyfe. What

**5044 on lyve**, alive; **hele**, health. **5047 as freely fro**, as freely from. **5055 sattelyn as sor**, settle  
as sorely.

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5075 tyme that he had weddyd hir, hym thynkyth that he is sekyr anow of hir and that no man schal partyn hem asundyr, for than, dowtyr, may thei gon to bedde togedyr wythowtyn any schame er dred of the pepil and slepyn in rest and pees yyf thei wil. And thus, dowtyr, it farith betwix the and me, for thu hast every weke specialy on the Sunday gret feer and drede in thy sowle how thu maist best be sekyr of my lofe, and  
5080 wyth gret reverens and holy drede how thu maist best receyvyn me to the salvacyon of thy sowle wyth al maner of mekenes, lownes, and charité, as any lady in this world is besy to receyve hir husbond whan he comyth hom and hath be long fro hir. My derworthy dowtyr, I thank the hily for alle men that thu hast kept seke in my name and for al the goodnes and servyse that thu hast don to hem in any degré for thu schalt  
5085 havyn the same mede wyth me in hevyn as thow thu haddist kept myn owyn self whil I was her in erde. Also, dowtyr, I thanke the for as many tymys as thu hast bathyd me in thi sowle at hom in thi chambre as thow I had be ther present in my manhod, for I knowe wel, dowtyr, alle the holy thowtys that thu hast schewyd to me in thi mende. And also, dowtyr, I thank the for alle the tymys that thu hast herberwyd me and my  
5090 blissyd modyr in thi bed. For thes and for alle other good thowtys and good dedys that thu hast thowt in my name and wrot for my lofe thu schalt have wyth me and wyth my modyr, wyth myn holy awngelys, wyth myn apostelys, wyth myn martirys, confessowris and virginys, and wyth alle myn holy seyntys al maner joye and blysse lestyng wythowtyn ende.”

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5095 The sayd creatur lay ful stille in the chirch, heryng and undirstondyng this swet dalyawnce in hir sowle as clerly as on frende schulde spekyn to an other. And, whan sche herd the gret behestys that owr Lord Jhesu Crist behite hir, than sche thankyd hym wyth gret wepyngys and sobbyngys and wyth many holy and reverent thowtys, seying in hir mende, “Lord Jhesu, blissyd mote thu be, for this deservyd I nevyr of the,  
5100 but I wolde I wer in that place ther I schulde nevyr displesse the fro this tyme forward.” Wyth swech maner of thowtys and many mo than I cowde evyr writyn sche worschepyd

**5081 lownes**, lowness. **5083 hily**, highly; **alle men that thou hast kept seke in my name**, all men you have cared for [who have been] sick in my name. **5089 herberwyd**, lodged, harbored.  
**5096 on frende**, one friend.

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and magnifyed owr Lord Jhesu Crist for hys holy visitacyon and hys comfort. And in  
swech maner visitacyons and holy contemplacyonis as arn beforne wretyn, mech mor  
sotyl and mor hy wythowtyn comparison than be wretyn, the sayd creatur had continuyd  
5105      hir lyfe thorw the preservyng of owr Savyowr Crist Jhesu mor than twenty-five yer  
whan this trety was wretyn, weke be weke and day be day, les than sche wer occupid  
wyth seke folke er ellys wer lettyd wyth other nedful occupasyon as was necessary  
unto hir er to hir evyn crystyn. Than it was wythdrawyn sumtyme, for it wil be had but  
in gret qwyet of sowle thorw long excersyse. Of this maner speche and dalyawnce  
5110      sche was mad mythy and strong in the lofe of owr Lord and gretly stabelyd in hir feith  
and encresyd in mekenes and charité wyth other good vertuys. And sche stablyd and  
stedfastly beleved that it was God that spak in hir sowle and non evyl spiryt, for in hys  
speche sche had most strength and most comfort and most encresyng of vertu, blissyd  
be God. Dyvers tymys, whan the creatur was so seke that sche wend to a ben ded and  
5115      other folke wende the same, it was answeryd in hir sowle that sche schulde not deyin but  
sche schulde levyn and far wel, and so sche dede. Sumtyme owr Lady spak to hir and  
comfortyd hir in hir sekenes. Sumtyme Seynt Petyr, er Seynt Powle, sumtyme Seynt  
Mary Mawdelyn, Seynt Kateryne, Seynt Margaret, er what seynt in hevyn that sche  
cowde thynke on thorw the wil and sufferawns of God, thei spokyn to the undirstondyng  
5120      of hir sowle, and enformyd hir how sche schulde lovyn God and how sche schulde best  
plesyn hym, and answeryd to what that sche wolde askyn of hem, and sche cowde  
undirstond be her maner of dalyawns whech of hem it was that spak unto hir and  
comfortyd hir. Owr Lord of hys hy mercy visityd hir so mech and so plenteuowsly  
wyth hys holy spechys and hys holy dalyawnce that sche wist not many tymys how  
5125      the day went. Sche supposyd sumtyme of five owrys er six owrys it had not ben the  
space of an owr. It was so swet and so devout that it ferd as sche had ben in an hevyn.  
Sche thowt nevir long therof ne sche was nevir irke therof; the tyme went awey sche  
wist not how. Sche had levar a servyd God, yyf sche myght a levyd so long, an hundryd  
yer in this maner of lyfe than oo day as sche began fyrst. And oftyn tymys sche seyd  
5130      to owr Lord Jhesu, “A, Lord Jhesu, syn it is so swet to wepyn for thi lofe in erth, I  
wote wel it schal be ryght joyful to be wyth the in hevyn. Therfor, Lord, I prey the, late  
me nevir han other joy in erthe but mornynge and wepyng for thy lofe. For me thynkith,

**5110 stabelyd**, made stable. **5125–26 Sche supposyd sumtyme . . . of an owr**, She supposed  
sometime that five or six hours had not been the space of an hour. **5127 irke**, weary. **5128  
levar**, rather.

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Lord, thow I wer in helle, yyf I myth wepyn ther and mornyn for thi lofe as I do her,  
helle schuld not noyin me, but it schulde be a maner of hevyn, for thy lofe putthy  
5135 awey al maner of drede of owr gostly enmye, for I had levar ben ther as long as thu  
woldist and plesyn the than ben in this worlde and displesyn the. Therfor, Lord, as thu  
wilt so mote it be."

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Whan this booke was first in wrytyng, the sayd creatur was mor at hom in hir  
chambre wyth hir writer and seyd fewer bedys for sped of wrytyng than sche had don  
5140 yerys beforne. And, whan sche cam to chirche and schulde heryn messe, purposyng to  
seyn hir mateyns and swech other devocyonas as sche had usyd afor tyme, hir hert was  
drawyn awey fro the seying and set mech on meditacyon. Sche beyng aferd of  
displesawns of owr Lord, he seyd to hir sowle, "Drede the not, dowtyr, for as many  
bedys as thu woldist seyn I accepte hem as thow thu seydist hem, and thi stody that  
5145 thu stodiist for to do writyn the grace that I have schewyd to the plesith me ryght  
meche and he that writith bothe. For, thow ye wer in the chirche and wept bothyn  
togedyr as sore as evyr thu dedist, yet schulde ye not plesyn me mor than ye don wyth  
yowr writyng, for dowtyr, be this boke many a man schal be turnyd to me and belewyn  
therin. Dowtyr, wher is a bettyr preyer be thyn owyn reson than to preyin to me wyth  
5150 thin hert er thyn thowt? Dowtyr, whan thu preyest be thowt, thu undirstondist thiselfe  
what thu askyst of me, and thu undirstondist also what I sey to the, and thu undirstondist  
what I behote the to the and to thin and to alle thi gostly fadrys. And, as for Maistyr  
Robert, thi confessour, I have grawntyd the that thu hast desiryd, and he schulde han  
halfe thy teerys and half the good werkys that I have wroot in the. Therfor he schal  
5155 trewly be rewardyd for thy wepyng as thow he had wept hymselfe. And beleve wel,  
dowtyr, that ye schal be ful mery in hevyn togedyr at the last and schal blyssyn the tyme  
that evyr yowr on knew yowr other. And, dowtyr, thu schalt blissyn me wythowtyn  
ende that evyr I gaf the so trewe a gostly fadyr, for, thow he hath be scharp to the  
sumtyme, it hath ben gretly to thy profyte, for thu woldist ellys an had to gret affeccyon  
5160 to hys persone. And, whan he was scharp to the, than thu ronne wyth al thy mynde to

**5138 hom**, home. **5139 bedys**, prayers. **5149 wher is . . . owyn reson**, where is a better prayer  
by your own reason. **5157 yowr on knew yowr other**, you knew one another. **5160 ronne**, ran.

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me, seying, ‘Lord, ther is no trost but in the alone.’ And than thu crydist to me wyth al thin hert, ‘Lord, for thi wowndys smerte drawe alle my lofe into thyn hert.’ And, dowtyr, so have I do. Thow thynkyst oftyn tymys that I have do ryght meche for the, and thu thynkyst that it is a gret myracle that I have drawyn al thyn affeccyon to me,

5165 for sumtyme thu wer so affectyd to sum synguler persone that thu wendist that tyme it had ben in a maner impossibyl to a wythdrawyn thyn affeccyon fro hym. And sithyn thu hast desyryd, yyf it had plesyd me, that the same persone schulde a forsakyn the for my lofe, for, yyf he had not supportyd the, fewe men wolde a sett any prise by the, as the semyd. And thu thowtist, yf he had a forsakyn the, it had be the grettest repref that

5170 evyr cam to the as agens the pepil, and therfor thu woldist a suffyrd that repref wyth good wil for my lofe yf it had lykyd me. And thus wyth swech dolful thowtys thu encresyst thi lofe to meward, and therfor, dowtyr, I receyve thi desirys as yf thei wer don in dede. And I knowe ryth wel that thu hast ryth trewe love to that same persone, and I have oftyn seyd to the that he schulde be ryth fawyn to lovyn the and that he schulde

5175 belevyn it is God that spekith in the and no devyl. Also, dowtyr, that persone hath plesyd me ryth wel, for he hath oftyn in hys sermownys excusyd thy wepyng and thi crying, and so hath Maystyr Aleyn don bothyn, and therfor thei schal have ful gret mede in hevyn. Dowtyr, I have telde the many tymys that I schulde maynteyn thi wepyng and thy crying be sermownys and prechygng. Also, dowtyr, I telle the that Maistyr

5180 Robert, thi gostly fadyr, plesyth me ful meche whan he byddyth the belevyn that I love the. And I knowe wel that thu hast gret feyth in hys wordys, and so thu maist ryth wel, for he wil not flatyr the. And also, dowtyr, I am hyly plesyd wyth hym, for he biddith the that thu schuldist sittyn stille and gevyn thyn hert to meditacyon and thynkyn swech holy thowtys as God wyl puttyn in thi mende. And I have oftyn tymys bodyn

5185 the so myself, and yet thu wilt not don therafyr but wyth meche grutchyng. And yet am I not displesyd wyth the, for, dowtyr, I have oftyn seyd onto the that whethyr thu preyist wyth thi mowth er thynkist wyth thyn hert, whethyr thu redist er herist redyng, I wil be plesyd wyth the. And yet, dowtyr, I telle the, yf thu woldist levyn me, that thynkyng is the best for the and most schal incresyn thy lofe to me; and the mor homly

5190 that thu suffyr me to be in thi sowle in erthe, it is worthy and rythful that I be the mor homly wyth thi sowle in hevyn. And therfor, dowtyr, yf thu wilt not don aftyr my cownsel, do aftyr the cownsel of thi gostly fadyr, for he biddith the do the same that I

**5162 ‘Lord for thi . . . into thyn hert,’** This is a variation of the couplet in chapter 65 (p. 156).

**5168 prise, value.** **5171 dolful, doleful.**

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bidde the do. Dowtyr, whan thi gostly fadys seith to the thu displesyst God, thu levyst  
hym ryth wel, and than takist thu meche sorwe and gret hevynes and wepist ful fast tyl  
5195 thu hast gotyn grace ageyn. And than I come oftyn tymys to the myself and comfort  
the, for, dowtyr, I may not suffyr the to have peyne any while but that I must do  
remedy. And therfor, dowtyr, I come to the and make the sekry of my lofe and telle the  
wyth myn owyn mowth that thu art as sekry of my lofe as God is God and that no  
thyng is so sekry to the in erthe that thu maist se wyth thi bodily eye. And therfor,  
5200 blissyd dowtyr, love hym that lovyth the and forgete me not, dowtyr, for I forgete not  
the, for my mercyful eye is evyr upon the. And that wote my mercyful modyr ful wel,  
dowtyr, for sche hath oftyn tymys telde the so, and many other seyntys bothyn. And  
therfor, dowtyr, thu hast gret cawse to lobyn me ryth wel and to gevyn me al thyn hool  
hert wyth alle thyn affeccyonis, for that I desyr and nothyng ellys of the. And I schal  
5205 gevyn the ther ageyn al myn hert. And, yyf thu wilt be buxom to my wil I schal be  
buxom to thi wil, dowtyr, beleve it ryth wel.

**89**

Also, whil the forseyd creatur was ocipiid abowte the writyng of this trety, sche  
had many holy teerys and wepingys, and oftyntymys ther cam a flawme of fyre abowte  
hir brest ful hoot and delectabyl, and also he that was hir writer cowde not sumtyme  
5210 kepyn hymself fro wepyng. And oftyn in the mene tyme, whan the creatur was in  
cherche, owr Lord Jhesu Crist wyth hys gloryows Modyr and many seyntys also comyn  
into hir sowle and thankyd hir, seying that thei wer wel plesyd wyth the writyng of  
this boke. And also sche herd many tymys a voys of a swet brydde syngyn in hir ere,  
and oftyn tymys sche herd swet sowndys and melodiis that passyd hir witte for to  
5215 tellyn hem. And sche was many tyme seke whyl this trety was in writyng, and, as  
sone as sche wolde gon abowte the writyng of this trety, sche was heil and hoole  
sodeynly in a maner. And oftyn sche was comawndyd to makyn hir redy in al hast.  
And on a tyme, as sche lay in hir preyerys in the chirche the tyme of Advent befor  
Cristmes, sche thowt in hir hert sche wolde that God of hys goodnes wolde makyn  
5220 Maistyr Aleyn to seyin a sermoun as wel as he cowde. And, as swithe as sche had

**5193** levyst, believe. **5204–05** **And I schal gevyn the ther ageyn al myn hert**, And I shall give  
you there in return all my heart. **5207** trety, treatise.

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thowt thus, sche herd owr Sovereyn Lord Crist Jhesu seyin in hir sowle, “Dowtyr, I wot ryth wel what thu thynkist now of Maistyr Aleyn, and I telle the trewly that he schal seyin a rith holy sermowne. And loke that thu beleve stedfastly the wordys that he schal prechyn as thow I prechyd hem myselfe, for thei schal be wordys of gret solas and comfort to the, for I schal spekyn in hym.” Whan sche had herd this answer, sche went and telde it hir confessowr and other tweyn preistys that sche trustyd mech on. And, whan sche had telde hem hir felyng, sche was ful sory for dred whethyr he schulde sey so wel as sche had felt er not, for revelacyons be hard sumtyme to undirstondyn. And sumtyme tho that men wenyn wer revelacyonis it arn deceytys and illusyons, and therfor it is not expedient to gevyn redily credens to every steryng but sadly abydyn and prevyn yf thei be sent of God. Nevrthelesse as to this felyng of this creatur, it was very trewth schewyd in experiens, and hir dred and hir hevynes turnyd into gret gostly conforte and gladnes. Sumtyme sche was in gret hevynes for hir felyngys, whan sche knew not how thei schulde ben undirstondyn many days togedyr, for drede that sche had of deceytys and illusyons, that hir thowt sche wolde that hir hed had be smet fro the body tyl God of hys goodnessse declaryd hem to hir mende. For sumtyme that sche undirstod bodily it was to ben undirstondyn gostly, and the drede that sche had of hir felyngys was the grettest scorge that sche had in erde and specialy whan sche had hir fyrst felyngys, and that drede made hir ful meke for sche had no joye in the felyng tyl sche knew be experiens whethyr it was trewe er not. But evyr blissyd mote God ben, for he mad hir alwey mor myty and mor strong in hys love and in hys drede and gaf hir encres of vertu wyth perseverawns. Her endith this trety, for God toke hym to hys mercy that wrot the copy of this boke, and, thow that he wrot not clerly ne opynly to owr maner of spekyng, he in hys maner of wrytyng and spellingy mad trewe sentens the whech, thorw the help of God and of hirselfe that had al this trety in felyng and werkyn, is trewly drawyn owt of the copy into this lityl boke.

**5229 tho that men wenyn . . . illusyons**, those that men thought were revelations were deceipts and illusions. **5230 sadly abydyn**, wisely abide.

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*Secundus liber*

1

Affyr that owr Sovereyn Savyowr had take the persone whech wrot first the tretyis aforn seyd to hys manyfold mercy, and the preiste of whom is beforne wretyn had copiid the same tretyis aftyr hys sympyl cunnyng, he held it expedient to honouer of the blisful Trinité that hys holy werkys schulde be notifyid and declaryd to the pepil, whan it plesyd hym, to the worschip of hys holy name. And than he gan to writyn in the yer of owr Lord 1438 in the fest of Seynt Vital Martyr sweche grace as owr Lord wrowt in hys sympyl creatur yerys that sche levyd aftyr, not alle but summe of hem, aftyr hyr owyn tunge. And first her is a notabyl mater the whech is not wretyn in the forseyd tretyis. It befel sone aftyr that the creatur beforne wretyn had forsakyn the occupasyon of the worlde and was joynyd in hir mende to God as meche as frelté wolde suffyr. The seyd creatur had a sone, a tal yong man, dwellyng wyth a worschespful burgeys in Lynne, usyng marchawndyse and seylyng ovyr the see, whom sche desryrd to a drawyn owt of the perellys of this wretchyd and unstabyl worlde yyf hir power myth a teynyd therto. Nevrthelesse sche dede as meche as in hir was, and, whan sche myth metyn wyth hym at leyser, many tymys sche cownselyd hym to leevyn the worlde and folwyn Crist in so meche that he fled hyr cumpny and wolde not gladlych metyn wyth hir. So on a tyme it happyd the modyr to metyn wyth hir sone thei it wer ageyns hys wille and hys entent as that tyme. And, as sche had don beforne tyme, so now sche spak to hym ageyn that he schulde fle the perellys of this world and not settyn hys stody ne hys besynes so mech therupon as he dede. He not consentyng but scharply awering ageyn, sche, sumdel mevyd wyth scharpnes of spiryt, seyde, "Now sithyn thu wil not leevyn the world at my cownsel, I charge the at my blissyng kepe thi body klene at the lest fro womanys feleschep tyl thu take a wyfe aftyr the lawe of the Chirche. And, yyf thu do not, I pray God chastise the and ponysch the therfor." Thei partyd asundyr, and sone aftyr the same yong man passyd ovyr the see in wey of marchawndyse, and than, what thorw evyl entisyng of other personys and foly of hys owyn governawnce, he fel into the synne of letchery. Sone aftyr hys colowr chawngyd, hys face wex ful of

6 **fest of Seynt Vital Martyr**, April 28. 12 **usyng marchawndyse**, using merchandise, in the sense of being employed in trading goods. 13 **a teynyd**, have attained. 24 **ponysch**, punish. 27–28 **hys face wex . . . a lepyr**, his face grew full of pimples and pustules as if it had been a leper's.

