

The
Romance of the Rose

BY GUILLAUME DE LORRIS

AND JEAN DE MEUN

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES DAHLBERG

THIRD EDITION

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TO MY FATHER AND MOTHER

2

THE GOD OF LOVE AND THE AFFAIR OF THE HEART

1681 The God of Love, who had maintained his constant watch over me and had followed me with drawn bow, stopped near a fig tree, and when he saw that I had singled out the bud that pleased me more than did any of the others, he immediately took an arrow and, when the string was in the nock, drew the bow—a wondrously strong one—up to his ear and shot at me in such a way that with great force he sent the point through the eye and into my heart. Then a chill seized me, one from which I have, since that time, felt many a shiver, even beneath a warm fur-lined tunic. Pierced thus by the arrow, I fell straightway to the earth. My heart failed; it played me false. For a long time I lay there in swoon, and when I came out of it and had my senses and reason, I was very weak and thought that I had shed a great quantity of blood. But the point that pierced me drew no blood whatever; the wound was quite dry. I took the arrow in my two hands and began to pull hard at it, sighing as I pulled. I pulled so hard that I drew out the feathered shaft, but the barbed point called Beauty was so fixed inside my heart that it could not be withdrawn. It remains within; I still feel it, and yet no blood has ever come from there.

1721 I was in great pain and anguish because of my doubled danger: I didn't know what to do, what to say, or where to find a physician for my wound, since I expected no remedy for it, either of herbs or roots. But my heart drew me toward the rosebud, for it longed for no other place. If I had had it in my power, it would have restored my life. Even the sight and scent alone were very soothing for my sorrows.

1733 I began then to draw toward the bud with its sweet exhalations. Love selected another arrow, worked in gold. It was the second arrow and its name was Simplicity. It has caused many a man and woman all over the world to fall in love. When Love saw me

approach, he did not threaten me, but shot me with the arrow that was made of neither iron nor steel so that the point entered my heart through my eye. No man born, I believe, will ever dislodge it from there, for I tried, without any great joy, to pull the shaft from me, but the point remained within. Now know for a truth that if I had been full of desire for the rosebud before, my wish was greater now. As my woes gave me greater distress, I had an increased desire to go always toward the little rose that smelled sweeter than violets. I would have done better to go farther away, but I could not refuse what my heart commanded. I had to go perforce, always where it aspired to be. But the bowman, who strove mightily and with great diligence to wound me, did not let me move without hurt in that direction. To madden me further, he caused the third arrow, called Courtesy, to fly to my heart. The wound was deep and wide, and I had to fall in a swoon beneath a branching olive tree. I lay there a long time without moving. When I was able to stir, I took the arrow and straightway removed the shaft from my side, but, no matter what I might do, I could not draw out the point.

There I sat, in deep distress and thought. My wound tormented me very much and urged me to approach the rosebud that pleased me. But the bowman frightened me away, as indeed he should, for he who has been scalded must fear all water. However, necessity is a powerful force; even if I had seen it raining stones and crossbow bolts as thick as hail, I would still have had to go toward the rosebud, for Love, who excels all other things, gave me the strength and heart to perform his commandment. I rose then to my feet, as feeble and weak as a wounded man, and made a great effort to move forward, nothing daunted by the archer, toward the rosebush where my heart longed to be. But there were so many thorns, thistles, and brambles, that I hadn't the power to pass through the thicket of thorns and reach the rosebud. I had to remain near the hedge, which was next to the rosebushes and made of very sharp thorns. But it was a delight for me to be so near that I smelled the sweet perfume that came from the rosebud, and I was very pleased with what I could see freely. My reward at this sight was so great that I forgot my woes in my delight and joy. I was greatly healed and comforted; nothing ever pleased me as much as to rest in that place. I would never have sought to leave

it. But after I had been there a long time, the God of Love, who had shattered my heart in making it his target, made a new assault upon me. To my discomfort he shot another arrow and made a new wound in my heart, under my breast. This arrow's name was Company, and there is none that subdues a lady or young man more quickly. Immediately the great anguish of my wounds began again. I swooned three times in a row.

1831

When I revived, I wailed and sighed, for my anguish was growing so much worse that I had no hope, either of cure or of relief. I would rather have been dead than alive, for, in my opinion, Love would make a martyr of me in the end. I could not part from him by any other means. Meanwhile he had taken another arrow, one that I value highly and consider very powerful. This arrow is Fair Seeming; it does not allow any lover to repent of serving Love, no matter what woes he may suffer. It has a point for piercing and an edge as keen as a steel razor. But Love had anointed it very well with a precious unguent so that it might not hurt too greatly. He did not want me to die but to be relieved by the power of the unguent, one which was full of healing comfort. Love had made it with his own hands to comfort pure lovers and to help them support their troubles. When he shot the arrow at me he made a great wound in my heart, but the ointment, spreading throughout the wound, gave me back the heart which I had lost. Without the sweet ointment I would have been dead and in an evil plight.

1864

Then I drew the shaft from me, but the head, newly polished, remained inside. Thus five of them were so well embedded that they would never be removed. Although the ointment was worth a great deal to me, nevertheless my wound hurt so much that the pain made me change color. This arrow has an unusual property; it brings both sweetness and bitterness. Indeed I felt and understood that it helped me at the same time that it harmed; while the point gave me anguish, the ointment gave relief. One part heals, the other pains, and thus it helps and harms.

1881

Then straightway Love came toward me with quick steps, and as he came he cried out: "Vassal, you are taken. There is no chance for escape or struggle. Surrender without making any resistance. The more willingly you surrender the sooner will you receive mercy. He is a fool who resists the one whom he should flatter and

before whom he would do better to beg. You cannot struggle against me, and I want to teach you that you can gain nothing through folly or pride. Rather submit yourself as a prisoner, as I wish, in peace and with a good will."

1898

I replied simply: "Sir, I surrender willingly, and I shall never defend myself against you. May it never please God for me even to think of ever resisting you, for to do so is neither right nor reasonable. You may do with me what you wish, hang me or kill me. I know very well that I cannot change things, for my life is in your hand. Only through your will can I live until tomorrow, and, since I shall never have joy and health from any other, I await them from you. If your hand, which has wounded me, does not give me a remedy, if you wish to make me your prisoner or if you do not deign to do so, I shall not count myself deceived. Know too that I feel no anger whatever. I have heard so much good spoken about you that I want to give my heart and body over to your service, to be used entirely at your discretion, for if I do your will I cannot complain of anything. I still believe that at some time I shall receive the mercy that I await, and under such conditions I submit myself prostrate before you."

1926

With these words, I wanted to kiss his foot, but he took me by the hand and said, "I love you very much and hold you in esteem for the way that you have replied here. Such a reply never came from a lowborn fellow with poor training. Moreover, you have won so much that, for your benefit, I want you to do homage to me from now on: You will kiss me on my mouth, which no base fellow touches. I do not allow any common man, any butcher, to touch it; anyone whom I take thus as my man must be courteous and open. Serving me is, without fail, painful and burdensome; but I do you a great honor, and you should be very glad—since Love carries the standard and banner of courtesy—that you have so good a master and a lord of such high renown. His bearing is so good, so sweet, open, and gentle, that no villainy, no wrong or evil training can dwell in anyone who is bent on serving and honoring him."

1955

Immediately, with joined hands, I became his man. And you may understand that I grew very proud when his mouth kissed mine; this gift gave me great joy. Then he required sureties from me: "Friend," he said, "I have received many homages from one

and another person by whom I was later deceived. These criminals, full of falsity, have tricked me many times. I have heard many a complaint about them, and they know how much they burden me. If I can get them into my power, I shall sell them dearly. Now, because I love you, I wish to be very certain of you and to bind you to me so that you may not repudiate your promise or covenant with me nor do anything you ought not to do. Since you seem loyal to me, it would be a sin if you were to play me false."

1977 "Sir," I said, "hear me. I don't know why you ask pledges or surety of me. Already you know for a truth that you have so ravished and captured my heart that without your permission it could do nothing for me even if it wished to do so. This heart is yours, not mine, for it is bound, for good or ill, to do your pleasure, and no man can dispossess you of it. You have placed within it a garrison that will guard and rule it well. Beyond all that, if you fear anything, make a key for it and carry it with you. The key will serve in place of a pledge."

1994 "By my head," said Love, "that idea is not a wild one, and I agree to it. He who has command over the heart is sufficiently lord of the body; and he who asks more is unreasonable." Then from his purse he drew a small, well-made key made of pure, refined gold. "With this," he said, "I shall lock your heart, and I require no other guarantee. My jewels are under this key; it is smaller than your little finger, yet it is the mistress of my jewel-box, and as such its power is great." Then he touched my side and locked my heart so softly that I hardly felt the key.

2011 Thus I did all his will, and when I had put him out of doubt, I said:

2013 "Sir, I have a great capacity for doing what you wish. But, by the faith that you owe me, receive my service with thanks. I do not say so out of weakness, for I do not fear your service in any way, but because a sergeant exerts himself in vain to perform worthy service if it does not please the lord for whom he does it."

2023 Love replied, "Now do not be distressed. Since you are installed in my household, I shall take your service with thanks and raise you to high station if some wickedness does not steal it from you. Perhaps, however, such elevation will not come immediately. Great fortunes do not come in a few hours; pain and delay are necessary for them. Wait and endure the distress that now pains and wounds

you, for I know very well by what potion you will be brought to your cure. If you maintain your loyalty I shall give you a marsh mallow unguent that will heal your wounds. By my head, it will certainly appear if you serve with a good heart, and it will depend on how you fulfill, night and day, the commandments that I prescribe for pure lovers."

"Sir," I said, "for the grace of God, before you move from here 2043 charge me with your commandments. I am in good heart to perform them, but perhaps if I didn't know them I could go astray immediately. Therefore, since I don't want to be mistaken in anything, I desire very much to learn them."

Love replied: "What you say is very good. Now listen and 2051 remember them. A master wastes his effort when the disciple does not turn his heart toward retaining what he hears so that he might remember it." The God of Love then charged me, word by word, with his commandments; this romance portrays them well. Let him who wishes to love give his attention to it, for the romance improves from this point on. From now on one will do well to listen to it, if he is one who knows how to recount it, for the end of the dream is very beautiful, and its matter is new. I tell you that he who will hear the end of the dream can learn a great deal about the games of Love, provided that he wishes to wait while I tell the tale in French and explain the dream's significance. The truth, which is hidden, will be quite open to you when you hear me explain the dream, for it doesn't contain a lying word.

"First of all," said Love, "I wish and command that, if you do 2077 not want to commit a wrong against me, you must abandon villainy forever. I curse and excommunicate all those who love villainy. Since villainy makes them base, it is not right that I love it. A villain is cruel and pitiless; he does not understand the idea of service or friendship.

"Next, guard well against repeating anything about other people 2087 which should be kept quiet. Slandering is not a good characteristic. Take, for example, the seneschal Kay: in former days, he was hated on account of his jeers, and he had a bad reputation. Just as men praised Gawain, who was well trained, on account of his courtesy, so they blamed Kay because he was wicked and cruel, insolent and evil-tongued beyond all other knights.

"Be reasonable and easy to know, soft-spoken and just toward 2099

men of both high and low rank. Cultivate the habit, when you go along the streets, of being the first to greet other people; if someone greets you first, before you have opened your mouth, take care to return his greeting without delay.

2109 "Next, take care not to utter dirty words or anything bawdy. You should never open your mouth to name anything base. I do not consider any man courteous who names anything that is filthy or ugly.

2115 "Honor all women and exert yourself to serve them. If you hear any slanderer who goes around detracting women, take him to task and tell him to keep quiet. If you can, do something that is pleasing to ladies and girls, so that they will hear good reports told and retold about you. By this means you can rise in people's esteem.

2125 "After all this, guard against pride, for pride, rightly understood and considered, is madness and sin. He who is tainted with pride cannot bend his heart to serve nor to make an entreaty. The proud man does the contrary of what a pure lover should do.

2133 "He, however, who wants to take trouble for love must conduct himself with elegance. The man who seeks love is worth nothing without elegance. Elegance is not pride. One is worth more for being elegant, provided that he be empty of pride, so that he is neither foolish nor presumptuous. Outfit yourself beautifully, according to your income, in both dress and footwear. Beautiful garments and adornments improve a man a great deal. Therefore you should give your clothes to someone who knows how to do good tailoring, who will seat the seams well and make the sleeves fit properly. You should have fine laced shoes and small boots and get new ones often, and you must see that they are so close-fitting that the vulgar will go around arguing over the way you are going to get into or out of them. Deck yourself out with gloves, a belt, and a silk purse; if you are not rich enough to do so, then restrain yourself. You should, however, maintain yourself as beautifully as you can without ruining yourself. A chaplet of flowers that costs little, or of roses at Pentecost—everyone can have these, since great wealth is not required for them.

2165 "Allow no dirt on your person: wash your hands and scrub your teeth. If the least black shows under your fingernails, don't let it remain there. Sew your sleeves and comb your hair, but do not

rouge or paint your face, for such a custom belongs only to ladies or to men of bad repute, who have had the misfortune to find a love contrary to Nature.

"Next, you should remember to keep a spirit of liveliness. Seek out joy and delight. Love cares nothing for a gloomy man. It's a courtly disease through which one laughs, plays, and has a good time. It is thus that lovers have hours of joy and hours of torment. At one hour they feel that the sickness of love is sweet, at another, bitter. The disease of love is very changeable. Now the lover is playful, now tormented, now desolated; at one hour he weeps and at another sings. If, then, you can produce some diverting entertainment by which you might be agreeable to people, I command you to do so. Everyone in all places should do what he knows suits him best, for such conduct brings praise, esteem, and gratitude.

"If you feel yourself active and light, don't resist the impulse to jump; if you are a good horseman, you should spur your mount over hill and dale; if you know how to break lances, you can gain great esteem from doing so; and if you are graceful at arms, you will be ten times loved for that quality. If you have a clear, sound voice and are urged to sing, you should not try to excuse yourself, for a beautiful song is very pleasing. Moreover, it is very advantageous for a young fellow to know how to play the viol, to flute, and to dance. By these means he can further himself a great deal.

"Don't let yourself be thought miserly, for such a reputation could be very troublesome. It is fitting for lovers to give more freely of what they have than do those vulgar, stupid simpletons. No man who doesn't like to give can ever know anything about love. If anyone wants to take pains in loving, he must certainly avoid avarice, for he who, for the sake of a glance or a pleasant smile, has given his heart away completely should certainly, after so rich a gift, give his possessions away without any reserve.

"Now I want to recall briefly what I have told you so that you will remember, for a speech is less difficult to retain when it is short. Whoever wants to make Love his master must be courteous and without pride; he should keep himself elegant and gay and be esteemed for his generosity.

"Next, I ordain that night and day, in a penitential spirit and without turning back, you place your thought on love, that you think of it always, without ceasing, and that you recall the sweet

heart whose joy dwells so strongly in you. And in order that you may be a pure lover, I wish and command you to put your heart in a single place so that it be not divided, but whole and without deceit, for I do not like division. Whoever divides his heart among several places has a little bit of it everywhere. But I do not in the least fear him who puts his whole heart in one place; therefore I want you to do so. Take care, however, that you do not lend it, for if you had done so, I would think it a contemptible act; give it rather as a gift with full rights of possession, and you will have greater merit. The favor shown in lending something is soon returned and paid for, but the reward for something given as a gift should be great. Then give it fully and freely, and do so with an easy manner, for one must prize that which is given with a pleasant countenance. I would not give one pea for a gift that one gave in spite of himself.

2265 "When you have given your heart away, as I have been exhorting you to do, things will happen to you that are painful and hard for lovers to bear. Often, when you remember your love, you will be forced to leave other people so that they might not notice the suffering which racks you. You will go all alone to a place apart; then sighs and laments, shivers, and many other sorrows will come to you. You will be tormented in several ways, one hour hot, another cold, ruddy at one time and pale at another. You have never had any fever as bad, neither daily nor quartan agues. Before this fever leaves you, you will indeed have tested the sorrows of love. Now it will happen many times, as you are thinking, that you will forget yourself and for a long time will be like a mute image that neither stirs nor moves, without budging a foot, a hand, or a finger, without moving your eyes or speaking. At the end of this time you will come back in your memory and will give a start of fright upon returning, just like a man who is afraid, and you will sigh from the depths of your heart, for you well know that thus do those who have tested the sorrows that now so torment you.

2299 "Next, it is right for you to remember that your sweetheart is very far away from you. Then you will say: 'Oh God, how miserable I am when I do not go where my heart is! Why do I send my heart thus along? I think constantly of that place and see nothing of it. I cannot send my eyes after my heart, to accompany it; and if my eyes do not do so, I attach no value to the fact that they

see. Must they be held here? No, they should rather go to visit what the heart so desires. I can indeed consider myself a sluggard when I am so far from my heart. God help me, I hold myself a fool. Now I shall go; no longer will I leave my heart. I shall never be at ease until I see some sign of it.' Then you will set out on your way, but under such conditions that you will often fail of your design and spend your steps in vain. What you seek you will not see, and you will have to return, thoughtful and sad, without doing anything more.