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whelys and bloberys as it had ben a lepyr. Than he cam hom ageyn into Lynne to hys maistyr wyth whech he had ben dwellyng befor tyme. Hys maistyr put hym owt of hys servyse for no defawte he fond wyth hym, but peraventur supposyng he had ben a lazer as it schewyd be hys visage. The yong man telde wher hym likyd how hys modyr had bannyd hym, wher thorw, as he supposyd, God so grevowsly ponyschyd hym. Sum persone, havyng knowlach of hys compleynt and compassyon of hys disese, cam to hys modyr, seying sche had don ryth evyl, for thorw hir prayer God had takyn venjawns on hir owyn childe. Sche, takyng lityl heed of her wordys, let it passyn forth as sche had mad no fors tyl he wolde comyn and preyin for grace hys self. So at the last, whan he sey non other bote, he cam to hys modyr, tellyng hir of hys mysgovernawns, promittynge he schulde ben obedient to God and to hir and to amende hys defawte thorw the help of God enchewyng al mysgovernawnce fro that tyme forward upon hys power. He preyid hys modyr of hir blissyng, and specialy he preyd hir to prey for hym that owr Lord of hys hy mercy wolde for gevyn hym that he had trespassyd and takyn awey that gret sekenes for whech men fleddyn hys company and hys felaschep as for a lepyr. For he supposyd be hir preyerys owr Lord sent hym that ponischyng, and therfor he trustyd be hir preyerys to be deliveryd therof yyf sche wolde of hir charité preyn for hym. Than sche, havyng trust of hys amendyng and compassyon of hys infirmyté, wthy scharp wordys of correpcyon promysyd to fulfillyn hys entent yyf God wolde grawntyn it. Whan sche cam to hir meditacyon, not forgetyng the frute of hir wombe, askyd for gevenes of hys synne and relesyng of the sekenes that owr Lord had govyn hym yyf it wer hys plesawns and profite to hys sowle. So longe sche preyid that he was clene delyveryd of the sekenes and levyd many yerys aftyr and had a wife and a childe, blissyd mote God ben, for he weddyd hys wife in Pruce in Dewchelonde. Whan tydyngys cam to hys modyr fro ovyr the see that hir sone had weddyd, sche was ryth glad and thankyd God wthy al hir hert, supposyng and trustyng he schulde levyn clene and chast as the lawe of matrimony askith. Sithyn, whan God wolde, hys wife had a childe, a fayr mayde child. Than he sent tydingys to hys modyr into Inglond how gracyowsly God had visityd hym and hys wife. Hys modyr, being in a chapel of owr Lady thankynge God of the grace and goodnes that he

**31 lazer**, leper. **32 bannyd**, cursed. **36 as sche had mad no fors**, since she would make no concession. **37 whan he sey non other bote**, when he saw no other remedy. **38 promittynge**, promising. **39 enchewyng**, avoiding. **46 correpcyon**, correction. **52 Pruce in Dewchelonde**, Prussia in Germany.

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schewyd to hir sone and havyng desyr to sen hem yyf sche myth, anon it was answeryd  
to hir mende that sche schulde seen hem alle er than sche deyid. Sche had wondyr of this  
60 felynge how it schulde be so as sche felt, in as meche as thei weryn beyowndyn the see  
and sche on this halfe the see, nevyr purposyng to passyn the see whil sche levyd.  
Nevyrthelesse sche wiste wel to God was nothyng impossibyl. Therfor sche trustyd it  
schulde be so as sche had felyng whan God wolde.

2

In fewe yerys aftyr that this yong man had weddyd he cam hom in to Ingland to hys  
65 fadry and hys modyr al chongyd in hys aray and hys condicyonis. For afor tyme hys  
clothys wer al daggyd and hys langage al vanyté; now he weryd no daggys, and hys  
dalyawns was ful of vertu. Hys modyr, havyng gret merveyl of this sodeyn chongyng,  
seyd unto hym, “Benedicité, sone, how is it wyth the that thu art so chongyd?” “Modyr,”  
he seyd, “I hope that thorw your preyerys owr Lord hath drawyn me, and I purpose be  
70 the grace of God to folwyn your cownsel mor than I have don beforne.” Than hys  
modyr, seyng this mervelyows drawte of owr Lord, thankyd God as sche cowde,  
takyngh good heed of hys governawns for dred of symulacyon. The lengar that sche  
beheld hys governawns, the mor sadde sche thowt he was and the mor reverent to owr  
Lordward. Whan sche knew it was the drawt of owr Lordys mercy, than sche was ful  
75 joyful, thankyngh God ful many timys for hys grace and hys goodnes. Sithyn, for he  
schulde be the mor diligent and the mor besy to folwyn owr Lordys drawyng, sche  
openyd hir hert to hym, schewyng hym and enformyng how owr Lord had drawyn hir  
thorw hys mercy and be what menys, also how meche grace he had schewyd for hir,  
the whech he seyd he was unworthy to heryn. Than he went many pilgrimageys to  
80 Rome and to many other holy placys to purchasyn hym pardon, resortyng ageyn to  
hys wife and hys childe as he was bowndyn to do. He enformyd hys wife of hys  
modyr in so meche that sche wolde leevyn hir fadry and hir modyr and hir owyn  
cuntré for to comyn into Inglonde and seen hys modyr. He was ful glad therof and

**61 nevyr purposyng to passyn the see whil sche levyd**, never intending to cross the sea while  
she lived. **65 aray**, clothing. **66 vanyté**, vanity; **daggys**, long pointed ends along the hems of  
tunics or gowns; see chapter 2. **72 for dred of symulacyon**, for fear of (his) simulation (of the  
appearance of virtue). **73 sadde**, wise, sober. **74 the drawt**, the draw.

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sent word into Ingland to hys modyr to certifyin hir of hys wifys desyr and to wetyn  
85 whedyr hys modyr wolde cownselyn hym to comyn be lond er be watyr, for he trustyd  
meche in hys moderys cownsel, levyng it was of the Holy Gost. Hys modyr, whan  
sche had lettry fro hym and knew hys desyr, went to hir preyer to knowyn owr Lordys  
cownsel and owr Lordys wyl. And, as sche preyid for the sayd mater, it was answeryd  
to hir sowle that whedyr hir sone come be lond er be watyr he schulde comyn in safwarde.  
90 Than wrot sche letterys to hym, seying that whedyr he come be londe er be watyr he  
schulde come in safté be the grace of God. Whan he was certifiid of hys moderys  
cownsel, he spedyd whan schippys schulde come into Ingland and hiryd a schip er ellys  
a part of a schip in whech he putt hys good, hys wife, hys childe, and hys owyn self,  
95 purposyng alle to comyn into Ingland togedyr. Whan thei weryn in the schip, ther  
resyn swech tempestys that thei durstyn not takyn the see, and so thei comyn on lond  
ageyn, bothyn he, hys wife, and her childe. Than thei left her childe in Pruce wyth her  
frendys, and he and hys wife comyn into Ingland be lond wey to hys fadur and to hys  
modyr. Whan thei wer come thedir, hys modir ful meche enjoiid in owr Lord that hir  
100 felyng was trewe, for sche had felyng in hir sowle, as is wretyn beforne, that whedyr  
thei come be lond er be watyr thei schulde comyn be safté. And so it was in dede,  
blissyd mote God ben. Thei come hom on the Satyrday in good heele, and on the next  
day that was the Sonday, whil thei wer at mete at noon with other frendys, he fel in  
gret sekenes that he ros fro the tabyl and leyd hym on a bed, whech sekenes and  
infirmité ocipiid hym abowte a monyth, and than in good life and ryth beleve he  
105 passyd to the mercy of owr Lord. So gostly and bodily it myth wel ben verifiid he schal  
comyn hom in safté, not only into this dedly lond but also into the lond of levyng men,  
wher deth schal nevyr aperyn. In schort tyme astyr, the fadur of the sayd persone folwyd  
the sone the wey whech every man must gon. Than levyd stille the modyr of the sayd  
persone, of whom this trety specyal makthy mencyon, and sche that was hys wife, a  
110 Dewche woman, dwellyng wyth hys modyr a yer and an halfe unto the tyme that hir  
frendys whech wer in Duchelond, desyryng to have hir hom, wretyn lettrys to hir and  
steryd hir to resortyn to hir owyn cuntré. And so sche, desyryng the benevolens of hir  
frendys, utteryd hir conseyte to hir eldmodyr, declarlyng to hir the desyr of hir frendys,  
preyng hir of good lofe and leve that sche myth resortyn to hir owyn cuntré. And so

84 to certifyin hir, to notify her. 86 levyng, believing. 89 safwarde, safe-keeping. 92 spedyd, asked. 95 resyn, arose. 96 Pruce, Prussia. 110 Dewche, German. 111 Duchelond, Germany. 112 resortyn, resort, repair. 113 conseyte, plan; eldmodyr, stepmother.

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115 thorw hir elmodrys consentyng sche purveyid hir to gon as sone as any schippys  
wentyn into that lond. So thei spedyd a schip of that same lond and hir owyn cuntremen  
schulde seylyn thedyr, and hem thowt it was goodly that sche schulde rathyrl seylyn wyth  
hem in her schip than wyth other men. Than sche went to hir confessowr for to be  
schrevyn, and, whil sche was in the schryvyng, the sayd creatur, hir elmodir, went up  
120 and down in the qwer, thynkyng in hir mende, “Lord, yyf it wer thi wille I wolde  
takyn leve of my confessowr and gon wyth hir ovyr the see.” Owr Lord answeryd to  
hyr thowt, seying, “Dowtyr, I wote wel, yf I bode the gon, thu woldist gon al redy.  
Therfor I wyl that thu speke no word to hym of this mater.” Than was sche ryth glad  
and mery, trustyng sche schulde not gon ovyr the see, for sche had ben in gret perell on  
125 the see afor tyme and was in purpos nevyr to comyn theron mor be hir owyn wille.  
Whan hir dowtyr in lawe was schrevyn, the good man whech was confessowr to hem  
bothyn as that tyme cam to hir and seyd, “Ho schal gon wyth yowr dowtyr to the see  
syde tyl sche come at hir schip? It is not goodly that sche schulde gon so fer wyth a yong  
man alone in strawnge cuntré wher her neithyr is knowyn,” for a strawnge man was  
130 come for hir and her neithyr was but lityl knowyn in this cuntré, wher for hir confessowr  
had the mor compassyon of hir. Than the sayd creatur seyd ageyn, “Syr, yyf ye wele  
biddyn me, I schal gon wyth hir my self tyl sche come at Yepiswech, ther lyth the schip  
and hir owyn cuntremen that schal ledyn hir ovyr the see.” Hir confessowr seyd, “How  
135 schulde ye gon wyth hir? Ye hirtyd but late yowr foote, and ye ar not yet al hool, and  
also ye arn an elde woman. Ye may not gon.” “Sir,” sche seyd, “God, as I trust, schal  
helpyn me ryth wel.” Than he askyd ho schulde gon wyth hir and bryngre hir hom ageyn.  
And sche seyd, “Ser, her is longyng to this chirch an ermyte, a yong man. I hope he  
wil for owr Lordys lofe gon and comyn wyth me, yef ye wil gevyn me leve.” So sche  
had leve to bryngre hir dowtyr to Yepiswich and than comyn ageyn to Lynne. Thus thei  
140 passyd forth in her jurné in tyme of Lenton, and, whan thei weryn five er six myle  
fro Lynne, thei comyn forby a cherch, and so thei turnyd in for to heryn messe. And,  
as thei wer in the chirche, the forseyd creatur, desiryng teerys of devocyon, non myth  
purchasyn at that tyme but evyr was comawndyd in hir hert for to gon ovyr the see  
wyth hir dowtyr. Sche wolde a putt it owt of hir mende, and evyr it cam ageyn so fast  
145 that sche myth not rest ne qwiet han in hir mende but evyr was labowryd and  
comawndyd to gon ovyr the see. Sche thowt it was hevy to hir to takyn sweche labour

116 **spered**, inquired (about). 119 **schrevyn**, shrien, confessed. 127 **Ho**, Who; **see**, sea. 132  
**Yepiswech**, Ipswich. 134 **hirtyd**, hurt. 137 **ermyte**, hermit. 140 **jurné**, journey; **Lenton**, Lent.

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upon hir and excusyd hir self to owr Lord in hir mende, seying, “Lord, thu wost wel I have no leve of my gostly fadyr, and I am bowndyn to obediens. Therfor I may not do thus wythowtyn hys wil and hys consentyng.” It was answeryd ageyn to hir thowt, “I bydde the gon in my name, Jhesu, for I am abovyn thy gostly fadyr and I schal excusyn the and ledyn the and bryngyn the ageyn in safté.” Sche wolde yet excusyn hir yf sche myth in any wey, and therfor sche seyd, “I am not purveyd of gold ne of sylver sufficiently for to gon wyth as I awt to be, and, thow I wer and wolde gon, I wote wel my dowtyr had levar I wer at hom, and peraventur the schip maistrys schulde not receyvyn me into her vessel for to gon wyth hem.” Owr Lord seyd ageyn, “Yf I be wyth the, ho schal ben ageyns the? I schal purveyin for the and getyn the frendys to helpyn the. Do as I bydde the, and ther schal no man of the schip sey nay unto the.” The creatur say ther was non other help but forth sche must at the comawndyng of God. Sche thowt that sche wolde fyrst gon to Walsyngham and offeryn in worschep of owr Lady, and, as sche was in the wey thedir ward, sche herd tellyn that a frer schuld seyin a sermoun in a lityl village a lityl owt of hir wey. Sche turnyd into the cherch wher the frer seyd the sermoun, a famows man, and a gret audiens had at hys sermoun. And many tymys he seyd thes wordys, “Yyf God be wyth us, ho schal be ageyns us?” thorw the whech wordys sche was the mor steryd to obeyn the wil of God and parformyn hir entent. So 165 sche went forth to Walsingham, and sithyn to Norwich wyth hir dowtyr in lawe, and the ermyte wyth hem. Whan thei cam at Norwich, sche mett a Grey Frer, a worscheful clerk, a doctowr of divinyté whech had herd of hir levynge and hir felyngys befor tyme. The doctowr schewyd hir gret cher and dalyid wyth hir as he had don befor tyme. Sche, many tymys syhyng, was hevy in cher and in cuntenawnce. The doctowr askyd what hir eylyd, “Sir,” sche seyd, “whan I cam owte of Lynne wyth the leve of my confessowr, I purposyd to ledyn my dowtyr to Yepisweche, wher is a schip in the whech sche be the grace of God schal seylyn to Deuchelond, and I than to turnyn hom ageyn as sone as I myth goodly to Lynne wyth an ermyte whech cam wyth me for the same entent to ledyn me hom ageyn. And he wenyn fully that I schulde don so. And, ser, 175 whan I was abowtyn six myle owt of Lynne in a chirch to makyn my preyerys, I was comawndyd in my sowle that I schulde gon ovyr the see wyth my dowtyr, and I wote wel sche wolde I wer at hom, and so wolde I yf I durst. Thus was I mevyd in my sowle and no rest myth han in my spiryt ne devocyon tyl I was consentyd to do as I was

156 **purveyin**, provide. 159 **Walsyngham**, Walsingham, one of the most important pilgrim sites in England. 174 **wenyn**, knows. 177 **durst**, dared.

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mevyd in my spiryt, and this is to me gret drede and hevynes.” The worshipful clerk  
180 seyd unto hir, “Ye schal obey the wil of God, for I leve it is the Holy Gost that spekyth  
in yow, and therfor folwyth the mevyng of your spiryt in the name of Jhesu.” Sche  
was meche comfortyd wyth hys wordys and toke hir leve, goyng forth to the see syde  
wyth hir felaschip. Whan thei were comyn thedir, the schip was redy to seilyn. Than  
sche preyid the maistyr that sche myth seilyn wyth hem into Duchelond, and he goodly  
185 receyvyd hir, and thei that weryn in the schip seyd not onys nay. Ther was non so  
meche ageyn hir as was hir dowtyr, that awt most to a ben wyth hir. Than sche toke hir  
leve of the ermyte that was come thedyr wyth hir, rewardyng hym sum deel for hys  
labowr and preying hym to excusyn hir to hir confessowr and to hir other frendys  
whan he come hom to Lynne, for it was not hir wetyng ne hir entent whan sche partyd  
190 fro hem to a passyd the see nevir whil sche had levyd, but, sche seyd, “I must abeyn  
the wil of God.” The ermyte partyd fro hir wyth hevy cher and cam hom ageyn to  
Lynne, excusyng hir to hir confessowr and to other frendys, tellyng hem of her sodeyn  
and wondirful partyng and how it was not hys knowyng that thei schulde a partyd so  
sodeynly asundyr. The pepil that herd therof had gret wondyr and seydin as thei woldyn.  
195 Sum seyd it was a womanys witte and a gret foly for the lofe of hir dowtyr in lawe to  
putte hir self, a woman in gret age, to perellys of the see and for to gon into a strawnge  
cuntré wher sche had not ben beforne not wist how sche schulde come ageyn. Summe  
heldyn it was a dede of gret charité for as meche as hir dowtyr had beforne tyme left hir  
frendys and hir cuntré and cam wyth hir husband to visityn hir in this cuntré that sche  
200 wolde now halpyn hir dowtyr hom ageyn into the cuntré that sche cam fro. Other  
whech knewe mor of the creaturys levyng supposyd and trustyd that it was the wille  
and the werkynge of almythy God to the magnifyng of hys owyn name.