"Then you will be in deep misery and be visited again by sighs, pangs, and shivers, that prick more sharply than a hedgehog. Let him who does not know this fact ask it of those who are loyal lovers. You will not be able to calm your heart, but will continue to go around trying to see by chance what you long for so much. And if you can struggle until you attain a glimpse, you will want to be very intent on satisfying and feasting your eyes. As a result of the beauty that you see, great joy will dwell in your heart; know, too, that by looking you will make your heart fry and burn, and as you look you will always quicken the burning fire. The more anyone looks upon what he loves, the more he lights and burns his heart. This fat lights and keeps blazing the fire that makes men love. By custom every lover follows the fire that burns him and lights him. When he feels the fire from close by, he goes away by approaching closer. The fire consists in his contemplation of his sweetheart, who makes him burn. The closer he stays to her the more avid he is for love. Wise men and simpletons all follow this rule: he who is nearer the fire burns more.

"As long as you see your joy thus you will never seek to move, and, when you have to leave, you will remember the whole day afterward what you have seen. And you will think yourself very vilely deceived in one respect, that you never had a heart bold enough to speak with her; like a gauche simpleton you stood near her without uttering a word. You will think that you acted badly in not speaking to the beauty before she had gone. You are bound to become exceedingly vexed, for if you had been able to elicit from her nothing but a fair greeting it would have been worth a hundred marks to you.

"Then you will take to lamenting and will look for an occasion to go again along the street where you saw the one to whom you

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displease them should dissuade them from anything that they want to do. Just as the cat knows by nature the science of catching, and cannot be diverted from it, because he is always born with such a faculty and was never put to school to learn it, just so a woman, however foolish she is, knows by her natural judgment that, whatever excess she commits, good or bad, wrong or right, or whatever you wish, she does nothing that she should not, and she hates whoever corrects her. She does not get this faculty from a teacher, but has had it from the time that she could be born, and she cannot be dissuaded from it. She is always born with such a faculty so that anyone who wished to correct her would never enjoy her love.

9987 "So it is, companion, with your rose, which is such a precious thing that you would not take any possession for it if you could have it. When you are in possession of it, as your hope foretells, and your joy overflows, then take care of it in the way that one should take care of such a little flower. Then you will enjoy the little love with which no other compares; you will not find its equal in perhaps fourteen cities."

10000 "Indeed," I said, "that's true; not in the world, I am sure, so good was, and is, its power to bring happiness."

6

THE ASSAULT ON THE CASTLE.

FALSE SEEMING'S CONTRIBUTION

Thus Friend comforted me. I took great comfort from his counsel, and it seemed to me, indeed, that he knew at least more than Reason did. But before he had finished his argument, which agreed strongly with me, Sweet Thought and Sweet Talk came back, and from then on they stayed close to me and hardly ever left me afterward. But they did not bring Sweet Looks; I did not blame them for having left him, for I knew well that they couldn't bring him. 10003

I took leave and left, and at length I went off all alone across the meadow, bright with grass and flowers, enjoying myself and listening to those sweet birds singing those new songs. Their sweet songs, which so pleased me, filled my heart with all good things. But Friend had burdened me with one thing when he ordered me to turn and flee from the castle and not to go and play around it. I did not know if I could keep myself away, for I always wanted to go there. 10015

After my departure then, I made my way to the left, avoiding the right hand, to seek the shortest road. I would willingly seek such a road, and if it were found, I would throw myself onto it completely unreined, with no denial, unless someone stronger opposed me, to draw Fair Welcoming, the open, sweet, good-natured one, from prison. As soon as I saw the castle weaker than a toasted cake, and the gate open, no one would stop me; indeed I would certainly have the devil in my stomach if I did not capture it and enter therein. Then Fair Welcoming would be liberated. I would not take a hundred thousand pounds for it—I can truly declare it to you—if I could establish myself on that road. In any case, I drew away from the castle, but not very far. 10029

As I was thinking of the new rose in a beautiful, very delightful place near a clear fountain, I saw an honorable lady of high 10051

rank, pleasant of body, with a beautiful figure, standing beneath the shade of an elm tree with her lover beside her. I do not know his name, but hers was Wealth, and she was a lady of great nobility. She guarded the entry to a little path, but she had not entered it. As soon as I saw them, I bowed toward them and saluted them with bent head. They returned my greeting immediately, but that did me little good. In any case, I asked them the right way to Give-Too-Much. Wealth, who spoke first, told me in a speech that was somewhat haughty:

"Here is the road. I am guarding it."

10072 "Ah! Lady, may God protect you. Then I pray you, as long as it does not burden you, to allow me to go by this way to the newly built castle that Jealousy established."

10077 "Vassal," she said, "that will not take place now, for I still know nothing of you. You are not well-arrived, since you are not one of my close friends. I will not set you within that way before perhaps ten years. No man, even though he is from Paris or Amiens, enters there if he is not close to me. I let my friends go there indeed, to carol and dance in balls, and they have a little gay life, but no wise man envies them for it. There they are served with gay times, with farandoles and *espingueries*, tabors and viols, new *rotruenges*, with games of dice, chess, and backgammon, and with
10095 all my immoderate delights. Young men and girls go there, brought together by old mackerel-procuresses, and explore the meadows, gardens, and groves, gayer than parrots. Then, with chaplets of flowers on their heads, they go back together to the stews and bathe together in tubs all prepared in the rooms of the house of Foolish Generosity. She makes them poor and wounds them so that afterward they can hardly be cured. She knows how to sell to them at a high price and make them pay for her service and her hospitality; she takes from them so cruel a tribute that they have to sell their lands before they can turn the whole fee over to her. When I take them there they are full of great joy, but when Poverty brings them back they are cold, trembling, and quite bare. I keep the entry and she the exit. I can never interfere with them, no matter how wise or learned they may be. They can go to the devil, thousands of them in the end.

10119 "I do not say that, if they did so much as to reconcile themselves with me afterward—but that would be a very difficult thing

—I would never be so tired that I would not lead them back to the path again every time that it pleased them, but you know that the more they frequent it the more they repent in the end; because of their shame they dare not look at me. They are so angry and so full of chagrin that each of them is just short of killing himself, and I abandon them because they abandon me. I promise you for certain, without lying, that you will come to repent too late if you ever put your feet there. No bear, when he is thoroughly baited, is so wretched, so prostrated, as you will be if you go there. If Poverty can get you in her power, she will make you give so much that she will let you die of hunger on a little stubble or hay. Hunger was formerly Poverty's chambermaid and served her in such a way that for her service, in which Hunger was eager and ardent, Poverty taught her all sorts of malice and made her the mistress and nurse of Larceny, the ugly young fellow. She nursed him with her own milk and had no other pap to feed him. Her situation, if you want to know it, is neither soft nor on good earth; Hunger lives in a stony field where neither grain, grove, nor thicket grows. This field lies at the end of Scotland, so cold that a little more and it would be marble. Hunger, who sees neither grain nor trees, tears out the very grass with cutting nails, with hard teeth, but, because of the thickly scattered rocks, she finds the grass very sparse. And if I wanted to describe her, I could be quickly free of that task.

"She is long and lean, weak and hollow, and in great want from a diet of oat-bread. Her hair is all bristly, her eyes hard and hollow, her face pale and her lips dry, her cheeks soiled with dirt. Whoever wanted to could see her entrails through her hard skin. Along her flanks, where all humors are lacking, her bones stick out, and she has no stomach whatever, only the place for it, which goes in so deep that the girl's whole chest hangs on her backbone. Her leanness has elongated her fingers and made her knees lose their roundness. Her heels are tall, sharp, and prominent; it looks as though there is no flesh on them, so closely does the lean skin hold to them. The goddess of the harvest, Ceres, who makes the grain grow, does not know how to keep to that road; nor does he who guides her dragons, Triptolemus, know that way. The Fates, who do not want the goddess of fertility and the exhausted sufferer, Hunger, to join themselves together, keep them apart

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from each other. But when Poverty takes hold of you she will lead you there soon enough if you want to go in that direction and be idle, as is your habit. In any case one can certainly turn toward Poverty by other ways than by that which I guard here; one can come to Poverty through an idle, lazy life. If it pleased you to stick to the way I have told you about here, the one toward exhausted, hateful Poverty, in order to attack the strong castle, you could indeed fail to capture it.

10205 "But I think it certain that Hunger will be your close neighbor, for Poverty knows the road better by heart than by parchment instructions. Furthermore, you should know that Hunger the wretched is always so attentive and courteous toward her mistress—whom she neither loves nor values, even though she is supported by her, however exhausted and naked she may be—that she comes to see her every day and sit with her. She takes her by the beak and, uncomfortable and uneasy, kisses her. Then, when she sees Larceny asleep, she takes him by the ear and wakens him. In her distress she leans toward him and counsels and teaches him how he must get things for them, however much he may have to endure for them. And Faint Heart agrees with them, although he dreams in any case of the rope, and the thought makes his hair stand straight out on end for fear that he may see them hang his son Larceny, the trembler, if they can catch him stealing.

10231 "But you will never enter here. Seek your road elsewhere, for you have not served me so well that you have deserved my love."

10235 "Lady," I said, "before God, if I could I would willingly have your grace. As soon as I entered upon that path, I would release Fair Welcoming from the prison within which he is held. If it please you, give me this gift."

10241 "I have understood you well," she said, "and I know that you have not sold all your woods, the great and the small; you have held out a beech, and no man can live without folly as long as he may want to follow Love. As long as men live in such madness, they think that they are very wise. Live! Indeed, they do not do so; rather they die while they dwell in such torment, for one should not give the name life to such madness and folly. Indeed Reason knew what to tell you, but she could not cure you of your stupidity. You know that when you did not believe her you deceived yourself cruelly; in fact, before Reason came to you there

was nothing that held you back, and never afterward, from the time that you loved *par amour*, did you consider me worth anything. Lovers do not want to value me; instead they strain themselves to disparage my goods when I take them away from them, and they reject them elsewhere. Where the devil could one get whatever a lover wanted to spend? Flee from here, and leave me in peace."

Since I could conquer nothing there, I left without delay. The beautiful lady remained with her lover, who was well dressed and adorned. With my thoughts in a turmoil, I went off through the delicious garden, as beautiful and precious as you have heard before; but I took very little delight in this beauty, for I had put all my thought elsewhere. In all times and in all places I thought in what way, without pretense, I would best perform my duty of service, for I would very willingly have done it without fault in anything; if I had committed any fault whatever, my value would not have grown in any way as a result.

My heart held close to and watched over what Friend had advised me. I constantly showed honor to Foul Mouth in all the places where I found him, and I set myself to showing great honor to all my other enemies, and I served them with my might. I don't know if I deserved their thanks, but to gain their esteem I restrained myself from daring to approach the enclosure as I was accustomed to do, for I always wanted to go there. Thus for a long time I performed my penance with such a conscience as God knows, for I did one thing and thought another. In this way I had a double intention, but it was never I, on any occasion, who made it double. I had to pursue treason to gain my end. I had never been a traitor, never yet incriminated myself to anyone.

When Love had tested me thoroughly and saw that he had found me loyal, as loyal in every way as I ought to be toward him, he appeared and, smiling at my discomfort, put his hand on my head and asked if I had done whatever he commanded, how it was with me and how it seemed to me with the rose that had stolen my heart. He knew very well, of course, all that I had done, for God knows the whole of whatever man does.

"Have you performed all the commandments," he asked, "that I give to pure lovers? I do not want to distribute them elsewhere, and pure lovers should never depart from them."

10323 "I do not know, sir, but I have done them as loyally as I know how."

10325 "True, but you are too changeable. Your heart is not very steadfast, but unfortunately full of doubt; indeed I know the whole truth about it. The other day you wanted to leave me. You were just a little short of robbing me of the homage due me, and you made a sorrowful complaint about Idleness and me. Moreover, you said of Hope that she was not certain in her knowledge, and you even considered yourself a fool for coming into my service, and you agreed with Reason. Weren't you indeed a wicked man?"

10339 "Mercy, sir, I have confessed it. You know that I did not flee, and I made my bequest, I well remember, just as one must make it, to those who are bound to you in homage. When Reason came to me she did not consider me unfailingly wise, but reprimanded very severely and preached to me for a long time; indeed she thought that by preaching she could prevent me from serving you. However, no matter how much she knew how to put her mind to it, I did not believe her; without fail—may I not lie—she made me fear, nothing more. But, if it please God, whatever may happen to me, as long as my heart stays with you, and that will be as long as it is not torn out of my body, Reason will never move me to anything which may go against you, or even against any other, of smaller worth. In fact I know for certain that I showed bad grace in ever thinking as I did and in listening to her, and I beg that I may be pardoned, for I wish, in order to amend my life as it pleased you to command, to die and live in your law, without ever following Reason. There is nothing that may erase this law from my heart. Nor may Atropos ever, for anything that I may do, bring death to me except in the performance of your work; instead may she take me in the very task in which Venus operates most willingly. For I do not doubt in any way that no man has so much delight as in this particular. And those who should weep for me, when they see me thus dead, can say: 'Fair sweet friend, you who are placed there in that situation, now it is true, without any fable whatever, that this death is indeed suitable to the life that you led when you kept your soul together with this body.'"

10385 "By my head, now you speak wisely. Now I see that in you my homage is well-used. You are not among the false renegades, the thieves who renounce me when they have done what they

sought. Your heart is very loyal; when you navigate so well, your ship will come to a good harbor, and I pardon you more because of your entreaty than because of any gift, for I wish neither silver nor gold. But in place of the confessional, I want you, before you reconcile yourself with me, to recall all my commandments, for your romance will contain ten of them, counting prohibitions and commandments. If you have remembered them well, you have not thrown a double ace. Say them."

"Willingly. I should flee villainy. I am not to utter slander. I should give and return greetings immediately. I should have no tendency to say anything vile. I must labor at all times to honor all women. I am to flee from pride, to maintain an elegant appearance, to become gay and lively, to abandon myself to being generous, and to give my whole heart in a single place."

"In faith, you know your lesson well; I am in no doubt of it. How is it with you?"

"I am in lively sorrow; my heart is hardly alive."

"Don't you have three comforts?"

"Not at all. I lack Sweet Looks, who used to take away the poison of my sorrow with his most sweet perfume. All three have fled, but of them, the other two came back to me."

"Don't you have Hope?"

"Yes, sir; she does not let me be conquered, for Hope once believed is held to for a long time afterward."

"Fair Welcoming, what has happened to him?"

"He is held in prison, the sweet, open fellow who loved me so much."

"It doesn't matter now; don't be dismayed. By my eyes, you shall yet have more of your will than you are used to having. Since you serve so loyally, I will order my men immediately to lay siege to the strong castle. The barons are strong and active. Before we leave our siege, Fair Welcoming will be brought out from his trap."

The God of Love, without making any specification of time or place in his message, ordered his entire barony to come to his parliament. He begged some; others he commanded. They all came without making any excuse, ready to carry out his wish, each one according to his ability. I shall name them briefly, without rank, in order to gnaw away at my rhymes more quickly.

10449 Lady Idleness, the keeper of the garden, came with the largest banner. Nobility of Heart came, Wealth, Openness, Pity, and Generosity; Boldness, Honor, Courtesy, Delight, Simplicity, and Company; Security, Diversion, and Joy; Gaiety, Beauty, Youth, Humility, and Patience; Skillful Concealment; and Constrained Abstinence, who led False Seeming with her—without him she could hardly come; all these came with all their followers. Each one of them had a very noble heart, but not Constrained Abstinence and False Seeming with his face of pretense. Whatever appearance they put on outside, they embrace Fraud in their thought.

10467 Fraud engendered False Seeming, who goes around stealing men's hearts. His mother's name is Hypocrisy, the dishonored thief who suckled and nursed the filthy hypocrite with a rotten heart who has betrayed many a region with his religious habit.

10475 When the God of Love saw him, his whole heart was disturbed within him. "What is this?" he asked. "Am I dreaming? Tell me, False Seeming, by whose leave have you come into my presence?"

10480 Constrained Abstinence jumped up and took False Seeming by the hand: "Sir," she said, "I brought him with me, and I beg you not to be displeased. He has brought me many honors and comforts; he sustains and consoles me, and if it weren't for him I would be dead from hunger. Therefore you should blame me the less. Although he does not want to love people, still it is important for me that he be loved and called a good man and a saint. He is my friend and I his sweetheart, and he comes with me for companionship."

10493 "So be it," said the God of Love. Thereupon he made a short speech to everyone.