3

The sayd creatur and hir felawship entryd her schip on the Thursday in Passyon  
Weke, and God sent hem fayr wynde and wedyr that day and the Fryday, but on the  
205 Satirday our Lord, turnyng hys hand as hym likyd, and the Palme Sonday also, prevyng

**180** *leve*, believe. **186 that awt . . . wyth hir**, who ought most to have been with her. **189 wetyng**,  
knowing. **190 a**, have; **abeyn**, obey. **201 levyng**, way of life. **203–04 Passyon Weke**, Passion  
Week, the week beginning with Palm Sunday and ending with Easter. **205 prevyng**, proving.

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her feith and her pacyens, wyth the two nyghtys, sent hem swech stormys and tempestys  
that thei wendyn alle to a ben perischyd. The tempestys weryn so grevows and hedows  
that thei myth not rewlyn ne governe her schip. Thei cowde no bettyr chefsyawns than  
comendyn hem self and her schip to the governawns of owr Lord; thei left her craft  
210 and her cunnyng and leet owr Lord dryvyn hem wher he wolde. The sayd creatur had  
sorwe and care inow; hir thowt sche had nevyr so mech beforne. Sche cryid to owr  
Lord for mercy and preservyng of hir and alle hir felaschep. Sche thowt in hir mende,  
“A, Lord, for thi lofe cam I hedyr, and thu hast oftyn tyme behite me that I schulde  
215 nevyr perischyn neithyr on londe ne in watyr ne wyth no tempest. The pepil hath  
many tyme bannyd me, cursyd me, and wariid me for the grace that thu hast wrowt in  
me, desiryng that I schulde deyin in myschef and gret disese, and now, Lord, it is lyke  
that her bannynge comyth to effect, and I, unworthy wretche, am deceyyvd and  
defrawdyd of the promys that thu hast mad many tyme onto me, whech have evyr  
220 trostyd in thi mercy and thi goodnesse, lesse than thu the sonar wythdrawe thes  
tempestys and schewe us mercy. Now may myn enmyis enjoyin, and I may sorwyn yf  
thei have her intent and I be deceyyvd. Now, blisful Jhesu, have mende of thy many-  
fold mercy and fulfille thi behestys that thu hast behite me. Schewe thu art sothfast  
God and non evyl spiryt that hast browte me hedyr into the perellys of the see, whoys  
cownsel I have trustyd and folwyd many yerys and schal don thorw thi mercy yf thu  
225 delyvyr us owt of this grevows perellys. Help us and socowr us, Lord, er than we  
perischyn er dispeyrym, for we may not long enduryrn this sorw that we ben in  
wythowtyn thi mercy and thi socowr.” Owr mercyful Lord, spekyng in hir mende,  
blamyd hir of hyr feerdnes, seying, “Why dredist the? Why art thu so aferd? I am as  
mythy her in the see as on the londe. Why wilt thu mistrostyn me? Al that I have hite  
230 the I schal trewly fulfillyn, and I schal nevyr deceyyvn the. Suffyr paciently a while and  
have trost in my mercy. Wavyr nowt in thy feith, for wythowtyn feith thu maist nowt  
plesyn me. Yyf thu woldist verily trostyn in me and no thyng dowtyn, thu maist han  
gret comfort in thi self and mythist comfortyn al thy felaschep wher ye ben now alle in  
gret drede and hevynes.” Wyth swech maner of dalyawns and meche mor hy and holy  
235 than evyr I cowde writyn owr Lord confortyd hys creatur, blissyd mote he ben. Holy  
seyntys whech sche preyid onto daliid unto hir sowle be the sufferawns of owr Lord,  
gevyng hir wordys of gret comfort. At the last cam owr Lady and seyd, “Dowtyr, be of

208 **cowde**, knew; **chefsyawns**, protection, relief. 215 **bannyd**, reproached; **wariid**, cursed.  
219 **lesse than thu the sonar**, unless you soon. 220 **enjoyin**, rejoice. 228 **feerdnes**, fearfulness.

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a good comfort. Thu hast evyr fowndyn my tydingys trewe, and therfor be no lengar  
afeard, for I telle the trewly thes wyndys and tempestys schal some sesyn and ye schal han  
240 rith fayr wedyr." And so, blissyd mote God ben, it was in schort tyme aftyr her schip  
was drevyn into Norwey coost, and ther thei londyd on Good Fryday and abedyn ther  
Estern Evyn, and Estern Day, and the Monday aftyr Estern. And on that Monday thei  
weryn howselyd wythinne the schip alle that longyd to the schip. On Estern Day the  
maistyr of the schip and the sayd creatur and other for the most partie of the schipgyng  
245 went on lond and herdyn her servyse at the chirche. Aftyr the use of the cuntré the cros  
was reisyd on Estern Day abowte noon tyme, and sche had hir meditacyon and hir  
devocyon wyth wepyng and sobbyng as wel as yf sche had ben at hom. God drow not  
hys grace fro hir neithyr in cherch, ne in schip, ne in the see, ne in no place that sche  
cam to, for evyr sche had hym in hir sowle. Whan thei had receyvyd the sacrament on  
250 Estern Monday, as is wretyn beforne, owr Lord sent hem a fayr wynde that browte hem  
owt of that cuntré and drofe hem hom into Duchelond as thei desiryd. The forseyd  
creatur fond swech grace in the maistyr of the schip that he ordeynd for hir mete and  
drynke and al that was necessary unto hir as long as sche was wythinne the schip, and  
255 was as tendyr to hir as sche had ben hys modyr. He curyd hir in the schip wyth hys  
owyn clothys, for ellys sche myth a deyd for colde, sche was not purveyd as other  
weryn. Sche went at the biddyg of owr Lord, and therfor hyr maistyr whech bad hir  
gon purveyid for hir so that sche ferd as wel as any of hir felawschep, worschep and  
preysyng be to owr Lord therfor.

4

The seyd creatur abood in Danske in Duchelond abowt five er six wekys and had  
260 ryth good cher of meche pepil for owr Lordys lofe. Ther was non so meche ageyn hir  
as was hir dowtyr in lawe, the whech was most bowndyn and beholdyn to a comfortyd  
hir yf sche had ben kende. Than the creatur enjoyid in owr Lord that sche had so gret  
cher for hys lofe and purposyd to abydyn ther the lengar tyme. Owr Lord, spekyng to  
hir thowt, monischyd hir to gon owt of the cuntré. Sche was than in gret hevynes and  
265 diswer how sche schulde do the byddyg of God, whech sche wolde in no wey

**247 drow**, drew. **254 curyd**, covered. **255 purveyd**, provided for. **262 kende**, natural. **264 monischyd**, admonished. **265 diswer**, doubt.

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wythstondyn, and had neithyr man ne woman to gon wyt hir in felawschep. Be the  
watyr wolde sche not gon as ny as sche myth, for sche was so afrayd on the see as sche  
cam thedirward; and be lond wey sche myth not gon esyly, for ther was werr in the  
cuntré that sche schulde passyn by. So what thorw o cawse and other sche was in gret  
270 hevynesse, not wetyng how sche schuld be relevyd. Sche went into a chirche and mad  
hir preyerys that owr Lord, liche as he comawndyd hir for to gon, he schulde sendyn  
hir help and felaschip wyt hir which sche myth gon. And sodeynly a man, comyng to  
hir, askyd yf sche wolde gon on pilgrimage a fer cuntré fro thens to a place clepyd  
275 Wilsnak wher is worschepyd the Precyows Blod of owr Lord Jhesu Crist whech be  
miracle cam of thre oostys, the sacrament of the awter, the whech three oostys and  
precyows blood ben ther onto this day had in gret worschip and reverens and sowt fro  
many a cuntré. Sche wyt glad cher seyde that sche wolde gon thedyr yf sche had  
good felaschep and yf sche wist of any honest man that myth sithyn bryng hir into  
Inglond. And he behestyd hir that he wolde gon on pilgrimage wyt hir to the forseyd  
280 place on hys owyn cost, and sithyn, yf sche wolde al qwide hys coste into Inglond, he  
schulde comyn wyt hir tyl sche wer in the costys of Inglond that sche myth han good  
felaschep of hir nacyon. He purveyd an heeke, a lityl schip, in the which thei schulde  
seylyn to the holy placeward, and than myth sche han no leve to gon owt of that lond,  
for sche was an Englisch woman, and so had sche gret vexacyon and meche letting er  
285 sche myth getyn leve of on of the heerys of Pruce for to gon thens. At the last, thorw  
the steryng of owr Lord, ther was a marchawnt of Lynne herd tellyn therof, and he  
cam to hir and comfortyd hir, behestyng hir that he schulde helpyn hir fro thens, eythyr  
prevyly er apertly. And this good man thorw gret labowr gate hir leve to gon wher  
sche wolde. Than sche, wyt the man whech had provydyd for hir, tokyn her vessel,  
290 and God sent hem calm wynde, the whech wynde plesyd hir ryth wel for ther ros no  
wawe on the watyr. Hir felaschep thowt thei sped no wey and weryn hevy and  
grutchyng. Sche preyid to owr Lord, and he sent hem wynde anow that thei seylyd a  
gret cowrse and the wawys resyn sor. Hyr felaschep was glad and mery, and sche was

274 **Wilsnak**, Wilsnack in Brandenberg, Germany. 275 **oostys**, hosts. 280 **al qwide**, repay.  
281 **costys**, coasts. 282 **heeke**, a small boat containing hatches. 283 **myth sche han . . . of  
that lond**, she could not get leave to go out of that land. In 1433 there were uneasy trade  
relations between England and Prussia that had an impact on shipping and, inevitably, upon  
English travellers in Prussia. 285 **heerys of Pruce**, Teutonic knights. 288 **prevyly**, secretly;  
**apertly**, openly. 291 **wawe**, wave. 293 **resyn sor**, arose greatly.

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hevy and sory for dred of the wawys. Whan sche lokyd upon hem, sche was evyr  
295 feryd. Owr Lord, spekyng to hir spirit, bad hir leyn down hir hevyd that sche schulde not  
seen the wawys, and sche dede so. But evyr sche was afeerd, and therfor was sche  
oftyn tymys blamyd. And so they seylyd forth to a place whech is clepyd Strawissownd.  
Yf the namys of the placys be not ryth wretyn, late no man merveylyn, for sche stodyid  
mor abowte contemplacyon than the namys of the placys, and he that wrot hem had  
300 nevyr seyn hem, and therfor have hym excusyd.

5

Whan thei wer comyn to Strawissownd, thei toke the lond, and so the sayd creatur  
wyth the forseyd man went toward Wilsnak in gret drede and passyd many perellys.  
The man the which was hir gyde was evyr aferd and wold evyr a forsakyn hir cumpany.  
Many tymys sche spak as fayr to hym as sche cowde that he schulde not forsakyn hir in  
305 tho strawnge cuntreys and in myddys of hir enmyis, for ther was opyn werr betwix the  
Englisch and tho cuntreys. Therfor hir drede was meche the mor, and evyr among owr  
Lord spak to hir mende, “Why dredist the ther schal no man don non harm to the, ne to  
non that thu gost wyth. Therfor conforte thi man and telle hym ther schal no man hurte  
hym ne harmyn hym whil that he is in thi cumpany. Dowtyr, thu wist wel a woman  
310 that hath a fayr man and a semly to hir husbonde, yyf sche love hym, sche wyl gon  
wyth hym wher evyr he wil. And, dowtyr, ther is non so fayr and so semly ne so good  
as I. Therfor, yf thu love me, thu schalt not dredyn to gon wyth me wher that evyr I wil  
havyn the. Dowtyr, I browte the hedyr, and I schal bryngyn the hom ageyn into Ingland  
315 in safwarde. Dowte it not, but leve it ryth wel.” Swech holy dalyawns and spechys in  
hir sowle cawsyd hir to sobbyn ryth boistowsly and wepyn ful plentyuowsly. The mor  
sche wept, the yrkar was hir man of hir cumpany and the rathyr besyn hym to gon fro  
hir and leevyn hir alone. He went so fast that sche myth not folwyn wythowtyn gret  
labowr and gret disese. He seyd that he was aferd of enmyis and of thevys that thei  
schulde takyn hir awey fro hym peraventur and betyn hym and robbyn ther to. Sche

297 **Strawissownd**, Stralsund in Pomerania, Germany. 298 **ryth wretyn**, written correctly.  
305–06 **for ther was . . . tho cuntreys**, for there was open war between the English and those  
countries. Kempe refers here to the hostilities over trade during the 1430s. 316 **the yrkar**, the  
more irked.

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320 comfortyd hym as wel as sche cowde and seyde sche durst undirtakyn that ther schulde  
no man neythyr betyn hem ne robbyn hem ne seyn non evyl worde to hem. And sone  
aftyr her dalyawns ther cam a man owt of a wode, a tal man wyth good wepyn and wel  
arayd for to fyten as hem semyd. Than hir man, beyng in gret drede, seyd to hir, "Lo,  
what seyst thu now?" Sche seyd, "Trust in owr Lord God and drede no man." The man  
325 cam by hem and seyd non evyl worde to hem, so thei passyd forth to Wilsnakward  
wyth gret labowr. Sche myth not enduryn so gret journeys as the man myth, and he had  
no compassyon of hir ne not wolde abydyn for hir. And therfor sche labowryd as long  
as sche myth tyl that sche fel in sekenes and myth no ferther. It was gret merveyl and  
myracle that a woman dysewsyd of goyng and also abowtyn three scor yer of age schuld  
330 enduryn cotidianly to kepyn hir journey and hir pase wyth a man fryke and lusty to gon.  
On Corpus Cristi Evyn it lukkyd hem to comyn to a lityl ostage fer fro any towne, and  
ther myth thei getyn no beddyng but a lityl strawe. And the sayd creatur restyd hir  
therupon that nyght and the next day tyl it was ageyn evyn. Owr Lord sent leevyn,  
thundyr, and reyne ny al the tyme that thei durst not labowryn outward. Sche was ful  
335 glad ther of, for sche was ryth seke, and sche wist wel, yf it had ben fayr wedyr, the  
man that went wyth hir wolde not abedyn hir, he wolde a gon fro hir. Therfor sche  
thankyd God that gaf hym occasyon of abydyng thow it wer ageyns hys wille. And in  
the mene tyme becausse of hir sekenes ther was ordeynd a wayne, and so sche was  
cariid forth to the Holy Blood of Wilsnak wyth gret penawns and gret diseise. The  
340 women in the cuntré as thei wentyn, havyng compassyon, seydyn many tymys to the  
forseyd man that he was worthy gret blame for he labowryd hir so sor. He, desiryng to  
be delyveryd of hir, chargyd not what thei seydyn ne nevyr sparyd hir the mor. Thus  
what wyth wel and wyth woo thorw the help of owr Lord sche was browt to Wilsnak  
and saw that Precyows Blod whech be myracle cam owt of the blisful sacrament  
345 of the awtere.

323 **arayd**, dressed; **fyten**, fight. 329 **dysewsyd of**, unused to; **three scor yer of age**, i.e., sixty years old. 330 **cotidianly**, quotidianly, daily; **pase**, pace; **fryke**, vigorous; **lusty**, eager. 331 **it lukkyd hem**, they happened; **ostage**, hostel. 333 **leevyn**, lightning. 338 **wayne**, wain, wagon.

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6

They beed not long in the sayd place, but in schort tyme thei tokyn her wey to Akunward, ryding in waynys tyl thei comyn to a watyr wher was meche concowrs of pepil, sum to Akunward and sum to other placys, among whech was a monke, a ful rekles man and evyl governyd, and in hys cumpany weryn yong men, chapmen. The  
350 monke and the chapmen knewyn wel the man that was gyde to the sayd creatur and clepyd hym be hys name, schewyng hym rith glad cher. Whan thei wer passyd the watyr and went on the lond, the monke wyth the chapmen and the seyd creatur wyth hir man alle in felaschep togedyr in waynys, thei comyn forby an hows of Frer Menowrys havyng mech thirst. Thei bodyn than the seyd creatur gon into the frerys  
355 and getyn hem sum wyne. Sche seyd, “Serys, ye schal have me excusyd, for yf it wer an hows of nunnys I wolde al redy gon, but for as meche thei arn men I schal not gon be yowr leve.” So went on of the chapmen and fette to hem a potel of wyne. Than cam frerys to hem and preyid hem that thei wolde comyn and seen the blisful sacrament in here chirche, for it was wythinne the utas of Corpus Cristi, and it stod opyn in a cristal  
360 that men myth se it yf thei wolde. The monke and the men went wyth the frerys to seen the precyows sacrament. The sayd creatur thowt sche wolde se it as wel as thei and folwyd aftyr, thow it wer agens hir wille. And, whan sche beheld the preciows sacrament, owr Lord gaf hir so mech swetnes and devocyon that sche wept and sobbyd wondyr sor and not myth restreyn hir self therfro. The monke was wroth and al hir  
365 felaschip for sche wept so sor, and, whan thei wer comyn ageyn to her waynys, thei chedyn hir and rebukyd hir, clepyng hir ypocrite and seyd many an evyl worde unto hir. Sche for to excusyn hir selfe leyd scriptur ageyn hem, versys of the Sawter, “*Qui seminant in lacrimis*” and cetera “*euntibant and flebant*” and cetera, and swech other. Than wer thei wel wrothar, and seyd that sche schulde no lengar gon in her  
370 cumpany, and procuryd hir man to forsakyn hir. Sche mekely and benyngly preyid

**346 beed**, bode, stayed. **347 Akunward**, Aachen in Prussia; **waynys**, carts. **349 rekles**, reckless. **352 chapmen**, merchants. **353–54 Frer Menowrys**, Franciscans. **354 thirst**, thirst; **bodyn**, bade. **357 potel**, two quart vessel. **359 utas**, octave; **Corpus Cristi**, the Feast of Corpus Christi, which occurs on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. **365 waynys**, wagons. **367 Sawter**, Psalter, the Psalms. **367–68 “*Qui seminant . . . and flebant*,”** allusion to verses from Psalm 126:5–6: “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” **369 wrothar**, more angry.