10495 "I have had you come here," he said, "to vanquish Jealousy, who makes martyrs of our lovers and who aspires to hold against me this strong castle that she has erected and that has caused my heart a grievous wound. She has had it so strongly fortified that before we can capture it it will be necessary to fight a great deal. Thus I am full of sorrow and vexation over Fair Welcoming, whom she has imprisoned there and who used to advance our friends' causes so well. If he does not come out from there, I am undone, for I lack Tibullus, who knew my characteristics so well. For his death I shattered my arrows, broke my bow, and dragged my quiver in shreds. His death gave me so much and such anguish

that at his tomb I trailed my poor wings, all torn because I had beaten them so much in my sorrow. My mother wept for his death so much that she nearly died. No man who saw us weeping for him would not have felt pity. There was neither rein nor bridle on our tears. We would have needed Gallus, Catullus, and Ovid, who knew well how to treat of love; but each of them is dead and decayed. Here is Guillaume de Lorris, whose opponent, Jealousy, brings him so much anguish and sorrow that he is in danger of dying if I do not think about saving him. He took counsel with me willingly, like one who is wholly mine; and he was right, for it is for him that we put ourselves to the trouble of assembling all our barons to carry off Fair Welcoming or steal him. But he is not, let it be said, very wise. Still, it would be a very great pity if I lost so loyal a sergeant, when I both can and should help him; he has served me so loyally that he has deserved well of me. I should sally forth and gird myself to burst the walls and tower and to lay siege to the castle with all the power that I have. He should serve me still more, for, to merit my grace, he is to begin the romance in which all my commandments will be set down, and he will finish it up to the point where he will say to Fair Welcoming, who now languishes, unjustly and in sorrow, in the prison: 'I am terribly afraid that you may have forgotten me, and I am in sorrow and pain. If I lose your good will, there will never be any comfort for me, since I have no confidence elsewhere.' Here Guillaume shall rest. May his tomb be full of balm, of incense, myrrh, and aloes, so well has he served me, so well did he praise me!

"Then will come Jean Chopinel with gay heart and lively body. He will be born at Meung-sur-Loire; he will serve me his whole life, feasting and fasting, without avarice or envy, and he will be such a very wise man that he will have no concern for Reason, who hates and blames my unguents, which exhale a perfume sweeter than balm. And if it happens, however things go, that he fails in any respect—for there is no man who does not sin, and each person always has some blemish—he will have so pure a heart toward me that he will always, at least in the end, repent of his misdeed when he feels himself at fault, and then he will not want to betray me. He will be so fond of the romance that he will want to finish it right to the end, if time and place can be

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10587 found. For when Guillaume shall cease, more than forty years after his death—may I not lie—Jean will continue it, and because of Fair Welcoming's misfortune, and through the despairing fear that he may have lost the good will that Fair Welcoming had shown him before, he will say, 'And perhaps I have lost it. At least I do not despair of it.' And he will set down all the other speeches, whatever they may be, wise or foolish, up to the time when he will have cut the most beautiful red rose on its green, leafy branch, to the time when it is day and he awakes. Then he will want to explicate the affair in such a way that nothing can remain hidden. If they could have given their counsel in this matter, they would have given it to me immediately; but that cannot now take place through Guillaume nor through Jean, who is yet to be born, for he is not here present. Thus the situation remains so grievous that certainly, after he is born, if I do not come to him, all furnished with wings, to read your sentence to him as soon as he emerges from infancy, I dare swear and guarantee you that he could never finish it.

10617 "And since it could happen that this Jean who is yet to be born might, perhaps, be hindered, and since such a situation would be a sin and sorrow, a detriment to lovers, for he will do them much good, I pray to Lucina, the goddess of infancy, to grant that he be born without pain and difficulty so that he may live for a long time. And then afterward, when he comes to the point where Jupiter will take him alive and he will have to be made to drink, even from before the time when he is weaned, from the double casks that he always has, the one clear, the other roiled, the one sweet and the other bitterer than soot or the sea, and when he is put in his cradle, I shall cover him with my wings because he will be so much my friend. I shall sing to him such airs that, after he is out of his infancy, he will, indoctrinated with my knowledge, so flute our words through crossroads and through schools, in the language of France, before audiences throughout the kingdom, that those who hear these words will never die from the sweet pains of love, provided that they believe only him. For he will read so fittingly that all those alive should call this book *The Mirror for Lovers*, so much good will they see there for them, provided that Reason, that wretched coward, be not believed.

10655 "Therefore, I wish to be counseled here, for you are all my

counselors. And I beg your grace with joined palms that this poor wretched Guillaume, who has borne himself so well toward me, may be helped and comforted. And if I did not beg you for him, I should certainly beg you at least that you give Jean the advantage of lightening his burden so that he may write more easily, for I prophesy that he will be born. I beg you also on behalf of the others who will come and who will try with devotion to follow my commandments, which they will find written in the book, that they may overcome Jealousy's envious machinations and destroy all the castles that she will dare erect. Advise me what we shall do, how we shall deploy our host, in which part we can best injure them in order to destroy their castle soonest."

Thus Love spoke to them, and they received his speech well. 10679 When he had finished his reasoning, the barons consulted among themselves. They supported several opinions, and different ones said different things, but after several of them composed their disagreements, they announced their consensus to the God of Love.

"Sir," they said, "we are agreed through the consent of all 10687 our people except Wealth alone. She has sworn her oath never to lay siege to that castle nor ever, she says, to strike a blow with dart, lance, or ax, or with any other arm that may exist, no matter what any man may say about it. She holds this young man in such despite that she scorns our undertaking and has left our band, at least for this operation. She blames him and despises him and turns such an unfavorable countenance upon him because, she says, he never held her dear; therefore she hates him and will hate him from now on because he doesn't want to lay up treasure. He never gave her other tribute; whatever he has given her is here. Indeed, she says, without fail, that the day before yesterday he asked her if he could enter the path that is called Give-Too-Much, and he flattered her in addition, but he was poor when he made his plea to her, and therefore she denied him the entry. As Wealth tells us, he has since then not worked enough to recover a single penny that might be lodged with her as her very own. When she told us all this, we came to an agreement without her.

"We find then in our agreement that False Seeming and Ab- 10719 stinence, along with all those under their banners, will attack the rear gate, which Foul Mouth guards with his Normans (may the fires of evil burn them!). Along with them, Courtesy and

Generosity will exhibit their prowess against the Old Woman, who rules Fair Welcoming with a harsh hand. Next, Delight and Skillful Concealment will go to kill Shame. They will assemble their host against her and lay siege to that gate. Boldness and Security are opposed against Fear; they will besiege her with all their followers, who never knew anything of flight. Openness and Pity will present themselves against Resistance and attack him. Thus the host will be well deployed, They will break down the castle if each one puts his attention to it, provided that your mother Venus be present; she is very wise, for she knows a great deal about this kind of operation. It will never be completed, by word or by deed, without her. It would have been good to send for her, for she would have made the job easier."

10749 "My lords," said Love, "my mother the goddess, who is my lady and my mistress, is in no way subject to my desire, and she does not do whatever I wish. But she is very much accustomed to running to my aid, when it pleases her, to finish my tasks, but I do not want to trouble her now. She is my mother, and I have feared her since my infancy. I have a very great reverence for her, for a child who does not fear his father and mother can never become their equal. Nevertheless we shall know well how to send for her when we need her. If she were near here she would come straightway, since nothing, I believe, would hold her back. My mother has very great prowess. She has taken many a fortress that cost more than a thousand bezants, when I was never present. Of course people imputed the victory to me, but I never entered in at any time, nor was I ever pleased by such a capture of a fortress without me; for it seems to me that, whatever one says, it is nothing but merchandising. If a man buys a war horse for a hundred pounds, he pays them and will be free of obligation; he owes nothing more to the merchant, and the merchant owes him nothing. I do not call a sale a gift. A sale owes no reward; it involves neither grace nor merit. One person leaves the other completely clear of debt. This situation is not like a sale, for when the buyer has put his horse in the stable, he can sell it again and recover his property or profit. At least he cannot lose everything. If he had to hang on to the hide, the hide at least would remain with him, and he would be able to realize something from it. Or, if he holds the horse so dear that he keeps it for his riding horse, he will always

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be the lord of the horse. But the market in which Venus is accustomed to intervene is far worse, for no man will ever know how to traffic there without losing all that he owns and all that he has bought. The seller has both the thing sold and the price for it, so that the buyer loses everything, for he will never hand over so much money that he may have lordship over it. And in spite of his own gifts, he could never, for any amount of gift or preaching, prevent a strange newcomer—whether Breton, English, or Roman—from getting as much by giving either the same amount, or more, or less. Perhaps, indeed, he can go around telling so many stories that he can get everything for nothing. Are such merchants then wise? They are but foolish, unhappy wretches when they buy a thing knowingly or lose everything that they put out; no matter how much they can work, it cannot dwell with them. 10799

"Nevertheless—I do not seek to deny it—my mother is not in the habit of paying anything for it. She is not so foolish or stupid as to meddle with such a vice. But you know very well that such a person pays her and afterward, when Poverty holds him in distress, repents of the price, no matter how much a disciple of Wealth he had been. Wealth remains wide awake for me when she wants what I want. 10817

"But by Saint Venus my mother and by Saturn her old father who engendered her as one who was already a young girl—but not on his espoused wife—by these I want to swear to you once more, the better to make the matter secure. By the faith that I owe to all my brothers, whose fathers no one knows how to name, so diverse, so many are they, all of whom my mother binds to herself—by these I swear to you again, and take the swamp of hell, the Styx, as witness. If I lie here, I shall not drink sweetened wine before a year has passed, for you know the custom of the gods: the one who forswears the Styx is not to drink until a year has passed. Now I have sworn enough; I am in a bad situation if I forswear myself, but you will never see me forsworn. Since Wealth fails me here, I think that I will sell that failure dearly to her. She shall pay for it if she does not arm herself at least with sword or halberd. Since she does not hold me dear today, she will have seen today's dawning in an evil hour from the moment that she knows that the fortress and its two towers are to tumble. If I can get a rich man in my power, you will see me so trim him that he will 10827 10844

never have so many marks or pounds that he may not be freed of them in a short time. I shall have all his money stolen unless it gushes out of granaries for him. Our girls will pluck him until he lacks even pinfeathers, and they will set him to selling his land if he does not know well enough how to protect himself.

10865 "Poor men have made me their master. Although they may not have anything to eat, I do not despise them; no worthy man does. Wealth is very greedy and gluttonous, and she treats them harshly, harries and spurns them. They love better than the rich, the misers and greedy hoarders, and, by the faith that I owe my grandfather, they are more eager to serve and more loyal; their good heart and willingness satisfy me in large measure. They have placed their entire thought in me, and I must necessarily think of them. Their outcries move me to such pity that if I were god of riches as I am of love, I would set them immediately in stations of great splendor. Moreover, I must protect those who labor so hard to serve my interests, for if they died from the ills of love, it would appear that there was no love whatever in me."

10887 "Sir," they said, "everything that you recount is the truth. The judgment that you have made about rich men remains indeed a tenable one, good, well-distilled, and appropriate, and thus it shall be, we are certain. If rich men do you homage, they will not act wisely, for you will never perjure yourself, never endure the pain of leaving off drinking sweetened wine. If they can fall into the traps of ladies, those ladies will grind such pepper for them that they should have all kinds of misery. The ladies will be so courteous that they will collect your debt handsomely. You need never seek other vicars, for they will tell them so much black and white, 10907 be not dismayed, that you will consider yourself paid. Never interfere with them. They will tell their victims such news and so incite them with requests, through dishonest flatteries, and will give them such volleys of kisses and embraces, that, if the men believe them, certainly there will not remain to them a single holding that will not follow after the movable goods of which they will be relieved first. Now command whatever you want, and we will do it, be it wrong or right. But False Seeming does not dare interpose in this matter, for he says that you hate him, and he doesn't know if you intend to put him to shame. Therefore we all beg you, fair sir, that you give over your anger toward him, and we beg that, with his

friend Abstinence, he may be part of our barony. That is our agreement, our compact."

"By my faith," said Love, "I grant this permission. From now 10928 on I want him to be in my court. Here, come forward." And False Seeming ran forward.

"False Seeming, by such an agreement you are now mine. You 10931 will aid our friends and never give them any trouble; rather you will think of how to raise them and to give trouble to our enemies. Let yours be the power of surveillance. You will be my king of the camp followers, since our chapter wishes it thus. Without fail, you are a wicked traitor and unrestrained thief. You have perjured yourself a hundred thousand times. But in any case, to relieve our people of their uncertainty, I command you in their hearing to teach them, at least with general indications, in what place they would best find you if they needed to, and how you will be recognized, for one needs good wits to recognize you. Tell us what places you frequent."

"Sir, I have various mansions that I would never try to tell 10952 you about, if it please you to relieve me of doing so, for if I tell you the truth about them, I can bring harm and shame to them. If my companions knew it, they would certainly harass me and make trouble for me, if I ever knew their cruelty. In all places they want to silence the truth which runs contrary to them; they would never seek to hear it. If I said a word about them that was not pleasing and friendly to them, I could enjoy it in a very unpleasant way. The words that sting them never please them at all, even if they were words from the gospel that reprimanded them for their treachery, for they are very cruel in an evil way. Indeed I know for certain that, if I say anything to you about them, they know about it sooner or later, no matter how enclosed is your court. I give no attention to worthy men, for when they hear me, they never apply what I say to themselves. But the man who does take what I say as applying to him falls under the suspicion of wishing to lead the life of Fraud and Hypocrisy, who engendered and nourished me."

"They made a very good engendering of it," said Love, "and 10984 a very profitable one, since they engendered the devil. But in any case," he went on, "it is necessary, without fail, that you name your mansions for us immediately, in the hearing of all our men,

and that you explain your life to us. It is not good to hide it any more; you must reveal everything: how you serve and by what means, since you have thrown yourself in among us. And if you are beaten for telling the truth—something you are not accustomed to do—you will not be the first.”

10999 “Sir, when it occurs to you as your pleasure, even if I should lie dead as a result, I shall do your will, for I have a great desire to do so.” Then, without waiting any longer, False Seeming began his lecture and said to all in hearing:

11006 “Barons, hear my theme: he who wants to become acquainted with False Seeming must seek him in the world or in the cloister. I dwell in no place except these two, but more in one and less in the other. Briefly, I am lodged where I think that I am better hidden. The safest hiding place is under the most humble garment. The religious are very covert, the worldly more open. I do not want to blame or defame the religious calling, in whatever habit one may find it. I shall not, as I may, blame the humble and loyal religious life, although I do not love it.

11023 “I have in mind the false religious, the malicious criminals who want to wear the habit but do not want to subdue their hearts. The religious are all compassionate; you will never see a spiteful one. They do not care to follow pride, and they all want to live humbly. I never dwell with such people, and if I do, I pretend. I can indeed assume their habit, but I would rather let myself be hanged than desert my main business, whatever face I put on it.

11037 “I dwell with the proud, the crafty, the guileful, who covet worldly honors and who carry out large dealings, who go around tracking down large handouts and cultivating the acquaintance of powerful men and becoming their followers. They pretend to be poor, and they live on good, delicious morsels of food and drink costly wines. They preach poverty to you while they fish for riches with seines and trammel nets. By my head, evil will come of them. They are neither religious nor worldly. To the world they present an argument in which there is a shameful conclusion: this man has the robe of religion; therefore he is a religious. This argument is specious, not worth a knife of privet; the habit does not make the monk. Nevertheless no one knows how to reply to the argument, no matter how high he tonsures his head, even if he shaves

with the razor of the *Elenchis*, that cuts up fraud into thirteen branches. No man knows so well how to set up distinctions that he dare utter a single word about it. But whatever place I come to, no matter how I conduct myself, I pursue nothing except fraud. No more than Tibert the cat has his mind on anything but mice and rats do I think of anything except fraud. Certainly by my habit you would never know with what people I dwell, any more than you would from my words, no matter how simple and gentle they were. You should look at actions if your eyes have not been put out; for if people do something other than what they say, they are certainly tricking you, whatever robes they have or whatever estate they occupy, clerical or lay, man or woman, lord, sergent, servant, or lady.”

When False Seeming had preached in this way, Love again spoke to him and said, interrupting his talk as if it were false or foolish, “What is this, you devil, are you shameless? What people have you told us about here? Can one find religion in a secular mansion?”

“Yes, sir. It does not follow that those who are attached to the clothing of the world lead a wicked life or that they therefore lose their souls, for that would be a very great sorrow. Holy religion can indeed flower in colorful robes. We have seen many holy men die, and many saintly women, devout and religious, who always wore ordinary clothing, but were none the less sainted. I might name many of them for you. But nearly all the holy women who are prayed to in the churches, whether chaste virgins or married women who bore many beautiful children, wore the robes of the world and died in those very clothes; and these women were, are, and will be saints. Even the eleven thousand virgins who held their candles before God, and whose feast is celebrated in the churches, were taken in worldly clothing when they received their martyrdom; but they are still none the worse on that account. A good heart makes the thought good; the robe neither takes away nor gives. And it is good thought that inspires the man who reveals the religious life. In such a life lies religion based upon a right intention. If you were to put the fleece of Dame Belin, instead of a sable mantle, on Sir Isengrin the wolf, so that he looked like a sheep, do you think that if he lived with the ewes he would not

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devour them? He would never drink their blood the less, but he would deceive them sooner, for as long as they did not recognize him they would follow him if he wanted to flee.