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hem that thei wolde for Goddys lofe suffyr hir to gon forth in her cumpayne and not  
letyn hir alone wher sche knew no man ne no man hir whidyr sche schulde gon. Wyth  
gret preyer and instawns sche went forth wyth hem tyl thei comyn at a good town in  
the utas of Corpus Cristi. And ther thei seydyn uttyrly for no thyng sche schulde no  
lengar gon wyth hem. He that was hir gyde and had behite hir to a browt hir into  
Inglond forsoke hir, deliveryng hir gold and swech thyng as he had of hir in kepyng,  
and proferyd to a lent hir mor gold yf sche had wolde. Sche seyd to hym, “John, I  
desiryd not yowr gold; I had levar yowr felaschep in these strawnge cuntreys than al  
the good ye han, and I leve ye schulde mor plesyn God to gon wyth me as ye hite me at  
375 Dansk than yf ye went to Rome on yowr feet.” Thus thei putt hir owt of her cumpayne  
and leet hir gon wher sche wolde. Sche seyd than to hym that had ben hir gyde, “John,  
ye forsakyn me for non other cawse but for I wepe whan I se the sacrament and whan  
380 I thynke on owr Lordys passyon. And, sithyn I am forsakyn for Goddys cawse, I  
beleve that God schal ordeyn for me and bryngyn me forth as he wole hym selfe, for he  
385 deceyyvd me nevyr, blissyd mote he be.” So thei went her wey and letyn hir ther  
stille. The nyght fel upon, and sche was ryth hevy, for sche was alone. Sche wist not  
wyth whom sche myth rest on that nyght ne wyth whom sche schulde gon the next  
day. Ther cam preistys to hir ther sche was at oste of that cuntré. Thei clepyd hir Englisch  
sterete and spokyn many lewyd wordys unto hir, schewyng unclenly cher and  
390 cuntenawns, proferyng to ledyn hir abowtyn yf sche wolde. Sche had mech drede for  
hir chastité and was in gret hevynes. Than went sche to the good wife of the hows,  
preying hir to han sum of hir maydenys that myth lyn wyth hir that nyght. The good  
wife assygnyd tweyn maydenys, the whech weryn wyth hir al that nyght, yet durst  
395 sche not slepyn for dred of defilyng. Sche woke and preyid ny al that nyght that sche  
myth be preservyd fro al unclennes and metyn wyth sum good felaschep that myth  
helpyn hir forth to Akun. Sodeynly sche was comawndyd in hir sowle for to gon to  
chirche betymys on the next day, and ther schuld sche metyn wyth felaschep. On the  
next day betyme sche payd for hir lodgynge, speryng at hir oostys yf thei knewe of  
any felaschep to Akunward. Thei seyd, “Nay.” Sche, takyng hir leve of hem, went to

373 **instawns**, urgency. 374 **utas of**, octave of (festive week after). 377 **proferyd**, offered;  
**wolde**, wished. 388 **ther sche was at oste**, where she was at hostel. 389 **sterete**, tail (?),  
probably a reference to continental jokes about the English having tails; perhaps a deroga-  
tory and salacious word for an Englishwoman. 396 **Akun**, Aachen. 397 **betymys**, early. 398  
**speryng at**, asking of.

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400 the chirche for to felyn and prevyn yf hir felyng wer trewe er not. Whan sche cam ther,  
sche saw a cumpny of powr folke. Than went sche to on of hem, speryng whidyr  
thei wer purposyd to gon. He seyd, “To Akun.” Sche preyid hym that he wolde suffyr  
hir to gon in her cumpny. “Why, dame,” he seyd, “hast thu no man to gon wyth the?”  
“No,” sche seyd, “my man is gon fro me.” So sche was receyvyd into a cumpny of  
405 powr folke, and, whan thei comyn to any towne, sche bowte hir mete and hir felaschep  
went on beggyng. Whan thei wer wythowtyn the townys, hir felaschep dedyn of her  
clothys, and, sittyng nakyd, pykyd hem. Nede compellyd hir to abydyn hem and  
prolongyn hir jurné and ben at meche mor cost than sche schulde ellys a ben. Thys  
creatyr was abavyd to putte of hir clothys as hyr felawys dedyn, and therfor sche thorw  
410 hir comownyng had part of her vermyng and was betyn and stongyn ful evyl bothe day  
and nyght tyl God sent hir other felaschep. Sche kept forth hir felaschep wyth gret  
angwisch and disese and meche lettyng unto the tyme that thei comyn to Akun.

7

Whan thei wer come to Akun, the seyd creatyr met wyth a monke of Ingland, the  
415 whech was to Romeward. Than was sche mech comfortyd in as mech as sche had a  
man that sche cowde undirstonden. And so thei abedyn ther togedyr ten er ellys eleven  
days for to seen owr Ladys smokke and other holy reliqwiiis whech wer schewyd on  
Seynt Margarety Day. And in the mene tyme that thei abedyn ther it lukkyd that a  
worschepful woman cam fro London, a wedow wyth meche meny wyth hir, to seen  
420 and worschepyn the holy relikys. The sayd creatyr cam to this worthy woman,  
compleynyng that sche had no felaschep to gon wyth hir hom into Ingland. The wor-  
thy woman grawntyd hir al hir desyr, and dede hir etyn and drynkyn wyth hir, and  
made hir ryth good cher. Whan Seynt Margarety Day was comyn and gon and thei  
had seyn the holy relikys, the worschepful woman sped hir fast owt of Akun wyth alle  
hir mené. The seyd creatyr, wenynge to a gon wyth hir and thus defrawdyd of hir

**405 bowte**, bought. **406 dedyn of her**, took off their. **407 pykyd hem**, picked them (for lice);  
**abdyn hem**, abide with them. **408 jurné**, journey. **409 was abavyd**, was afraid, embarrassed.  
**410 betyn**, bitten. **416 owr Ladys smokke**, the smock Mary wore at Christ’s birth, one of  
Aachen’s four important relics. **417 Seynt Margarety Day**, July 20; **it lukkyd**, it happened.  
**418 meny**, household. **424 mené**, household.

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425 purpose, was in gret hevynes. Sche toke hir leve of the monke whech was to Romeward, as is wretyn beforne, and sithyn gate hir a wayne wyth other pilgrimys and pursuyd aftyr the forseyd worthi woman as fast as sche myth to lokyn yf sche cowde oyrtakyn hir, but it wolde not be. Than it happyd hir to metyn wyth tweyn men of London goyng to Londonward. Sche preyid hem to gon in her cumpany. Thei seydyn, yf sche myth duryn to gon as yerne as thei, sche schulde be wolcome, but thei myth not han no gret lettyng; nevrthelesse thei wolde helpyn hir forth in hir jurné wyth good wyl. So sche folwyd aftyr hem wyth gret labowr tyl thei comyn at a good town wher thei mettyn pilgrimys of Ingland wer comyn fro the cowrt of Rome and schulde gon hom ageyn into Ingland. Sche preyid hem that sche myth go wyth hem, and thei seydyn 430 shortly that thei woldyn not lettyn her jurné for hir, for thei weryn robbyd and haddyn but lityl mony to bryng hem hom, wherfor thei must nedys makyn the scharpar journeys. And therfor, yf sche myth duryn to gon as yern as thei, sche schulde be wolcome and ellys not. Sche saw non other socowr than to abydyn wyth hem as long as sche myth, and so left tho other tweyn men and abood stille wyth this men. Than thei wentyn to 435 her mete and madyn mery. The sayd creatur lokyd a lityl besyden hir and sey a man lyn and restyn hym on a benchys ende. Sche enqwiryd what man that was. Thei seydyn it was a frer, on of her felaschep. “Why etith he not wyth yow?” “For we wer robbyd as wel as he and therfore ych man must help hym self as wel as he may.” “Wel,” seyd sche, “he schal have part of swech good as God sendith me.” Sche trustyd wel that owr 440 Lord schuld ordeyn for hem bothyn as wer nedful to hem. Sche dede hym etyn and drynkyn and comfortyd hym ryth meche. Sithyn thei wentyn alle in fer togedyr. The sayd creatur cam sone behyndyn; sche was to agyd and to weyke to holdyn foot wyth hem. Sche ran and lept as fast as sche myth tyl hir myghtys failyd. Than sche spak wyth the powr frer whom sche had cheryd beforne, proferyng to aqwityn hys costys tyl 445 he come at Caleys, yf he wolde abydyn wyth hir and latyn hir gon wyth hym tyl thei comyn ther, and yet gevyn hym reward besyden for hys labowr. He was wel content and consentyd to hir desyr. So thei letyn her felaschep gon forth, and thei tweyn folwyd softly as thei myght enduryn. The frer, beyng evyl for thryst, seyd to the creatur, “I knowe thes cuntreys wel anow, for I have oftyn tymys gon thus to Romeward,

429–30 **yf sche myth . . . yerne as thei**, if she could endure going as quickly as they. 431 **lettyng**, loitering, hindering. 436 **scharpar**, more painful. 437 **yern**, swiftly. 438 **socowr**, help. 446 **alle in fer**, all in company. 447 **agyd**, aged; **weyke**, weak. 449 **costys**, costs. 453 **softly**, easily; **beyng evyl for thryst**, craving drink.

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455 and I wote wel ther is a place of recreacyon a lityl hens. Late us gon thedyr and drynkyn." Sche was wel plesyd and folwyd hym. Whan thei cam ther, the good wife of the hows, havyng compassyon of the creaturys labowr, cownselyd that sche schulde takyn a wayne wyth other pilgrimys and not gon so wyth a man alone. Sche seyd that sche was purposyd and fully trustyd for to a gon wyth a worschepful woman of London,  
460 and sche was deceyvyd. Be than that thei had restyd hem a while and dalyid wyth the good wife of the hows, ther cam a wayn forby wyth pilgrimys. The good wife, havyng knowlach of the pilgrimys in the wayne, whan thei wer passyd hir hows, sche clepyd hem ageyn, besechyngh hem that this creatur myth rydyn wyth hem in her wayne for the mor sped of hir jurné. Thei, goodly consentyng, receyvyd hir into her wayn,  
465 rydyng alle togedyr tyl he comyn at a good towne wher the sayd creatur parceyvyd the worschepful woman of London of whom is beforne seyd. Than sche preyid the pilgrimys that weryn in the wayne thei schulde heldyn hir excusyd and latyn hir payn for the tyme that sche had ben wyth hem as hem lykyd, for sche wolde gon to a worschepful woman of hir nacyon that sche parceyvyd was in the towne, wyth the whech sche had mad forward whan sche was at Akun for to gon hom wyth hir into Ingland. Sche had good  
470 lofe and leve and partyd fro hem. Thei redyn forth, and sche went to the worschepful woman, wenng to a be receyvyd wyth a rith glad cher. And it was evyn ryth contrary; sche fonde rith schort cher and had rith scharp langage, the worschepful woman seying to hir, "What wenyst thu for to gon wyth me? Nay, I do the wel to wetyn I wyl not medelyn wyth the." The creatur was so rebukyd that sche wist not what to do. Sche knew no man ther ne no man knew hir. Sche wist not whedir to go. Sche wist not wher the frer was whech schulde a ben hir gyde ne whedir he schulde comyn that wey er no. Sche was in gret diswer and hevynes, the grettest, as hir thowt, that sche had suffyrd  
475 syn sche was comyn owt of Ingland. Nevrthelesse sche trustyd in owr Lordys promyses and abood stille in the towne tyl God wolde sendyn hir sum comfort. And, whan it was ny evyn, sche saw the frer comyng into the towneward. Sche hyid hir to spekyn wyth hym, compleynyng how sche was deceyvyd and refusyd of the good woman that sche trustyd so meche to. The frer seyd thei schulde don as wel as God wolde gevyn hem grace and comfortyd hir into hys power, but he seyd he wolde not abydyn in that towne that nyth, for he wost wel it was a perlyows pepil. Than went thei forth togedyr  
480 owt of the towne ageyn the evyn wyth gret drede and hevynes, mornynge be the wey  
485

**464 sped**, speed. **467 latyn hir payn**, let her pay. **469–70 sche had mad forward**, she had made an agreement. **472 wenng**, thinking. **478 diswer**, doubt.

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wher thei schuldyn han herborwe that nyth. Thei happyd to comyn undyr a wodys syde,  
bisily beheldyng yf thei myth spyin any place wherin thei myth restyn. And, as owr  
490 Lord wolde, thei parceyyvd an hows er tweyn, and in hast thedir thei drowyn ther was  
dwelling a good man wyth hys wife and tweyn childeryn. Than heldyn thei non hostel  
ne not wolde receivyn gestys to her herborw. The seyd creatur saw an hep of  
brakys in an hows, and wyth gret instawns sche purchasyd grace to restyn hir on the  
brakys that nyth. The frer wyth gret preyer was leyd in a berne, and hem thowt thei  
wer wel esyd that thei haddyn the hows ovyr hem. On the next day thei made aseth for  
495 her lodgyng, takyng the wey to Caleysward, goyng wery weys and grevows in dep  
sondys, hillys, and valeys tweyn days er thei comyn thedyr, sufferyng gret thirst and  
gret penawns, for ther wer fewe townys be the wey that thei went and ful febyl herberwe.  
And on nyghtys had sche most dreded oftyn tymys, and peraventur it was of hir gostly  
enmy, for sche was evyr aferd to a be ravisched er defilyd. Sche durst trustyn on no  
500 man; whedir sche had cawse er non, sche was evyr aferd. Sche durst ful evyl slepyn  
any nyth, for sche wend men wolde a defylyd hir. Therfor sche went to bedde gladlich  
no nyth les than sche had a woman er tweyn wyth hir. For that grace God sent hir,  
wher so sche cam for the most party maidenys wolde wyth good cher lyn be hir, and  
that was to hir gret comfort. Sche was so wery and so ovyrcomyn wyth labowr to  
505 Caleysward that hir thowt hir spiryt schulde a departyd fro hir body as sche went in the  
wey. Thus wyth gret labowrys sche cam to Caleys and the good frer wyth hir, the  
which ful goodly and honestly had ben governyd to hirward the tyme that thei went  
togedyr. And therfor sche gaf hym reward as sche myth ateyn so that he was wel  
plesyd and content and departyd asundyr.

8

510 In Caleys this creatur had good cher of divers personys, bothyn of men and of  
women, whech had nevyr seen hir befor. Ther was a good woman had hir hom to hir  
hows, the whech wesche hir ful clenly and dede hir on a newe smok and comfortyd hir

489 **hast**, haste; **drowyn ther**, drew where. 491–92 **an hep of brakys**, a heap of ferns. 492  
instawns, urgency. 493 **berne**, barn. 494 **thei made aseth**, they made compensation. 497 **ful  
febyl herberwe**, not many hostels. 501–02 **Therfor sche . . . no nyth les**, Therefore she went  
to bed gladly (easily) no night unless. 508 **as sche myth ateyn**, as she was able.

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rith mech. Other good personys had hir to mete and to drynke. Whil sche was ther abydyng schepyng three or four days, sche met ther wyth dyvers personys which had knowyn hir beforne that spokyn fayr to hir and govyn hir goodly langwage. Other thynge thei gaf hir non, the which personys abedyn schepyng as sche dede. Sche desiryng to seylyn wyth hem to Dovyr, nowt thei wolde helpyn hir ne latyn hir wetyn what schip thei purposyd to seylyn in. Sche speryd and spyid as diligently as sche cowde, and evyr sche had knowlach of her intent o wey er other tyl sche was schepyd wyth hem, and, whan sche had boryn hir thynge into the schip wher thei wer, supposyng thei schulde a seylyd in hast sche wist not how sone, thei purveyd hem another schip redy to seilyn. What the cawse was sche wist nevyr. Thorw grace, sche, havyng knowyng of heer purpos how redy thei wer to seylyn, left al hir thynge in the vessel that sche was in and went to the schip ther thei weryn, and thorw owr Lordys help sche was receyvyd into the schip. And ther was the worschepful woman of London that had refusyd hir as is beforne wretyn. And so thei seilyd alle togedyr to Dovyr. The seyd creatur, parceyvyng thorw her cher and cuntenawnce that thei had lityl affeccyon to hir persone, preyid to owr Lord that he wolde grawntyn hir grace to holdyn hir hevyd up and preservyn hir fro voidyng of unclene mater in her presens, so that sche schulde cawsyn hem non abhominacyon. Hir desyr was fulfillyd so that, other in the schip voydyng and castyng ful boistowsly and unclenly, sche, her alderys mervelyng, myth helpyn hem and do what sche wolde. And specialy the woman of London had most of that passyon and that infirmité, to whom this creatur was most besy to helpyn and comfortyn for owr Lordys love and be charité, other cawse had sche non. So thei seilyd forth tyl thei comyn at Dovyr, and than eche on of that company gat hym felaschep to gon wyth yf hym likyd, safe sche only, for sche myth getyn no felawe to hir ese. Therfor sche toke hir wey to Cawntyrberryward be hir self alone, sory and hevy in maner that sche had no felaschep ne that sche knew not the wey. Sche was up betymys in the morwenyng and cam to a powr manrys hows, knokkyng at the dor. The good powr man, hogelyd in hys clothys unsperd and unbotenyd, cam to the dor to wetyn hir wille. Sche preyid hym, yf he had any hors, that he wolde helpyn hir to Cawntyrbury, and sche schulde aquityn hys labowr. He, desiryng to do hir plesawnce in owr Lordys name, fulfillyd

**514 abydyng schepyng**, awaiting shipping. **518 speryd and spyid**, inquired and espied. **520 boryn**, borne. **528–29 preservyn hir fro . . . in her presens**, save her from sea-sickness in their presence. **531 her alderys mervelyng**, all marvelling at her. **539 hogelyd**, hastily dressed. **540 unsperd and unbotenyd**, unfastened and unbuttoned.

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hir intent ledyng hir to Cawntyrbury. Sche had gret joy in owr Lord, that sent hir help  
and socowr in every nede, and thankyd hym wyth many a devout teer, wyth meche  
545 sobbyng and wepyng, ny hand in every place that sche cam in, of al that it be not  
wretyn, as wel on yen half the see as on this halfe, on the watyr as on the lond, blissyd  
mote God ben.

9

Fro thens sche went to London, clad in a cloth of canvas as it wer a sekkyn gelle as  
sche had gon beyondyn the se. Whan sche was comyn into London, mech pepil knew  
550 hir wel anow; in as mech as sche was not clad as sche wold a ben for defawte of mony,  
sche, desiryng to a gon unknowyn into the tyme that sche myth a made sum chefsyawns,  
bar a kerche befor hir face. Not wythstondyng sche dede so, sum dissolute personys,  
supposyng it was Mar. Kempe of Lynne, seydyn that sche myth esily heryn thes wordys  
555 into repref. “A, thu fals flesch, thu schalt no good mete etyn.” Sche, not answeryng,  
passyd forth as sche had not an herd. The forseyd wordys wer nevyr of hir spekyng,  
neythyr of God ne of good man, thow so wer that it wer leyd to hir, and sche many  
560 tymys and in many placys had gret repref therby. Thei wer fowndyn of the devyl,  
fadyr of lesyngys, favowryd, maynteynd, and born forth of hys membrys, fals invyows  
pepil, havyng indignacyon at hir vertuows levyng, not of powyr to hyndryn hir but  
thorw her fals tungys. Ther was nevyr man ne woman that evyr myth prevyn that sche  
seyd swech wordys, but evyr thei madyn other lyars her autorys, seyng in excusyng  
565 of hem self that other men telde hem so. On this maner wer thes fals wordys fowndyn  
thorw the develys suggestyon. Sum on person er ellys mo personys, deceyvyd be her  
gostly enmy, contrivyd this tale not long aftyr the conversyon of the sayd creatur,  
seyng that sche, sittynge at the mete on a fisch day at a good manrys tabyl, servyd  
wyth divers of fyschys as reed heryng and good pyke and sweche other, thus sche

**546 yen**, yonder. **548 clad in a . . . sekkyn gelle**, clad in a cloth of canvas like a garment made  
of sack. **551 chefsyawns**, financial transaction, borrowing. **552 bar a kerche befor hir face**,  
bore a handkerchief before her face, i.e., to disguise herself until she had proper clothing. **553**  
**Mar. Kempe of Lynne**, only here does Kempe sign her book. **558 lesyngys**, lies. **559 powyr**,  
power. **560 tungys**, tongues. **561 autorys**, authors. **565 mete**, meal. **566 divers of fyschys**,  
different varieties of fish.

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schulde a seyd, as thei reportyd, “A, thu fals flesch, thu woldist now etyn reed heryng, but thu schalt not han thi wille.” And ther wyth sche sett awey the reed heryng and ete the good pike. And swech other thus sche schuld a seyd, as thei seydyn, and thus it  
570 spong into a maner of proverbe agen hir that summe seydyn, “Fals flesch, thu schalt ete non heryng.” And sum seydyn the wordys the whech arn beforne wretyn, and al was fals, but yet wer thei not forgetyn; thei wer rehersyd in many a place wher sche was nevyr kyd ne knowyn. Sche went forth to a worschepful wedows hows in London, wher sche was goodly receyyd and had gret cher for owr Lordys lofe, and in many  
575 placys of London sche hily was cheryd in owr Lordys name, God rewarde hem alle. Ther was on worschepful woman whech specially schewyd hir hy charité bothyn in mete and drynke and other rewardys gevyng, in whoys place on a tyme sche beyng at the mete wyth other dyvers personys of divers condicyons, sche unknowyn onto hem and thei unto hir, of the whiche summe wer of the cardenalys hows (as sche had be  
580 relacyon of other), thei haddyn a gret fest and ferdyn ryth wel. And, whan thei wer in her myrthys, sum rehersyd the wordys beforne wretyn er other liche, that is to seyn, “Thu fals flesch, thu schalt non etyn of this good mete.” Sche was stille and suffyrd a good while. Ech of hem jangelyd to other, havyng gret game of the imperfeccyon of the persone that thes wordys wer seyd of. Whan thei had wel sportyd hem wyth thes  
585 wordys, sche askyd hem yf thei had any knowlach of the persone whech schulde a seyd thes wordys. Thei seyd, “Nay forsothe, but we have herd telde that ther is swech a fals feynyd hypocrite in Lynne whech seyth sweche wordys, and, leevyng of gret metys, sche etith the most delicyows and delectabyl metys that comyn on the tabyl.” “Lo,  
590 serys,” sche seyd, “ye awt to seyn no wers than ye knowyn and yet not so evyl as ye knowyn. Nevrthelesse her ye seyn wers than ye knowyn, God forgeve it yow, for I am that same persone to whom thes wordys ben arectyd, whech oftyn tyme suffir gret schame and repref and am not gylty in this mater, God I take to record.” Whan thei beheldyn hir not mevyd in this mater, no thyng reprevyng hem, desiryng thorw the spirit of charité her correccyon, thei wer rebukyd of her owyn honesté, obeyng hem to  
595 aseeth makyng. Sche spak boldly and mytily wher so sche cam in London ageyn

**567–68 “A, thu fals flesch . . . han thi wille,”** A, you false flesh, you would now eat red herring (eat the lesser fish as a sign of false humility), but you shall not have your will. **573 kyd**, known. **583 jangelyd**, gossiped, talked idly. **587 leevyng of gret metys**, leaving coarse meats. **591 arectyd**, imputed. **595 aseeth makyng**, making satisfaction; **ageyn**, against.

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swerars, bannars, lyars and swech other viciows pepil, ageyn the pompows aray bothin  
of men and of women. Sche sparyd hem not, sche flateryd hem not, neithyr for her  
giftys, ne for her mete, no for her drynke. Hir spekyng profityd rith mech in many  
personys. Therfor, whan sche cam into chirch to hir contemplacyon owr Lord sent hir  
600 ful hy devocyon, thankyng hir that sche was not aferd to reprevyn synne in hys name  
and for sche suffyrd scornys and reprevys for hys sake, behestyng hir ful meche grace  
in this lyfe and aftyr this lyfe to havyn joy and blysse wythowtyn ende. Sche was so  
comfortyd in the swet dalyawns of owr Lord that sche myth not mesuryn hirself ne  
governe hir spirit aftyr hyr owyn wyl ne aftyr discrecyon of other men, but aftyr that  
605 owr Lord wolde ledyn it and mesuryn it hys self in sobbyng ful boistowsly and wepyng  
ful plenteuowsly, wherfor sche suffyrd ful mech slawndyr and repref, specyalys of the  
curatys and preistys of the chirchis in London. Thei wold not suffyr hir to abydyn in  
her chirchys, and therfor sche went fro on chirch to an other that sche schulde not ben  
tediows onto hem. Mech of the comown pepil magnifiid God in hir, havyn good  
610 trost that it was the goodnes of God whech wroot that hy grace in hir sowle.

**10**

Fro London sche went to Schene a three days beforne Lammes Day for to purchasyn  
hir pardon thorw the mercy of owr Lord. And, whan sche was in the chirch at Schene,  
sche had gret devocyon and ful hy contemplacyon. Sche had plentiuows teerys of  
615 compuncyon and of compassyon in the rememorawns of the bittyr peynys and  
passyons whech owr merciful Lord Jhesu Crist suffyrd in hys blissyd manhod. Thei  
that seyn hir wepyn and herdyn hir so boistowsly sobbyn wer takyn wyth gret merveyl  
and wondyr what was the ocupasyon of hir sowle. A yong man whech beheld hir cher-

**596 swerars**, swearers; **bannars**, cursers. **605 ledyn**, lead. **611 Lammes Day**, Lammas Day, August 1, the feast of Saint Peter in Chains, a day on which rents were traditionally collected, a day associated with the agricultural harvest, and a day that commemorated Peter's freedom from his prison chains and thus our liberation from sin. In addition, the pope had set aside the day for special pardon for pilgrims who honored St. Bridget by visiting the abbey. **612 Schene**, the Carthusian monastery at Shene, founded by Henry V in 1415; Kempe's reference, however, is to Mount Syon, the Brigettine abbey at Isleworth, where the Lammas Day pardon was a special indulgence. **614 rememorawns**, remembrance.

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and hir cuntenawns, mevyd thorw the Holy Gost, went to hir, whan he myth goodly,  
be hymself alone, wyth fervent desir to have undirstondyng what myth be the cawse  
620 of hir wepyng, to whom he seyd, “Modir, yf it lyke yow, I pray yow to schewyn me  
the occasyon of yowr wepyng, for I have not seyn a persone so plenteuows in teerys  
as ye ben, and specialy I have not herd beforne any persone so boistows in sobbyng as  
ye ben. And, modir, thow I be yong, my desir is to plesyn my Lord Jhesu Crist and so  
to folwyn hym as I kan and may. And I purpose me be the grace of God to takyn the  
625 abite of this holy religyon, and therfor I prey yow beth not strawnge unto me. Schewith  
modirly and goodly yowr conceit unto me as I trust unto yow.” Sche, benyngly and  
mekely wthy gladnes of spirit, as hir thowt it expedient, comendyd hym in hys entent  
and schewyd to hym in parcel that the cawse of hir wepyng and sobbyng was hir gret  
630 unkendnes agens hir maker, wher thorw sche had many tymys offendyd hys goodnes,  
and the gret abhominacyon that sche had of hir synnys cawsyd hir to sobbyn and  
wepyn. Also the gret excellent charité of hir redemptowr, be the whech thorw the  
vertu of hys passyon sufferyng and hys precyows blod schedyng sche was redemyd  
fro evyrlestyng peyne, trustyng to ben an eyr of joy and blisse, mevyd hir to sobbyn  
635 and wepyn, as no merveyl was. Sche teld hym many good wordys of gostly comfort,  
thorw the whech he was steryd to gret vertu, and aftyrward he ete and dranke wthy hir  
in the tyme that sche was ther and was ful glad to ben in hir company. On Lammes  
Day was the principal day of pardon, and, as the sayd creatur went in the chirch of  
Schene, sche had a syght of the ermite whech led hir owt of Lynne whan sche went to  
the seward wthy hir dowtyr in lawe, as is wretyn be forn. Anon wthy gret joy of spirit  
640 sche offeryd hir self to hys presens, wolcomyng hym wthy alle the myghtys of hir  
sowle, seying unto hym, “A, Reynald, ye arn wolcome. I trust owr Lord sent yow  
hedyr, for now I hope as ye led me owt of Lynne, ye schal bryng me hom ageyn to  
Lynne.” The ermyte schewyd schort cher and hevy contenawnce, neythyr in wil ne in  
purpos to bryng hir hom to Lynne as sche desiryd. He, awsweryng ful schortly, seyd,  
645 “I do yow wel to wetyn yowr confessowr hath forsakyn yow for ye wentyn ovyr the  
see and wolde telle hym no word therof. Ye toke leve to bryng yowr dowtyr to the  
see syde; ye askyd no leve no ferther. Ther was no frend ye haddyn that knew of yowr  
cownsel; therfor I suppose ye schal fyndyn but lityl frenschep whan ye come ther. I pray  
650 yow, getith yow felaschep wher ye can, for I was blamyd for yowr defawte whan I led  
yow last; I wil no mor.” Sche spak fayr and preyd for Goddys lofe that he wolde not be

**625 abite**, habit. **633 eyr**, heir. **638–39 to the seward**, seaward. **645 wetyn**, let you know.

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displesyd, for thei that loyed hir for God er sche went owe thei wolde lobyn hir for God whan sche come hom. Sche proferyd hym to aqwityn hys costys be the wey homward. So at the last he, consentyng, browt hir ageyn to London and sithyn hom to Lynne to hy worschep of God and to gret meryte of her botherys sowlys. Whan sche  
655 was come hom to Lynne, sche obeyd hir to hir confessowr. He gaf hir ful scharp wordys, for sche was hys obedienter and had takyn upon hir swech a jurné wythowtyn hys wetyng. Therfor he was mevyd the mor ageyn hir, but owr Lord halpe hir so that sche had as good love of hym and of other frendys aftyr as sche had befor, worschepyd be God. Amen.

660 Thys creatur, of whom is tretyd befor, usyd many yerys to begynnyn hir preyerys on this maner. First whan sche cam to chirche, knelyng befor the sacrament in the worschep of the blissyd Trinité (Fadir, Sone, and Holy Gost, oo God and three Personys), of that gloryows Virgine, Qwen of Mercy, owr Lady Seynt Mary, and of the twelve apostelys, sche seyd this holy ympne "*Veni creator spiritus*" wyth alle the  
665 versys longyng therto, that God schulde illumyn hir sowle, as he dede hys apostelys on Pentecost Day, and induyn hir wyth the gyftys of the Holy Gost that sche myth han grace to undirstondyn hys wil and performyn it in werkyng, and that sche myth han grace to wythstondyn the temptacyons of hir gostly enmiis and enczewyn al maner synne and wikkydnes. Whan sche had seyd "*Veni creator spiritus*" wyth the versys,  
670 sche seyd on this maner, "The Holy Gost I take to witnesse, owr Lady, Seynt Mary, the modyr of God, al holy cowrte of hevyn, and alle my gostly faderys her in erth, that, thow it wer possibyl that I myth han al knowyng and undirstondyng of the prevyteys of God be the tellyng of any devyl of helle, I wolde not. And as wistly not knowyn, heryn, seen, felyn, ne undirstondyn in my sowle in this lyfe mor than is the  
675 wil of God that I schulde knowyn, so wistly God mote helpyn me in alle my werkys, in alle my thowtys, and in alle my spechys, etyng and drynkyng, slepyng and wakyngh. As wistly as it is not my wil ne myn entent to worschepyn no fals devyl for my God, ne no fals feith, ne fals beleve for to han, so wistly I defye the devyl, and al hys fals

**652 aqwityn**, acquit, pay back. **654 her botherys**, both of their. **656 obedienter**, a person who vows obedience to some person, office, or rule. **664 ympne**, hymn; "*Veni creator spiritus*," "Come Holy Spirit," the pentecostal hymn. **666 Pentecost Day**, the festival that occurs on the seventh Sunday after Easter and celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit; **induyn**, endue, endow. **668 enczewyn**, eschew, avoid. **675 wistly**, certainly.

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cownsel, and al that evyr I have don, seyd, er thowt, aftyr the cownsel of the devyl,  
680 wenying it had be the cownsel of God and inspiracyon of the Holy Gost. Yf it hath not  
ben so, God, that art inseare and knowar of the prevyté of alle mennys hertys, hafe  
mercy of me therfor and grawnte me in this lyfe a welle of teerys spryngyng  
plenteuowsly, wyth the which I may waschyn awey my synnys thorw thi mercy and  
thi goodnes. And, Lord, for thi hy mercy, alle the teerys that may encresyn my lofe to  
685 the and moryn my meryte in hevyn, helpyn and profityn myn evyn cristen sowlys,  
lyvys er dedys, visite me wyth her in erth. Good Lord, spar no mor the eyne in myn  
hed than thu dedist the blood in thi body whech thu scheddist plenteuowsly for synful  
mannys sowle, and grawnt me so meche peyne and sorwe in this world that I be not  
lettyd fro thi blisse and the beholdyng of thi gloryows face whan I schal passyn hens. As  
690 for my crying, my sobbyng, and my wepyng, Lord God almythy, as wistly as thu  
knowist what scornys, what schamys, what despitys, and what reprevys I have had  
therfor, and, as wistly as it is not in my power to wepyn neythyr lowde ne stille for no  
devocyon ne for no swetnes but only of the gyft of the Holy Gost, so wistly, Lord,  
excuse me ageyn al this world to knowyn and to trowyn that it is thi werke and thi  
695 gyfte for magnifying of thi name and for encresyng of other mennys lofe to the, Jhesu.  
And I prey the, sovereyn Lord Crist Jhesu, that as many men mote be turnyd be my  
crying and my wepyng as me han scornyd therfor er schal scornyn into the werdys ende  
and many mo yf it be yowr wille. And, as anemst any erdly manrys love, as wistly as  
I wolde no love han but God to lovyn above al thinge and alle other creatures lovyn for  
700 God and in God, al so wistly qwenche in me al fleschly lust and in alle tho that I have  
beholdyn thi blisful body in. And geve us thin holy drede in owr hertys for thi wowndys  
smert. Lord, make my gostly fadirs for to dredyn the in me and for to lovyn the in me,  
and make al the world for to han the mor sorwe for her owyn synnys for the sorwe that  
thu hast govyn me for other mennys synnys. Good Jhesu, make my wil thi wyl and thi  
705 wil my wil that I may no wil han but thi wil only. Now, good Lord Crist Jhesu, I crye  
yow mercy for alle the statys that ben in Holy Chirche, for the Pope and alle hys  
cardinalys, for alle erchebischopys and bischopys, and for al the ordir of presthoode,  
for alle men and women of religyon, and specialy for hem that arn besy to savyn and  
defendyn the feith of Holy Chirch. Lord, for thi mercy blisse hem and grawnt hem the  
710 victory of alle her enmiis and spedē hem in alle that thei gon abowtyn to thi worschep;

**681 inseare**, one who sees into. **685 moryn**, increase. **686 lyvys er dedys**, alive or dead; **her**, here; **eyne**, eyes. **690 wistly**, certainly. **698 as anemst**, as regards. **706 statys**, states, estates.

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for alle that arn in grace this tyme God send hem perseverawns into her lyvys ende.  
And make me worthy to be partabyl of her preyerys and hem of myn and eche of us of  
otheris. I cry the mercy, blisful Lord, for the Kyng of Inglond and for alle Cristen  
kyngys and for alle lordys and ladiis that arn in this world. God, sett hem in sweche  
715 governawnce as thei may most plesyn the and ben lordys and ladys in hevyn wythowtyn  
ende. I cry the mercy, Lord, for the riche men in this worlde that han thi goodys in  
weldyng; geve hem grace for to spendyn hem to thi plesyng. I cry the mercy, Lord, for  
Jewys, and Sarazinys, and alle hethen pepil. Good Lord, have mende that ther is many  
a seynt in hevyn whech sumtyme was hethen in erde. And as thu hast spred thi mercy  
720 to hem that arn in erthe. Lord, thu seist thi self ther schal no man comyn to the wythowtyn  
the ne no man be drawyn wythowtyn thu drawe hym. And therfor, Lord, yf ther be  
any man undrawyn, I prey the drawe hym aftyr the. Me hast thu drawyn, Lord, and I  
deservyd nevir for to ben drawyn, but aftyr thi gret mercy thu hast drawyn me. Yf al  
725 this world knew al my wikkydnes as thu dost, thei wolde merveylyn and wonderyn of  
the gret goodnes that thu hast schewyd me. I wolde that al this worlde wer worthy to  
thankyn the for me, and, as thu hast mad of unworthi creaturys worthy, so make al this  
world worthi to thankyn the and preisyn the. I cry the mercy, Lord, for alle fals heretikys  
and for alle mysbelevarys, for alle fals titharys, thevys, vowtererys and alle comown  
730 women, and for alle myschevows levarys. Lord, for thi mercy have mercy upon hem  
yf it be thi wille and bryng hem owt of her mysgovernawnce the sonar for my preyerys.  
I cry the mercy, Lord, for alle tho that arn temptyd and vexid wyth her gostly enmiis,  
that thu of thi mercy gefe hem grace to withstandyn her temptacyons and delyvyr hem  
therof whan it is thi most plesawns. I cry the mercy, Lord, for alle my gostly faderys  
735 that thu vochesaf to spredyn as mech grace in her sowlys as I wolde that thu dedist in  
myn. I cry the mercy, Lord, for alle my childeryn, gostly and bodily, and for al the  
pepl in this world that thu make her synnys to me be very contricyon as it wer myn  
owyn synnys, and forgeve hem as I wolde that thu forgave me. I cry the mercy, Lord,  
for alle my frendys and for alle myn enmiis, for alle that arn seke specialy, for alle  
lazerys, for alle bedred men and women, for alle that arn in preson, and for alle creaturys  
740 that in this world han spokyn of me eythyr good er ylle and er schal don into the worldys  
ende. Have mercy upon hem and be as gracyows to her sowlys as I wolde that thu wer  
to myn. And thei that han seyd any evyl of me, for thi hy mercy, forgefē it hem; and

**712 partabyl of**, able to share in. **717 weldyng**, control. **728 titharys**, tithers; **vowtererys**, adulterers. **729 levarys**, people. **730 sonar**, sooner. **739 bedred**, bedridden.