11133 "If there are even a few such wolves among your new apostles, O Church, you are in a bad situation. If your city is attacked by the knights of your table, your lordship is very weak. If those to whom you have given its defense attack the city, who can protect it against them? It will be captured without feeling a shot from a mangonel or a catapult, without displaying a banner to the wind. And if you don't want to rescue it from them, then you let them run everywhere. Let them! But if you command them, then there is nothing for you to do except to surrender or become their tributary by making peace with them and keeping it, as long as no greater misfortune comes to you than that they become lords of the entire church. In fact they know now how to mock you. By day they run around strengthening the walls, and by night they don't stop undermining them. Think about setting out elsewhere the grafts from which you want to gather fruit; you should not wait to do so. But peace! I shall come back from that subject. I want to say no more now about it, if I may pass along, for I could tire you too much.

11163 "But indeed I want to promise you to further the causes of all your friends, provided that they want my companionship. They are dead if they don't receive me, and they will serve my friend, or, by God, they will never succeed! Without fail, I am a traitor, and God has judged me a thief. I am perjured, but one hardly knows before the end what I am bringing to an end, for several who never recognized my fraud have received their deaths through me, and many are receiving them and will receive them without ever recognizing it. The man who does so, if he is wise, protects himself from it, or it will be his great misfortune. But the deception is so strong that it is very difficult to recognize it. For Proteus, who was accustomed to change into whatever form he wished, never knew as much fraud or guile as I practice; I never entered a town where I was recognized, no matter how much I was heard of seen. I know very well how to change my garment, to take one and then another foreign to it. Now I am a knight, now a monk; 11187 at one time I am a prelate, at another a canon; at one hour a clerk,

at another a priest; now disciple, now master, now lord of the manor, now forester. Briefly I am in all occupations. Again I may be prince or page, and I know all languages by heart. At one hour I am old and white, and then I have become young again. Now I am Robert, now Robin, now Cordelier, now Jacobin. And in order to follow my companion, Lady Constrained Abstinence, who comforts me and goes along with me, I take on many another disguise, just as it strikes her pleasure, to fulfill her desire. At one time I wear a woman's robe; now I am a girl, now a lady. At another time I become a religious: now I am a devotee, now a prioress, nun, or abbess; now a novice, now a professed nun. I go through every locality seeking all religions. But, without fail, I leave the kernel of religion and take the husk. I dwell in religion in order to trick people; I seek only its habit, no more. What should I tell you? I disguise myself in the way that pleases me. The tune is very much changed in me; my deeds are very different from my words."

At this point False Seeming wanted to stay silent, but Love 11223 did not pretend that he was annoyed at what he heard; instead, to delight the company, he said to him:

"Tell us more especially in what way you serve disloyally. 11227 Don't be ashamed to speak of it, for, as you tell us of your habits, you seem to be a holy hermit."

"It is true, but I am a hypocrite."

"You go around preaching abstinence."

"True, indeed, but I fill my paunch with very good morsels 11234 and with wines such as are suitable for theologians."

"You go around preaching poverty."

"True, abundantly richly. But however much I pretend to be 11238 poor, I pay no attention to any poor person. I would a hundred thousand times prefer the acquaintance of the King of France to that of a poor man, by our lady, even though he had as good a soul. When I see those poor devils all naked, shivering with cold on those stinking dunghills, crying and howling with hunger, I don't meddle in their business. If they were carried to the Hôtel-Dieu, they wouldn't get any comfort from me, for they wouldn't feed my maw with a single gift, since they have nothing worth a cuttlefish. What will a man give who licks his knife? But a

visit to a rich usurer who is sick is a good and pleasant thing. I go to comfort him, for I expect to bring away money from him. And if wicked death stifles him, I will carry him right up to his grave. And if anyone comes to reprove me for avoiding the poor, do you know how I escape from him? I give out behind my cloak that the rich man is more stained with sin than the poor, and has greater need of counsel, and that that is the reason that I see him and advise him.

11269 "All the same, the soul in very great poverty may undergo as great a loss as it does in very great wealth. The one and the other are equally wounding to the soul, for they are two extremities, wealth and beggary. The name of the mean is sufficiency. There lies the abundance of virtues. Solomon has written it all, withholding nothing, in one of his books, entitled Proverbs, right in the thirtieth chapter: 'Keep me, O God, by your power, from wealth and from beggary.' For a rich man, when he applies himself to thinking too much about his wealth, so turns his heart toward folly that he forgets his creator. How can I save anyone from sin when he is attacked by beggary? He can hardly help being a thief and perjurer, or God is a liar, if Solomon uttered for him the very words that I spoke of to you just now. I can swear to you without delay that it is not written in any law, at least not in ours, that Jesus Christ or his apostles, while they went about on earth, were ever seen seeking their bread, for they did not wish to beg. The masters of divinity in the city of Paris were formerly accustomed to preach thus. Moreover, the apostles could ask in full power without begging, for they were pastors in the name of God and they held the cure of souls. In fact, after their Master's death, they again began to be manual laborers, and they again maintained themselves by their own labor, neither more nor less, and lived in patience. If they had anything left over, they gave it to other poor people. They did not establish palaces or halls, but lay in dirty houses.

11317 "I well remember that a capable man, if he doesn't have the means by which he may live, should seek his living by laboring with his own hands, his own body, no matter how religious or eager to serve God he may be. He must do thus except in the cases, as I remember them, that I can tell you about very well

when I have time to do so. And Scripture has told me that, even if he is quite perfect in goodness, he should still sell everything and make his living by laboring. The idler who haunts another's table is a thief who serves him with fables.

"You know too that there is no reasoning by which he might excuse himself on account of prayers, since, in one way or another, he must leave the service of God from time to time for his other needs. It is true that he must eat and sleep and do other things; our prayer then takes its rest. Thus he must withdraw from prayer to do his work. Scripture, which records truth for us, is consistent on this point.

"Moreover, Justinian, who wrote our old books, forbids any man who is capable of body to ask for his bread in any way as long as he can find a place to earn it. One would do better to cripple him or punish him openly than to sustain him in such a malicious practice. Those who receive such alms, unless perhaps they have a privilege that lessens the penalty for them, are not doing what they should. But I don't think that they would have this privilege if the prince had not been deceived; nor do I believe that they may rightfully possess it. However, I do not make any limitation on the prince or his power, nor do I wish by my remarks to include the question of whether or not his power may extend to such a case. I should not meddle in this question. But I believe that, according to the letter, he who eats the alms that are due to the unfortunate who are poor, naked, weak, old, and crippled, who do not earn their bread because they haven't the strength—such a man, when he eats their alms to their detriment, eats his own damnation, if He who made Adam does not lie.

"Know too, that where God commands the man of substance to sell whatever he has, give it to the poor, and follow Him, He did not wish him to live in beggary in order to serve Him. That was not His meaning. Instead, He meant that he should work with his hands and follow Him with good works. Saint Paul ordered the apostles to work in order to recover what they needed to live on, and he forbade them to beg, saying, 'Work with your hands; never acquire anything through another.' He did not want them to ask for anything from any of the people to whom they preached, nor to sell the gospel. He feared that, if they asked, they might

be extorting what they asked for, for there are on earth many people who give because, to tell the truth, they are ashamed to refuse, or because the person who asks annoys them and they give so that he will go away. And do you know what this practice gains them? They lose the gift and the merit of giving it. When the good men who heard Saint Paul's sermon begged him for the sake of God that he might wish to accept what they had, he never wanted to stretch out his hand; but with the labor of his hands he took that with which he maintained his life."

11407 "Tell me then," said the God of Love, "how can a man live who is strong of body and wants to follow God after he has sold everything that is his and distributed his money to the poor? Suppose that he wants only to pray, without ever working with his hands. Can he do so?"

"Yes."

"How?"

11414 "If," replied False Seeming, "he entered, according to the commandment of Scripture, into an abbey that had been furnished with its own property, as nowadays are those of the white monks, those of the black, the canons regular, the Hospitalers, and the Templars—for I can indeed take these as examples—and if he took his livelihood there, for there is no beggary whatever there. Nevertheless many monks labor and afterward run to God's service."

11425 "And because there was great discord, at a time that I remember, about the estate of mendicancy, I will tell you briefly here how a man who has nothing with which he might feed himself may be a mendicant. You will hear the cases one after the other, so that there will be no need to tell them again, in spite of any wicked cackle, for Truth doesn't care for corners, and I could reward her well whenever I dared plow such a field."

11437 "Here are the special cases: If the man is such an animal that he has no knowledge of any trade and doesn't want to remain ignorant, he can take to begging until he knows how to perform some trade by which he may legitimately earn his living without begging."

11445 "Or if he cannot work because of a sickness that he has, or because of old age or dotage, he may turn to begging."

11449 "Or if by chance he has been accustomed by his upbringing to live very delicately, good men commonly should then have pity

on him and, through friendship, allow him to beg for his bread rather than let him perish of hunger.