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thei that han seyd wel, I pray the, Lord, rewarde hem for that is thorw here charité and  
not thorw my mertyts, for, thow thu suffredist al this world to vengyn the on me and  
745 to hatyn me for I have displesyd the, thu dedist me no wrong. I cry the mercy, Lord,  
for alle the sowlys that arn in peynys of purgatory ther abydyng thi mercy and the  
preyeris of Holy Chirche as wistly, Lord, as thei arn thin owyn chosyn sowlys. Be as  
gracyows to hem as I wolde that thu wer to myn yf it wer in the same peyne that thei  
arn in. Lord Crist Jhesu, I thank the for al helth and al welth, for al riches and al  
750 poverté, for seeknes and alle scornys, for alle spitys and alle wrongys, and for alle  
divers tribulacyons that han fallyn er schal fallyn to me as long as I leve. Heily I thank  
the that thu woldist letyn me suffryny any in this world in remissyon of my synnys and  
moryng of my mertyte in hevyn as wistly as I have gret cawse to thanke the. Here my  
755 preyeris, for, thow I had as many hertys and sowlys closyd in my sowle as God knew  
wythowtyn begynnnyng how many schulde dwellyn in Hevyn wythowtyn ende and as  
ther arn dropys of watyr, fres and salt, cheselys of gravel, stonys smale and grete,  
gresys growyng in al erthe, kyrnellys of corn, fischys, fowelys, bestys and leevys  
upon treys whan most plenté ben, fedir of fowle er her of best, seed that growth in  
erbe, er in wede, in flowyr, in lond, er in watyr whan most growyn, and as many  
760 creaturys as in erth han ben and arn er schal ben and myth ben be thi myth, and as ther  
arn sterrys and awngelys in thi syght er other kynnes good that growyth upon erthe,  
and eche wer a sowle as holy as evyr was our lady Seynt Mary that bar Jhesu owr  
savyowr, and, yf it wer possibyl that eche cowde thynkyn and spekyn al so gret reverens  
and worschep as evyr dede owr lady Seynt Mary her in erthe and now doth in hevyn  
765 and schal don wythowtyn ende, I may rith wel thynkyn in myn hert and spekyn it wyth  
my mowth at this tyme in worschip of the Trinité and of al the cowrt of hevyn, to gret  
schame and schenschep of Sathanas that fel fro Goddys face and of alle hys wikkyd  
spiritys, that alle thes hertys ne sowlys cowde nevyr thankyn God ne ful preysyn hym,  
ful blissyn hym ne ful worschepyn hym, ful lovyn hym ne fully gevyn lawdacyon,  
770 preisyng, and reverens to hym as he were worthy to han for the gret mercy that he hath  
schewyd to me in erth that I can not don ne may don. I prey my lady, whech that is  
only the modyr of God, the welle of grace, flower and fairest of alle women that evyr  
God wroot in erth, the most worthiest in hys syght, the most leef, der, and derworthy

750 **spitys**, spites. 753 **moryng**, increasing. 756 **fres and salt**, fresh and salt; **cheselys**,  
pebbles. 757 **gresys**, grasses; **kyrnellys**, kernels. 758 **fedir**, feather; **er her**, or hair. 761 **kynnes**,  
kind. 767 **schenschep**, disgrace. 769 **lawdacyon**, laudation. 773 **leef**, dear; **der**, precious.

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unto hym, best worthy to ben herd of God, and the heyest that hath deservyd it in this  
775 lyfe, benyngne lady, meke lady, chariteful lady, wyth al the reverens that is in hevyn and  
wyth alle yowr holy seyntys, I pray yow, Lady, offyr ye thankys and preysyngys to  
the blisful Trinité for love of me, askyng mercy and grace for me and for alle my  
gostly fadrys and perseverawns into owr lyvys ende in that life one may most plesyn  
God in. I blisse my God in my sowle and yow alle that arn in hevyn. Blissyd mote God  
780 ben in yow alle and ye alle in God. Blissyd be thu, Lord, for alle thi merciis that thu  
hast schewyd to alle that arn in hevyn and in erth. And specyalys I blisse the, Lord, for  
Mary Mawdelyn, for Mary Egipcyan, for Seynt Powle, and for Seynt Awstyn. And, as  
thu hast schewyd ther mercy to hem, so schewe thi mercy to me and to alle that askyn  
the mercy of hert. The pees and the rest that thu hast beqwothyn to thi discipulys and  
785 to thi lovars, the same pees and rest mote thu beqwethyn to me in erth and in hevyn  
wythowtyn ende. Have mend, Lord, of the woman that was takyn in the vowtré and  
browt beforne the, and, as thu dreve awey alle hir enmyis fro hir and sche stod alone by  
the, so verily mot thu dryvyn awey alle myn enmiis fro me, bothin bodily and gostly,  
that I may stondyn alone by the and make my sowle ded to alle the joyis of this world  
790 and qwyk and gredy to hy contemplacyon in God. Hafe mend, Lord, of Lazer that lay  
four days ded in hys grave, and, as I have ben in that holy stede ther thi body was qwik  
and ded and crucifiid for mannys synne and ther Lazer was reisyd fro deth to lyfe, as  
wistly, Lord, yf any man er woman be ded in this owr be dedly synne, yf any prayer  
may helpyn hem, here my preyerys for hem and make hem to levyn wythowtyn ende.  
795 Gramercy, Lord, for alle tho synnys that thu hast kept me fro whech I have not do, and  
gramercy, Lord, for al the sorwe that thu hast govyn me for tho that I have do, for thes  
gracys and for alle other gracys whech arn nedful to me and to alle the creaturys in  
erth. And for alle tho that feithyn and trustyn er schul feithyn and trustyn in my prayerys  
into the worldys ende, sweche grace as thei desiryn, gostly er bodily, to the profite of  
800 her sowlys, I pray the, Lord, grawnt hem for the multitude of thi mercy. Amen."

Jhesu mercy quod Salthows.

782 **Mary Egipcyan**, St. Mary of Egypt, the third-century prostitute who, in grieving for her sins, lived forty years as a desert saint; **Seynt Awstyn**, Saint Augustine of Hippo. 784 **beqwothyn**, bequeathed. 785 **lovars**, lovers. 786 **vowtré**, adultery. 790 **Lazer**, Lazarus, brother of Martha and Mary, whom Jesus raised from the dead. 791 **holy stede**, holy place. 795 **Gramercy**, lit., Grant mercy. 798 **feithyn**, believe. 801 **Salthows**, the name of the man who copied the manuscript, probably in the mid-fifteenth century.

## *Notes*

An early sixteenth-century reader/editor has gone through the manuscript emending it in red ink. In the notes I have dealt with these markings as if they came from Margery's first editor, noting some of those emendations particularly those that typify that reader's reconstruction of her text. Sometimes, as in lines 146 and 206, this effort simply modernizes Margery's idiom. Elsewhere the concern seems to be with streamlining the syntax (i.e., lines 714, 2035). In some instances the emendations seem necessary (e.g., lines 11 and 103), and I have adopted them for my text. We have no way of knowing whether the red hand has any authority for the alterations other than his/her own reading of the text. For a systematic annotation of the red hand see the notes to Meech's edition. In the MS, chapter numbers are written in the outer margins at the beginning of each chapter. Each chapter begins with a rubric capital.

### **Primus liber**

- 11        *oure*. MS: added above *Savyour* in red.
- 32        *sum men*. MS: *summen*.
- 92        *yyf*. MS: *ȝyf*. With this construction, I have converted all yoghs to *y*.
- 105      *of*. MS: added in red above *peyr*.
- 126      *be the*. MS: *bethe*.
- 129      *Mary Maudelyn*. As a penitent, lover of Christ, mourner, chief witness of the Resurrection, missionary, and mystic seer, the Magdalene was a key figure in the literature of affective devotion. The numerous references to the saint throughout the *Book of Margery Kempe* seem designed to indicate a particular identity for Margery who, like the Magdalene, would see herself as one of Jesus' intimate friends or lovers. For a discussion of the role of the Magdalene in the late medieval literature of devotion, including further bibliographical references, see Johnson (1979) and (1984, pp.146–68).

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For a study of the Magdalene in relation to the late medieval and probably East-Anglian play, the Digby *Mary Magdalene*, see Davidson. By noting that the text of Margery's life began to take a written form on July 23, the day after the saint's feast day, Kempe suggests that Margery, like Mary, was a potent witness to the new life, that her visions inspired others to "see."

- 146      *gan*. MS: *be* in superscript correction above *gan* in red.
- 151      *brennyng*. MS: *brennyg*.
- 160      *steryngys*. *Stirrings*, from the verb *stirren*, is a term frequently used by Richard Rolle, the enormously popular and influential mid-fourteenth-century devotional writer, to describe the physical symptoms of his passionate spiritual ecstasy. It became a "key word" for those writing about or talking about devotion and/or subjectivity. The word itself could indicate either spiritual or physical arousal. *Stirren* could also mean to set in motion, to turn aside, to rouse, to trouble, to exhort or coax, to inspire or prompt, and to incite. Kempe's uses of it should be seen as one more instance of her self-conscious use of language. For a consideration of Hilton's proscriptive use of the term, see Staley, "Julian of Norwich and the Late Fourteenth-Century Crisis of Authority," in Aers and Staley, *Powers of the Holy*, pp. 107–78.
- 183      *sche*. Not in MS. Meech's emendation.
- 205      *gan*. MS: *be* in superscript above *gan* in red.
- 228      *he<sub>2</sub>*. MS: *het*.
- 233      *seyd on*. Meech mistranscribes as *seyden* and emends by adding [*o thyng*], which is unnecessary since *on* supplies the "one thing" sense.
- 250      *cowd not*. MS: *cowdnott*.
- 253      *ye know*. MS: *yeknow*.
- 289      *entryng*. MS: *entryg*.
- 306      *wownd of*. MS: *vy* crossed out after *of*.

## *Notes*

- 309      *temptacyon*. MS: *tamptacyon*, with *e* in superscript above the first *a*.
- 332      *suasyons*. MS: *suasynons* with the first *n* expuncted and crossed out.
- 332      *gan*. MS: *be* in superscript above *gan* in red.
- 341      *and*. MS: *k* crossed out after *and*.
- 374      *grawnt*. MS: *grawt*.
- 392      *to*. *to* in superscript between *gefē* and *the*.
- 398      *ernest peny of hevyn*. It is worth noting that Hugh of St. Victor wrote a treatise on the earnest penny as a metaphor of Christ's love of his bride. See his *Soliloquy on the Earnest Money of the Soul*, trans. Kevin Herbert (Milwaukee: Marquette Christianity Press, 1956).
- 402      *schuld*. MS: *schul*.
- 406      *than*. MS: *than* in superscript between *And* and *anoon*.
- 442      *ob*. *of* is occasionally written *ob* in anticipation of words beginning with *b*.
- 462      *N*. Meech reads this letter as an *R* (see the note to Meech, p. 20), but it looks more like an *N*. This usage is consistent with the widespread habit (including that of the scribe of this manuscript) of using the letter *N* as a “wildcard character.” See, for example, the beginning of Chapter 2, where Kempe identifies her father as mayor of the town of *N*.
- 462      *mor*. MS: *thow* in superscript above *mor* in red.
- 486      *hir*. *k* crossed out after *hir* and before *bakke*.
- 503      *rathyr*. Meech transcribes as *rathar*.
- 507      *grawntyn*. MS: *grawtyn*.
- 522      *comown*. *Comown*, from the verb *comowmyn*, has come down to us as “commune,”

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but our word seems to me far less allusive than the medieval term. “Common,” though it is now used only as an adjective, more closely captures the complicated association encoded in the medieval verb. *Comown* could be used to describe the act of sharing or entering into a partnership, of acting jointly, of having sexual intercourse, of communicating, or of receiving or administering Holy Communion. Like her equally elastic use of *medelyn*, Kempe’s word-play hints at the many types of communities she considers in her *Book*.

- 571      *to*. Though the word is almost illegible, it looks like *to*.
- 622      *a*. Marked with a caret, in superscript between *al* and *day*.
- 626      *mech. the* expuncted after *of*; *mech* marked with a caret and in superscript between *the* and *pepyl*.
- 626      *toke. ke* in superscript above *to*.
- 629      *thow. tho* expuncted after *wold*; *thow* in superscript above.
- 671      *begynnyng*. MS: *begynnyg*.
- 678      *thowt*. MS: *thow*.
- 682      *woldyst*. The words *suffer deth* are added in very dark ink in large letters in the outer margin. The caret after the phrase corresponds to the caret after *woldyst* in the text.
- 692      *watyr. fro*, which is expuncted in red, follows *watyr*.
- wasch it*. MS: *waschit*.
- 697      *hem*. MS: *to* in superscript above *hem* in red.
- 700      *compunccyon*. MS: *compuccyon*.
- 711      *Thowgh*. MS: *th*, with a caret afterwards, *owgh* in dark letters above.
- 714      *owyr Lord*. MS: crossed out in red.

*Notes*

- 714      *hys.* MS: crossed out in red.
- 722      *hir. as* crossed through and expuncted after *hir.*
- 731      *I. l* crossed through after *I.*
- 735      *slawndyr.* MS: *slawdyr.*
- 804      *mend.* MS: *soull* in superscript above *mend* in red.
- 810      *the. archsh* crossed out after *the.*
- 813      *to.* MS: *ty. o* written in red on top of original *y.*
- 823      *cam forth.* MS: *camforth.*
- 829      *hir. to* crossed out after *hir.*
- 838      *dalyawns.* Lower right corner of the folio has been destroyed.
- 843      *maynten.* MS: *mayten.*
- 857      *behyte. hyte* partially destroyed.
- 863      The chapter break is followed in the MS by a directive note in red. It runs from the chapter into the margin. It reads: *it begynnes thus in the tyme the vj lefe efter.* The reference directs a reader to chapter 21, which recounts events (the beginning of Margery's special relationship with her confessor) prior to those in chapter 16. See also Introduction, p. 5, for a discussion of these lines.
- 880      *sowle. owl* partially destroyed, *e* completely destroyed.
- 899      *Bridis.* MS: *Pridis.*
- 899      The Latin titles refer to key works of affective piety that link Margery to the concerns of late medieval lay devotion. See Introduction, pp. 5–6.

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- 902     *sumtyme. sumty* completely destroyed.
- 925     *had. h and d* partially destroyed. There was probably one more word at the end of the line. *of* is written in the lower margin under *she*.
- 949     *helde*. The word itself is obliterated, but there appears to be space for a four-letter word. Only the upper part of *d*, about two letter spaces from the left-hand margin, remains. *Helde* is Meech's suggestion.
- 972     *muste. uste* completely destroyed. At the end of the line, there is further space for either a two- or a three-letter word.
- 979     For a discussion of this attribution to Jerome (which seems not to belong to him but reflects pious popular tradition), see Meech, p. 279, n. 43/7.
- 982     *sete. seet*, perhaps in the original hand, is written above *sete*.
- 996     *and causyd*. Only *syd* is legible; the rest is completely destroyed. Meech's emendation.
- 1012    *levyn*. MS: *be* in red followed by a red hyphen in the margin.
- 1019    *bryte*. MS: *yte* partially destroyed.
- 1020    *dyrke*. One, or perhaps two, words may have been destroyed here at the end of the line.  
*the mor*. This is Meech's emendation. The lower right-hand corner of the manuscript has been destroyed, and on this final line there is space for perhaps seven to nine more letters.
- 1023    *a tyme*. MS: *atyme*.
- 1046    *eraend*. Altered from *erden*. *d* changed to *a*, and *d* fitted in at the end of the word.
- 1055    *wyth. many* expunced after *wyth*.
- 1068    *Yyf ye*. MS: *ȝyf ye* completely destroyed.

## *Notes*

- 1068 *messys*. The tops of two letters (perhaps *ss*) are visible. See also Meech. There is space on the line for another word.
- 1078 *a day*. MS: *aday*.
- 1092 *grace*. *gr* completely destroyed.
- 1093 *I prevyd*. Only the *d* survives. Meech suggests *I lovyd* here, but the sense seems to indicate God's intent to test those he loves. There are about seven generous letter spaces here in the lower right-hand corner of the folio.
- 1093–94 *that evyr men*. Meech's suggestion; the words are completely destroyed.
- 1118 *of*. Only the top of a letter, probably *f*, remains.
- 1147 *creatür*. MS: *mater*.
- 1157 *togedyr*. MS: *in love* in superscript above *togedyr* in red.
- 1158 *synguler*. *j* crossed out after *synguler*.
- 1159 *schal*. Not in manuscript. In the far right margin, in very large dark letters, are the words *that I xal*.
- 1171 *And therfor*. *And therfor* is written twice; the first instance is expuncted and crossed through.
- 1177 *anoynted*. MS: *a noyted*.
- 1189 *have*. *is* crossed through after *have*.
- 1190 *and*. *and* preceding *thei* has been crossed out in red.
- 1199 *dawnsyn*. MS: *gostly* in superscript above *dawnsyn* in red.
- 1213 *massage as*. & expuncted after *massage*; *as* written in superscript above *sche*.
- 1217 *messe peny*. A “mass penny” was given to enter the name of the dead on the parish bede-roll. See Duffy, pp. 334–37.

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- 1260    *ellys not a.* *not* in very dark letters above *a*, with a caret after *ellys*.
- 1266    *had.* The loop of the *h* is still visible, along with the top of what may be a *d*.
- 1270    *irregularité.* Defined by MED as “violation of the rules of holy orders or provisions of canon law.”
- 1290    *a.* Only the top of the letter is visible.
- 1294    *latyth.* MS: *lathyth*, with the first *h* expuncted.
- 1317    *hym.* *m* is destroyed.
- 1321    *than.* MS: *to* in superscript above *than* in red.
- 1342    *Benetys.* *Be* completely destroyed; *n* partially destroyed. Meech’s reconstruction.
- 1357    *wythstod hem.* MS: *wythstodhem*.
- 1361    *He.* Not in MS. Meech’s emendation.
- 1369    *geve.* *e* destroyed. There is space at the end of the line for another short word, perhaps *hem*.
- 1391    *befel in.* Completely destroyed. Meech’s reconstruction.
- 1415    *gretly.* The loop of the *e* and the tops of two letters are still visible.
- 1416    *of God.* Completely destroyed. Meech’s reconstruction.
- 1417–18 The great fear that accompanied the final hours was that of the devil worrying or threatening the soul *in extremis*. Margery’s fellows thus wish upon her not simply death, but a spiritually painful death.
- 1427    Constance, in Germany, was at once a city on the common route from Lynn to Venice and the site of the important Council of Constance from 1414 to 1418. For remarks about the significance of Constance for Margery’s itinerary, see Staley (1994), pp. 157–58.

### *Notes*

- 1429    *wentyn*. MS: *wenty*.
- 1438    *to Constanwnsward*. *to* completely destroyed.
- 1439    *harmyd*. Only the *d* is still visible. *harmyd* is Meech's emendation, but other words such as *grevydy* or *robbyd* are possible.
- 1442    *owyr*. MS: *owryr*.
- 1447    *schewyd. hir* crossed out after *schewyd*.
- 1464    *sytyng*. *g* is partially destroyed. After *sytyng* there is space for a short word, such as *stylle*.
- 1468    *seyd*. Not in MS. Meech's emendation.
- 1471    *don*. MS: *byd* in superscript above *don* in red.
- 1488    *gyde. gy* completely destroyed; *de* partially destroyed.
- 1515    *speke*. Only the top of the letter *s* is visible.
- 1535    *whech. s* crossed out after *whech*.
- 1538    *to*. Added in red in the margin.
- 1539    *so than*. Only the *an* is visible. Meech conjectures & *than*.
- 1541    *thow it*. MS: *thowit*.
- 1555    *of*. MS: written in superscript in black.
- 1564    *to. to* is underlined and crossed out in very dark ink. Above *to* is written *on* in very dark ink.
- 1566    *on*. MS blank at this point.
- peynys*. Only the top of what looks like a *p* remains; *peynys* is Meech's suggestion.

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- 1581 *for. th* crossed through after *for.*
- 1583 *ellys.* MS: *elly.*
- 1589 *best.* Lower part of *b* destroyed.
- 1590 *alone.* *a* completely destroyed; *lone* partially destroyed.
- 1613 *beforn.* *n* partially destroyed.
- 1614 *sowle.* *ow* partially destroyed; *le* completely destroyed.
- 1637 *suffyr yt.* *fyr* completely destroyed; *y* partially destroyed.
- 1645 *we.* *thei* has been changed to *we* in red.
- 1651 *so. owyr lady* crossed out after *so.*
- 1658 *was.* Not in MS; *then* in superscript in red.
- 1663 *to the.* Conjectural; the words are destroyed in the MS.
- 1687 *as.* Only the top part of the *s* remains.
- 1688 *wyth the.* Completely destroyed; the suggestion is Meech's.
- 1711 *hir gon.* Letters *ir* and *on* are partially destroyed.
- Lord. ord* completely destroyed. Meech conjectures that *Jhesu* might have followed, since there is room at the end of the line.
- 1733 *ther Lazer.* *ther* and *a* are partially destroyed; *zer* is completely destroyed.
- 1734 *went also.* Meech's conjecture. Only what looks like the top part of the final *o* remains.
- 1748 *holy.* A caret is after *tho*; *holy* is written in very small letters above.

### *Notes*

- 1757 *servawnt that. nt that* completely destroyed. There is space for, at most, five letters after *w*. Meech feels, and I concur, that *hat* is therefore a more likely choice than *whech*.
- 1758 *Drede*. Only the *D* remains.
- 1759 *bryng the*. Only *br* remains.
- 1760 *be. k* crossed out after *be*.
- 1774 *of<sub>2</sub>*. Added in superscript in red between *sche* and *hir*.
- 1780 *For thy. For* completely destroyed; *th* partially destroyed.
- 1781 *whech. whec* completely destroyed; *h* partially destroyed.
- 1781–82 *I have no. I have* completely destroyed; *no* partially destroyed. Meech's reconstruction.
- 1806 *and*. Ampersand partially destroyed.
- 1824 *sche. con* crossed out after *sche*.
- 1828 *good wyfe*. MS: *wyfe good*, with signs for inversion.
- 1829 *hir. h* partially destroyed.
- 1852 *how. w* partially destroyed.
- 1876 *of. o* completely destroyed; *f* partially destroyed.
- 1897 *seyest*. Second *e* in superscript, and second *s* written on top of a *d*.
- 1900 *thu*. Added in red in outer margin.
- 1901 *blyssed. d* partially destroyed.
- 1917 *he*. Not in MS. Meech's emendation.

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- 1921     *days.* MS: *dayd.*
- 1932     *spiryt, not levyng. er a sodeyn sekenes* crossed through after *spiryt* and before *not levyng*.
- 2028     *in.* MS: *gostle* in superscript above *in* in red.
- 2035     *in hir sowle.* MS: crossed out in red.
- 2052     *sche. sy* crossed through after *sche.*
- 2096     *many other.* MS: *other many* with signs for inversion.
- 2106     *wife.* *wife* added in red above *good*, with a caret after *good*.
- 2180     *undirstand. b* crossed out after *undirstand.*
- 2227     *Brigyp<sup>t</sup>.* MS: *B.*
- 2231     *Brigyp<sup>t</sup>.* MS: *Bri.*
- 2241     *our Lord. owyr lord* expunceted after *our lord.*
- 2248     *the.* MS: *po*
- 2266     *in.* MS: *in in.*
- 2270     *she.* MS: *he; s* added in red.
- 2290     *lernyd. r* in superscript between *e* and *n.*
- 2320     *hir. r* written on top of *m.*
- 2327–28     *whech was . . . beriid.* The section in parentheses is written at the end of the chapter and marked by an *a* that corresponds to another *a* in the left margin where the phrase should be inserted.

### *Notes*

- 2340     *goodys.* MS: *godys*, with an *o* in superscript between *g* and *o*.
- 2460     *not.* *not* written in red above *dey*.
- 2467     *cryen.* MS: *cryed*. Meech's emendation.
- 2477     *had.* Not in MS. Meech's emendation.
- 2498     *the brokebakkyd.* *the* added in red in the inner margin.
- 2524     *Corpus Cristi.* MS: *xpi*.
- 2550     *riche man.* MS: *richeman*.
- 2552     *ryche man.* MS: *rycheman*.
- 2561     *dalyin.* MS: *dalyid*. Meech's emendation.
- 2609     *gan meltyn.* MS: *be* in superscript before *gan* in red; *to* in superscript before *meltyn* in red.
- 2633     *mevyd.* MS: *was* in superscript before *mevyd* in red.  
          *the.* Added in red in superscript between *of* and *man*.
- 2643     *dede.* MS: *lete* in superscript before *dede* in red.
- 2663     *strobelyd.* Meech emends to *strogelyd*, following the rubrications of the MS editor who placed *g* in red above a red caret between *o* and *b*. MED cites numerous instances of *strobelin* as a past participle form of *striven*. Perhaps the sense is that the inquisitor “roughed her up,” or “verbally abused her,” or “fondled her,” or “threw her into confusion.”
- 2718–19 “*ther is no man in this worlde that I lofe so meche as God, for I lofe hym abovyn al thyngē, and . . . I lofe al men in God and for God.*” Margery adheres here to a common-place Augustinian definition of love, that charity is the love of God for the sake

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of God and love of man and things for the sake of God. See *On Christian Doctrine*, Bk. I, ch. xxvi–xxvii and Bk. III, ch. x.16.

- 2757     *not*. Added in red above *stondyn*.
- 2775     *sche*. MS: *sche sche*; second *sche* crossed through in red.
- 2807     *into*. MS: *in* designated by a caret and written in superscript before *to*.
- 2812     *thei*. *d* crossed out after *thei*.
- 2854     *a worschepful*. MS: *aworschepful*.
- 2870     *in*. MS: *Yok* crossed through after *in*.
- 2885     *a. a*, designated by a caret, in superscript between *as* and *juge*.
- 2891     *sotyn*. Meech emended this word to *fotyn*; however, *sotyn* conveys the sense of the persecution of the innocent that is central to Kempe's presentation of Margery's difficulties with figures of authority. She also uses the verb in her account of the Passion (chapter 79).
- 2908     *chawmbyr*. MS: *chawbyr*.
- 2909     *good man*. MS: *goodman*.
- 2959     *it*. MS: *is*. Meech's emendation.
- 2964     *schalt ne. ne* not in MS.
- 2974     *swythe*. *e* in superscript.
- 2987     *hymyr party*. Meech glosses as “rear.” MED glosses *himmere* in *Ancrene Wise* as “?in-glorious,” though this does not seem to be the same word. *Hymyr* might conceivably be a corruption of *hamer* (see MED *himer*), used here as a euphemism for genitalia.

### *Notes*

- 2988    *hevynes.* *d* crossed through after *hevynes*.
- 3022    *Erchebischopys.* MS: *Ercheb* with a horizontal line through the stem of the *b*. This abbreviation is used often after this first mention.
- 3045    *he.* MS: *sche*, with *sc* crossed through in red.
- 3066    *ryth good.* Caret before *good* and *ryth* is written above.
- 3117    *nowt.* *nowt* not in MS. Meech's emendation.
- 3155    *it.* *ky* expuncted after *it*.
- 3166    *we.* MS: *wey*, with *y* expuncted and crossed through.
- 3172    *prevyd.* MS: *neithyr l* crossed through after *prevyd*.
- 3189    *alle.* *c<sup>m</sup> L.vv.* is written after *alle* to indicate the chapter that begins on the following page.
- 3191    *happyd.* The first *p* of *happyd* is written on top of a *d*.
- 3213    *West Lynne.* MS: *Westlynne*.
- 3276    *was.* MS: *s* crossed through after *was*.
- 3297    *the awter.* *l* crossed through after *the*.
- 3351    *man.* MS: *or woman* in superscript above *man* in red.
- 3392    *that.* *that* is written above *what*, which is expuncted.
- 3407    *savyd.* *al* expuncted and crossed through after *savyd*.
- 3409    *belevyn.* *it* expuncted after *belevyn*.
- 3434    *mendys.* *abedyn with hir* crossed through after *mendys*.

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- 3441 *the.* *thy* has been crossed through, and an *e* written above the *y*, which has been changed into a *b*.
- 3511 *convent.* MS: *conent.*
- 3525 *and.* *he* crossed out after *and.*
- 3639 *se me.* MS: *seme*
- 3736 *charité.* Though Meech retains the phrase “token of love,” it is enclosed by parallel slash marks that indicate the scribe deleted the phrase and substituted *charité*, which he wrote above *token of love*.
- 3758 *arn. passyd owt of the worlde* crossed through after *arn.*
- 3788 *thynkyst. al the world* expuncted after *thynkyst.*
- 3789 *unto.* There is a caret before *to*; *un* is written above.
- 3883 *whan. w* expuncted after *whan.*
- 3895 *divinité.* MS: *and sade* in superscript after *divinite* in red.
- 3952 *a gret.* MS: *agret.*
- 3957 *frer. as* crossed out after *frer.*
- 3969 *regular and seculer.* Refers to the distinction between a member of the clergy living under a monastic rule and one living within the world, such as a clerk or a canon.
- 3975 *Holy Scriptur.* MS: *Scriptur Holy*, with signs for inversion.
- 4012 *God. w* crossed through after *God.*
- 4024 *that. l* expuncted after *that.*
- 4098 *desiryd.* A dark stain obliterates *si.*

### *Notes*

- 4101     *owr.* MS: *Lord* in superscript above *owr* in red.
- 4103     *beheldyn.* MS: *ben heldeyn.*
- 4108     *a.* Flourished *m* crossed through after *a.*
- 4109     *sche.* *s* crossed through after *sche.*
- 4116     *meny.* Literally “household,” a term more often used to describe the households, or entourages, of the worldly. That Kempe often uses it to describe those persons surrounding or in the employ of ecclesiastical figures carries its own delicately charged irony.
- 4120     *not.* MS: *to*, with *no* in red above.
- 4130     *Lady.* *Lady* not in MS; designated by a red caret and added in dark ink in the right margin.
- 4150     *sonys.* MS: *sonyd*, with second *s* altering original *d*.
- 4168     *and.* MS: & &.
- 4183     *seke man.* MS: *sekeman.*
- 4249     *hys.* *d* crossed out after *hys.*
- 4259     *owyn.* *hurt*, indicated by a caret after *owyn*, is written in red above *fayling.*
- 4260     *the.* *f* expuncted after *the.*
- 4351     *to me.* MS: *tome.*
- 4452     *teld.* MS: *tel.*
- 4460     *comfort.* MS: *comfor.*
- 4470     *ye.* *j* has been changed to *ȝe*, indicated by a caret, added above.

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- 4478     *ful.* *w* crossed through after *ful*.
- 4509     *venymowslych*. MS: *venowslych*. Meech's emendation.
- 4512     *had*. Added in red above.
- 4513     *he*. Added in red above.
- 4531     *ryth*. *wo* crossed through after *ryth*.
- 4533     *beryn*. MS: *to the mount* expuncted after *beryn*.
- 4590     *to*. MS: *to to*.
- 4592     *sorwe*. *wyth* crossed through after *sorwe*; *for* is written between *wyth* and *yow* in superscript.
- 4631–33    *mad for owr Lady . . . The creatur*. These lines are crossed through in dark ink, which could be the same color as the original. The deletion is especially interesting, since it does not damage the sense of the narrative and perhaps suggests that the scribe himself exercised certain editorial liberties over the text he copied.
- 4634     *er. er*, indicated by a caret between *gon* and *wher*, is written in superscript.
- 4657     *thynke*. *b* crossed through after *thynke*.
- 4663     *wyth*. *wyth* has been added in red in superscript.  
*ther*. *ther* is written above *of*, which has been expuncted.
- 4670     *schal*. *ȝe* crossed out and expuncted after *schal*.
- 4740     *wythdrow*. *hir* crossed through after *wythdrow*.
- 4825–26    *and holbyn . . . his deth*. These words have been crossed through in red.
- 4884     *chosyn*. *specyal* is expuncted here; *chosyn* is written above it.

### *Notes*

- 4925     *was.* *g* crossed through after *was*.
- 4926     *she.* Added in red in the near right margin.
- 4943–44 *And than . . . the brest.* These words have been crossed through in red.
- 4950     *to. to*, indicated by a caret, is written in superscript.
- 4956     *inundirstondabyl.* *in* has been prefixed in red.
- 4980     *as. meche* has been expuncted after *as*.
- 5004     *virginys. to wolcomyn me in thi sowle* has been expuncted after *virginys*.
- 5051     *that. the* crossed through after *that*.
- 5137     *so. MS: so so.*
- 5148     *be. be*, indicated by a caret, is written in superscript between *dowtyr* and *this*.
- 5188     *plesyd. MS: displesyd*, with *dis* expuncted and crossed out.
- 5221     *herd. herd* has been added in red above the line.

### **Secundus liber**

- 26       *evyl. MS: evyl evyl.*
- 46       *correpcyon. p* has been written over an original *c*.
- 185      *in. MS: in in*, with the first *in* expuncted.
- 226      *we. we* is written in red on top of the original *me*.
- sorw. sorw* is written above *perel*, which is expuncted.
- 258      *therfor. for* is written on the line below *ther*.

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- 276      *ther.* *up* expuncted and crossed through after *ther.*
- 379      *han. j* crossed out after *han.*
- 387      *whom sche myth.* MS: *whom sche sche myth* with second *sche* crossed out in red.  
*rest on.* MS: *reston.*
- 412      *Akun.* Written on the line below *comyn to.*
- 424      *of.* MS: *of of*, with the second *of* crossed out in red.
- 519      *o wey.* MS: *owey.*
- 528      *and.* MS: *&&*, with the first *&* crossed through in red.
- 569      *And swech . . . a seyd.* These words are crossed through in red.
- 588      *sche. t* crossed through after *sche.*
- 594      *thei.* Not in MS. Meech's emendation.
- 628      *the. e* is written in superscript; *th* is added in red.
- 629      *unkendnes.* MS: *unkednes.*
- 642      *Lynne. so* crossed through after *Lynne.*
- 644      *ful. ful* is written in superscript between *answeryng* and *schortly.*
- 658–59     The second part of the *Book* ends nine lines into the first leaf of folio 120. The final words, “*worschepyd be God,*” are closed by a period and followed by “*Amen.*” On the same line in red ink is another “*Amen.*” The remainder of the page has been left blank. The scribe began the prayers on the verso side of folio 120, using a large capital *T* (“*Thys* . . .”), suggesting that the prayers are a separate section of the manuscript.
- 676      *spechys. c* written over an original *h.*

## *Notes*

- 677      *ne myn.* MS: *nemyn.*
- 689      *fro.* MS: *fro fro*, with first *fro* crossed out in red.
- 709      *mercy. s* crossed through after *mercy*.
- 715      *the.* MS: *hym* crossed through in red; *the* is written above in red.
- 719–20    *And as thu hast spred thi mercy to hem that arn in erthe.* The syntax is faulty here. Meech suggests that the sentence may originally have been something like this: *And as thu hast spred thi mercy [to hem that arn in Heuyn, so spred thi mercy] to hem that arn in erthe* (p. 250).
- 754      *many. he* and more letters are destroyed at the end of the line following *many*.
- 755      *wythowtyn. ow* is partially destroyed; *tyn* is completely destroyed; in the second *wythowtyn*, *tyn* is completely destroyed.
- 756      *cheselys. y* is partially destroyed; *s* is completely destroyed.
- 758      *of<sub>i</sub>. man* is expuncuted after *of*.
- 778      *fadrys. dr* partially destroyed.
- 779      *and. and* completely destroyed.
- 780      *in yow alle. alle* is completely destroyed.
- 781      *hast. h* is completely destroyed; *a* is partially destroyed.
- 801      *Jhesu mercy quod Salthows.* This scribal thanksgiving is centered and written on the bottom of the last leaf.



## Glossary

<b>a</b>	<i>a; have</i>	<b>avowtré</b>	<i>adultery</i>
<b>abakke</b>	<i>aback</i>	<b>awte</b>	<i>ought</i>
<b>abauyd</b>	<i>afraid</i>	<b>awter</b>	<i>altar</i>
<b>abeyen</b>	<i>obey</i>		
<b>abowte</b>	<i>bought</i>	<b>bannyd</b>	<i>reproached, cursed</i>
<b>abowtyn</b>	<i>about</i>	<b>be</b>	<i>by</i>
<b>abrode</b>	<i>abroad</i>	<b>be, ben</b>	<i>be</i>
<b>abydyn</b>	<i>abide</i>	<b>bedys</b>	<i>prayers</i>
<b>abyte</b>	<i>habit (clothing)</i>	<b>beforn</b>	<i>before</i>
<b>afeerd</b>	<i>afraid</i>	<b>beggen</b>	<i>beg</i>
<b>aftorn</b>	<i>before</i>	<b>begynne</b>	<i>begin</i>
<b>aftornoon</b>	<i>before noon</i>	<b>behest</b>	<i>promise; behestyd, promised</i>
<b>agyd</b>	<i>aged</i>	<b>behyte</b>	<i>promised</i>
<b>aknowen</b>	<i>confess, avow</i>	<b>belevyn</b>	<i>believe</i>
<b>algaltsys</b>	<i>anyway, anyhow</i>	<b>beryn</b>	<i>endure, carry</i>
<b>aloon</b>	<i>alone</i>	<b>besyn</b>	<i>busy</i>
<b>alto</b>	<i>completely, utterly. Used before a verb,</i> <i>alto heightens the intensity of the verb</i>	<b>bode, bodyn</b>	<i>commanded</i>
<b>anethe</b>	<i>hardly</i>	<b>bode</b>	<i>abode</i>
<b>ankres</b>	<i>anchoress</i>	<b>boystows</b>	<i>(of persons) crude, unmannerly,</i> <i>violent; (of things) big, coarse, rough,</i> <i>huge; loud</i>
<b>ankyr</b>	<i>male anchorite</i>	<b>brekyn</b>	<i>break</i>
<b>anoon</b>	<i>anon, at once</i>	<b>brenn</b>	<i>burn</i>
<b>anow (inow)</b>	<i>enough</i>	<b>brestyn, brostyn</b>	<i>burst</i>
<b>apayd</b>	<i>satisfied</i>	<b>brothel</b>	<i>scoundrel</i>
<b>aqwityn</b>	<i>acquitted, repaid</i>	<b>buxom</b>	<i>gentle, kind, obedient</i>
<b>arn</b>	<i>are</i>	<b>byddyn</b>	<i>command, bid</i>
<b>asayn, assayn</b>	<i>try, assay</i>	<b>byen</b>	<i>buy</i>
<b>aseeth</b>	<i>compensation</i>		
<b>asoyled</b>	<i>absolved</i>	<b>cam</b>	<i>see comyn</i>
<b>aswythe</b>	<i>quickly</i>	<b>castyn</b>	<i>to cast, to throw</i>
<b>astonynd</b>	<i>bewildered, astonished</i>	<b>chalengyn</b>	<i>to reprove</i>
<b>audiens</b>	<i>audience</i>		

## Glossary

<b>cher (chere)</b> <i>manner, countenance</i>	<b>deryn</b> <i>to harm, injure</i>
<b>cherschyn</b> <i>cherish</i>	<b>desyren</b> <i>to desire</i>
<b>cheryn</b> <i>comfort</i>	<b>deyn</b> <i>to die</i>
<b>chesyn</b> <i>choose</i>	<b>disese (dysese)</b> <i>anxiety, trouble</i>
<b>clef</b> <i>see clevyn</i>	<b>disesen</b> <i>to distress</i>
<b>clene</b> <i>entirely</i>	<b>diswer</b> <i>doubt</i>
<b>clepyn</b> <i>call</i>	<b>don</b> <i>to cause</i>
<b>clevyn</b> <i>cleave</i>	<b>dowtyn</b> <i>to fear</i>
<b>comfortyn</b> <i>comfort</i>	<b>drawt</b> <i>physical or spiritual pull (or attraction); draught</i>
<b>communycacyon</b> <i>talk</i>	<b>drawyn</b> <i>to draw or pull</i>
<b>comown, komown</b> <i>to associate or have dealings with, to have sexual intercourse with, to talk with, to communicate spiritually with</i>	<b>dredyn</b> <i>to dread</i>
<b>compassyf(e)</b> <i>compassionate, piteous</i>	<b>drewyn</b> <i>see drawyn</i>
<b>compuncyon</b> <i>remorse, contrition, repentance</i>	<b>drow, drowyn</b> <i>see drawyn</i>
<b>comyn</b> <i>come</i>	<b>drynkyn</b> <i>to drink</i>
<b>conseyt</b> <i>thought, opinion</i>	<b>dryvyn</b> <i>to drive</i>
<b>constreyn</b> <i>constrain</i>	<b>durst</b> <i>see dar</i>
<b>contré</b> <i>see cuntré</i>	<b>duryn</b> <i>endure</i>
<b>contrycyon</b> <i>contrition</i>	<b>dyrke</b> <i>dark</i>
<b>cooste</b> <i>district</i>	<b>dyspeyren</b> <i>to despair</i>
<b>cryyn</b> <i>cry</i>	<b>dyspite</b> <i>contempt, despite</i>
<b>cun (kan)</b> <i>be able to, know how to</i>	<b>dysseyt</b> <i>deceit</i>
<b>cuntré</b> <i>country</i>	<b>dyvers</b> <i>divers, diverse</i>
<b>cure</b> <i>spiritual responsibility</i>	
<b>curyd</b> <i>covered</i>	<b>ech</b> <i>each</i>
<b>cyté (cité)</b> <i>city</i>	<b>eer (erys)</b> <i>ear</i>
<b>dalyawns</b> <i>intimate conversation, gossip, spiritual conversation, amorous talk, sexual union</i>	<b>eftsonys</b> <i>again</i>
<b>dalyin</b> <i>to talk, to gossip, to engage in serious conversation, to flirt, to embrace</i>	<b>eld</b> <i>old</i>
<b>dar (durst, durstyn)</b> <i>dare</i>	<b>ellys</b> <i>else</i>
<b>ded, dede</b> <i>see don</i>	<b>enchewyn</b> <i>eschew, avoid</i>
<b>dedist, dedyn</b> <i>see don</i>	<b>encresyn</b> <i>to increase</i>
<b>defawte</b> <i>lack</i>	<b>enduryn</b> <i>to last, endure, bear</i>
<b>demyn</b> <i>deem</i>	<b>enformyn</b> <i>to inform</i>
<b>denyin</b> <i>deny</i>	<b>enjoyn</b> <i>to rejoice</i>
	<b>enspir</b> <i>to inspire</i>
	<b>entent</b> <i>meaning</i>
	<b>enterly</b> <i>completely</i>
	<b>entren</b> <i>enter</i>
	<b>envyows</b> <i>envious</i>
	<b>er</b> <i>or; before; rather</i>
	<b>erde</b> <i>earth</i>

## Glossary

<b>ermyte</b> <i>hermit</i>	<b>gan</b> <i>began</i>
<b>esy</b> <i>easy</i>	<b>gaf</b> <i>see gevyn</i>
<b>esyn</b> <i>to ease</i>	<b>gat, gate</b> <i>see getyn</i>
<b>etyn</b> <i>to eat</i>	<b>getyn</b> <i>to get</i>
<b>evyn</b> <i>evening</i>	<b>gevyn</b> <i>to give</i>
<b>evyn Crystyn</b> <i>fellow Christian</i>	<b>gon</b> <i>to go</i>
<b>evynsong</b> <i>evensong (vespers)</i>	<b>gostly</b> <i>spiritual</i>
<b>evyr</b> <i>ever</i>	<b>grawntyn</b> <i>to grant</i>
<b>explyntyng</b> <i>complaining</i>	<b>gynnyng</b> <i>beginning</i>
<b>eylyn</b> <i>to ail, afflict</i>	
<b>fadyr</b> <i>father</i>	<b>han</b> <i>to have</i>
<b>faryn</b> <i>to fare</i>	<b>heed</b> <i>head; heed</i>
<b>fastyn</b> <i>to fast</i>	<b>heele</b> <i>health</i>
<b>faylyn</b> <i>to fail</i>	<b>heldyn</b> <i>to hold</i>
<b>fayr</b> <i>fair</i>	<b>hem</b> <i>them</i>
<b>feithyn</b> <i>to believe</i>	<b>her</b> <i>hair</i>
<b>feld</b> <i>field</i>	<b>her</b> <i>here; hear</i>
<b>felyn</b> <i>to feel</i>	<b>her(e)</b> <i>their</i>
<b>felyng</b> <i>feeling</i>	<b>herborwe</b> <i>lodging</i>
<b>fer</b> <i>far</i>	<b>heretyk</b> <i>heretic</i>
<b>fer</b> <i>fear</i>	<b>heryn</b> <i>to hear</i>
<b>ferd</b> <i>fares (see faryn)</i>	<b>hevyd</b> <i>head</i>
<b>feryn</b> <i>to cause to be afraid, to be afraid</i>	<b>hey</b> <i>high</i>
<b>fettyn</b> <i>to fetch</i>	<b>hol, hool</b> <i>whole, well</i>
<b>feynyd</b> <i>feigned</i>	<b>holpyn</b> <i>to help (helpyn)</i>
<b>feyth</b> <i>faith</i>	<b>homly</b> <i>familiar</i>
<b>folwyn</b> <i>to follow</i>	<b>homlynes</b> <i>familiarity</i>
<b>fond, fonde</b> <i>see fyndyn</i>	<b>hoo</b> <i>who</i>
<b>forberyn</b> <i>to forego</i>	<b>hoot</b> <i>hot</i>
<b>forseyd, foreseyd, fornseyd</b> <i>aforesaid</i>	<b>hors</b> <i>horse</i>
<b>fors</b> <i>head, care</i>	<b>howsel</b> <i>to administer the Eucharist to</i>
<b>frend</b> <i>friend</i>	<b>hy</b> <i>high</i>
<b>frer</b> <i>friar; Grey Frer or Frer Menowr,</i>	<b>hyd</b> <i>hidden</i>
<i>Franciscan friar; Frer Prechowr, Dominican friar; Whyte Frer, Carmelite friar</i>	<b>hyer</b> <i>to hire</i>
<b>fyndyn</b> <i>to find</i>	<b>hygth</b> <i>was called</i>
<b>fyr</b> <i>fire</i>	<b>hyte</b> <i>called</i>
<b>fyten</b> <i>to fight</i>	 
	<b>Ingland</b> <i>England</i>
	<b>inow</b> <i>enough</i>
	<b>irken</b> <i>to anger</i>

## Glossary

<b>jangelyd</b> <i>talked idly, gossiped</i>	<b>lond</b> <i>land</i>
<b>jape</b> <i>jibe, joke</i>	<b>longyth</b> <i>belongeth, pertains to</i>
<b>kan</b> <i>see cun</i>	<b>losyn</b> <i>to loose</i>
<b>kende</b> <i>friendly, natural</i>	<b>lowde</b> <i>loud</i>
<b>kepyn</b> <i>to keep, guard</i>	<b>lych</b> <i>like</i>
<b>kerche</b> <i>kerchief</i>	<b>lyfe</b> <i>life</i>
<b>kest</b> <i>see castyn</i>	<b>lyke</b> <i>to please</i>
<b>klene</b> <i>clean</i>	<b>lykyng</b> <i>liking</i>
<b>kne</b> <i>knee</i>	<b>lyn</b> <i>to lie, to kneel, to stay</i>
<b>knowlach</b> <i>knowledge</i>	<b>lytyl</b> <i>little</i>
<b>komown</b> <i>see comowyn</i>	 
<b>kyd</b> <i>known</i>	<b>maystyr</b> <i>master</i>
<b>kytt</b> <i>cut</i>	<b>mech</b> <i>much</i>
 	<b>medelyn</b> <i>have to do with, associate with, have sexual intercourse with</i>
<b>lak</b> <i>lack</i>	<b>medyl</b> <i>have intercourse with</i>
<b>languryn</b> <i>to languish</i>	<b>medytacyon</b> <i>meditation</i>
<b>langwage</b> <i>language</i>	<b>meke</b> <i>meek</i>
<b>latyn</b> <i>to allow</i>	<b>mend, mende</b> <i>mind, memory</i>
<b>lawghe</b> <i>laugh</i>	<b>mene</b> <i>mean</i>
<b>lazar</b> <i>leper</i>	<b>meny</b> <i>household</i>
<b>lech, leche</b> <i>see lych</i>	<b>merveyle</b> <i>marvel, wonder</i>
<b>ledyn</b> <i>to lead</i>	<b>merveylyn</b> <i>to marvel</i>
<b>leevyn</b> <i>lightning</i>	<b>messe</b> <i>mass</i>
<b>leevyn</b> <i>to leave, to relinquish</i>	<b>mesuryn</b> <i>to measure, control</i>
<b>lengar</b> <i>longer</i>	<b>mete</b> <i>food, meal, mid-day meal</i>
<b>leryn</b> <i>to teach</i>	<b>metyn</b> <i>to meet</i>
<b>les than</b> <i>unless</i>	<b>mevyng</b> <i>moving</i>
<b>lestyn</b> <i>to last</i>	<b>meyr</b> <i>mayor</i>
<b>lesyng</b> <i>a lie</i>	<b>mict</b> <i>see mown</i>
<b>lesyng</b> <i>losing</i>	<b>mo</b> <i>more</i>
<b>letchery</b> <i>lechery</i>	<b>modyr</b> <i>mother</i>
<b>lettyn</b> <i>to hinder</i>	<b>monyschyg</b> <i>admonishing</i>
<b>levar</b> <i>rather</i>	<b>mornyn</b> <i>to mourn</i>
<b>leve</b> <i>permission; farewell; live</i>	<b>mornyn</b> <i>mourning</i>
<b>levyn</b> <i>to believe</i>	<b>morwyn, morwenyng</b> <i>morning</i>
<b>levyn</b> <i>to live</i>	<b>mot</b> <i>may, must</i>
<b>levyn(g)</b> <i>living, manner of living</i>	<b>mown</b> <i>to be able</i>
<b>lokyn</b> <i>to look</i>	<b>myth</b> <i>might (see mown)</i>
<b>Lollare</b> <i>Lollard, heretic, follower of beliefs associated with John Wycliff</i>	<b>mowth</b> <i>mouth</i>
	<b>myschef</b> <i>bad luck, misfortune</i>

## Glossary

**mythy** *mighty*

**nayle** *nail*

**nede** *need*

**neybowrys** *neighbors*

**noyin** *to harm, annoy*

**noysen** *to make noise, broadcast*

**obeyn** *obey*

**occupyn** *to occupy*

**on** *one*

**onyd** *joined*

**onys** *once*

**opyn** *open*

**ordeyn** *look out for, provide*

**ower** *our*

**owyn** *own, ought*

**owyr** *hour*

**owyth** *ought*

**pacyens** *patience*

**parceyve** *perceive*

**parfyt** *perfect*

**party** *part*

**partyn** *to part*

**passyn** *to pass*

**peyr** *pair*

**plenary** *plenary, full, entire, complete*

**plesyn** *to please*

**ponysch** *to punish*

**powyr** *power, poor*

**prest** *priest*

**prevy** *privy, private*

**prevyn** *to prove*

**preysyn** *to praise*

**profyr** *proffer, offer*

**punched** *see ponysch*

**receyvyn** *to receive*

**recur** *recovery*

**redyn** *to read*

**rehersyn** *to repeat*

**renne** *to run*

**repref** *reproof*

**reprebyn** *to reprove*

**rewlyn** *to rule*

**roryn** *to cry loudly*

**rydyn** *to ride*

**rytful** *righteous*

**sad** *sober, wise*

**saf, save** *except*

**sattelyn** *to settle*

**schal** *shall*

**sche** *she*

**schewyn** *to show*

**schrevyn** *shrive, be confessed*

**schrewyd** *severe, sharp*

**schynyn** *to shine*

**sekyn** *seek*

**sekyr** *sure*

**sen** *to see*

**sere, ser, syr** *sir; serys* *sirs*

**sesyn** *to cease*

**settyn** *to set*

**seyin** *to say*

**seylen** *to sail*

**sithyn, sythyn** *afterward, then*

**skape** *to escape*

**slawnder** *slander*

**somdel** *somewhat; in some part*

**sorwyn** *to sorrow*

**speryng** *asking*

**steryn** *to stir, to move; steryd* *stirred*

**stondyn** *to stand*

**sufferyn** *to suffer, to endure*

**sumdeel** *somewhat*

**swech** *such*

**swem** *sorrow; swemful* *sorrowful*

**swete** *sweet*

**swownyn** *to swoon*

**syhyng** *sighing*

## *Glossary*

**synnyn** *to sin*

**sythen** *since, because*

**syttyn** *to sit*

**tabyl** *table*

**teche** *teach*

**thedyr** *thither*

**thretyng** *threatening*

**to . . . ward** *toward, i.e., to Yorkward*

**too** *two*

**trostyn** *to trust*

**trowyn** *to believe*

**wost** *see wetyn*

**wreth** *anger*

**wroth** *angry*

**wyf** *wife*

**wysten** *see wetyn*

**xal** *shall*

**undirnemen, undyrnemen** *reprove, criticize*

**unkende** *unnatural*

**unpossybyl** *impossible*

**use** *use, custom*

**usyn** *to use sexually*

**utas** *octave, the week following a holiday*

**velany** *shame*

**veniawns** *vengeance*

**very** *true*

**veynglory** *vainglory, pride*

**voydyn** *to void, vomit*

**voys** *voice*

**welyn** *will*

**wene** *suppose, think*

**werkyn** *to work*

**wetyn** *to know*

**whech** *which*

**whyl** *while*

**wist** *see wetyn*

**wistly** *certainly*

**woke** *week*

**won** *accustomed*

**wonyн** *to dwell*

**worschep** *honor, esteem*

**worschepyn** *to worship, honor*