"Or if he has the knowledge, the wish, and the ability to work, 11457 and is ready to work well, but does not immediately find someone who may want to give him work at anything that he can do or is accustomed to do, then he may certainly obtain his needs by begging."

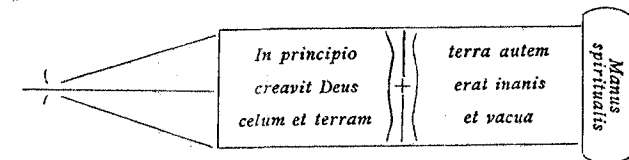
"Or if he has the wages of his labor, but cannot live on them 11465 adequately on this earth, then he may indeed set out to ask for his bread and from day to day go about everywhere, obtaining what he lacks."

"Or if he wants to undertake some knightly deed to defend 11471 the faith, either with arms, or by cultivation of his mind, or by some other suitable concern, and if he is weighed down by poverty, he may certainly, as I have said before, beg until he can work to obtain his needs. But he should work with hands of this sort,



Manus corporalis

not with spiritual hands,



but with the actual bodily hands, without putting any double meaning on them.

"In all these and similar cases, if you find any further cases that 11483 are reasonable, in addition to those that I have given you here, the man who wants to live by beggary may do so, and in no other cases, if the man from Saint-Amour does not lie. He was accustomed to argue and lecture and preach on this subject with the theologians at Paris. May bread and wine never help me if in his truth he did not have the support of the University and the generality of the people who heard his preaching. No worthy man can excuse himself before God for denying this idea. Whoever

wants to grumble about it let him grumble, or if he wants to get angry, let him get angry, for I would not keep silent about it if I had to lose my life, or, like Saint Paul, be put unjustly into a dark prison, or be wrongfully banished from the kingdom, as was Master William of Saint-Amour, whom Hypocrisy, out of her great envy, caused to be exiled.

11509 "My mother plotted against him so much, on account of the truth that he supported, that she chased him into exile. He committed a great fault against my mother in writing a new book in which he exposed her entire life, and he wanted me to deny mendicancy and go to work, if I had nothing to live on. In fact he wanted to consider me a drunkard. Working can give me no pleasure: I have nothing to do with it, for there is too great difficulty in working. I prefer to pray in front of people and cover my foxlike nature under a cloak of pope-holiness."

11525 "What's this?" said Love. "The devil! What are your words? What have you said here?"

"What?"

"Great and open disloyalty. Don't you fear God then?"

11528 "Certainly not. The man who wants to fear God can hardly attain anything great in this world, for the good, who avoid evil, live legitimately on what they have, and keep themselves according to God, scarcely get from one loaf to the next. Such people drink too much discomfort; there is no life that displeases me so much.

11537 "But consider how usurers, counterfeiters, and loan sharks have money in their storehouses. Bailiffs, beadles, provosts, mayors, all live practically by rapine. The common people bow to them, while they, like wolves, devour the commoners. Everybody runs over the poor; there isn't anyone who does not want to despoil them, and all cover themselves with their spoil. They all snuff up their substance and pluck them alive without scalding. The strongest robs the weakest. But I, wearing my simple robe and duping both dupers and duped, rob both the robbed and the robbers.

11553 "By my trickery I pile up and amass great treasure in heaps and mounds, treasure that cannot be destroyed by anything. For if I build a palace with it and achieve all my pleasures with company, the bed, with tables full of sweets—for I want no other life—my money and my gold increases. Before my treasure can be

emptied, money comes to me again in abundance. Don't I make my bears tumble? My whole attention is on getting. My acquisitions are worth more than my revenues. Even if I were to be beaten or killed, I still want to penetrate everywhere. I would never try to stop confessing emperors, kings, dukes, barons, or counts. But with poor men it is shameful; I don't like such confession. If not for some other purpose, I have no interest in poor people; their estate is neither fair nor noble.

"These empresses, duchesses, queens, and countesses; their high-ranking palace ladies, these abbesses, beguines, and wives of bailiffs and knights; these coy, proud bourgeois wives, these nuns and young girls; provided that they are rich or beautiful, whether they are bare or well turned out, they do not go away without good advice.

"For the salvation of souls, I inquire of lords and ladies and their entire households about their characteristics and their way of life; and I put into their heads the belief that their parish priests are animals in comparison with me and my companions. I have many wicked dogs among them, to whom I am accustomed to reveal people's secrets, without hiding anything; and in the same way they reveal everything to me, so that they hide nothing in the world from me.

"In order that you may recognize the criminals who do not stop deceiving people, I will now tell you here the words that we read of Saint Matthew, that is to say, the evangelist, in the twenty-third chapter: 'Upon the chair of Moses' (the gloss explains that this is the Old Testament), 'the scribes and pharisees have sat.' These are the accursed false people that the letter calls hypocrites. 'Do what they say, but not what they do. They are not slow to speak well, but they have no desire to do so. To gullible people they attach heavy loads that cannot be carried; they place them on their shoulders, but they dare not move them with their finger.'"

"Why not?" asked Love.

"In faith," replied False Seeming, "they don't want to, for porters' shoulders are often accustomed to suffer from their burdens, and these hypocrites flee from wanting to do such a thing. If they do jobs that may be good, it is because people see them. They enlarge their phylacteries and increase their fringes; since

they are haughty, proud, and overbearing, they like the highest and most honorable seats at tables and the first in the synagogues. They like people to greet them when they pass along the street, and they want to be called 'master,' which they shouldn't be called, for the gospel goes against this practice and shows its unlawfulness.

11637 "We have another custom toward those that we know are against us. We want to hate them very strongly and attack them all by agreement among ourselves. He whom one hates, the others hate, and all are bent on ruining him. If we see that he may, through certain people, win honor in the land, income, or possessions, we study to find out by what ladder he may mount up, and the better to capture and subdue him, we treacherously defame him to those people, for we do not love him. We cut the rungs from his ladder, and we strip him of his friends in such a way that he will never know by a word that he has lost them. If we troubled him openly, we would perhaps be blamed for it and thus miss out in our calculation; if he knew our worst intention, he would protect himself against it so that we would be reprimanded for it.

11661 "If one of us has done something very good, we consider that we have all done it. Indeed, by God, if he was pretending it, or if he no more than condescends to brag that he has advanced certain men, we make ourselves partners in the deed and, as you should well know, we say that these people have been helped on by us. In order to win people's praise we tell lies to rich men and get them to give us letters bearing witness to our goodness, so that throughout the world people will think that every virtue abounds in us. We always pretend to be poor, but no matter how we complain, we are the ones, let me tell you, who have everything without having anything.

11679 "I also undertake brokerage commissions, I draw up agreements, I arrange marriages, I take on executor's duties, and I go around doing procurations. I am a messenger and I make investigations, dishonest ones, moreover. To occupy myself with someone else's business is to me a very pleasant occupation. And if you have any business to do with those whom I frequent, tell me, and the thing is done as soon as you have told me. Provided that you have served me well, you have deserved my service. But anyone who wanted to punish me would rob himself of my favor. I neither love nor value the man by whom I am reprov'd for anything.

I want to reprove all the others, but I don't want to hear their reproof, for I, who correct others, have no need of another's correction.

"I have no care either for hermitages. I have left the deserts and woods, and I leave desert manors and lodgings to Saint John the Baptist, for there I was lodged much too far away. I make my halls and palaces in towns, castles, and cities, where one can run with a free rein. I say that I am out of the world, but I plunge into it and immerse myself in it; I take my ease and bathe and swim better than any fish with his fin.

"I am one of Antichrist's boys, one of the thieves of whom it is written that they have the garment of saintliness and live in pretense; we seem pitiful sheep without, but within we are ravening wolves. And we inhabit sea and land. We have taken up war against the whole world, and we want to prescribe in every detail the life that one should lead. If there is a castle or city where heretics may be mentioned, even if they were from Milan (for men give the Milanese that reputation); or if anyone exacts unreasonable terms in selling on time or lending at usury, no matter how eager he is for gain; or if he is very lecherous, or a robber or simoniac, whether a provost, an official, a jolly-living prelate, a priest who keeps a mistress, an old whore with a house, a pimp, a brothel-keeper, or an old offender at whatever vice to which one should do justice; then—by all the saints to whom one may pray!—if he doesn't protect himself with lampreys, pike, salmon, or eels, as long as one can find them in town; or with tarts or pies or cheeses in wicker baskets—a very fine gem with a *caillou* pear—or with fat young geese or capons, with which we tickle our palates; or if he doesn't make haste to bring kids and rabbits, roasted on spits, or at least a loin of pork, he will have a leading rope by which he will be led off to be burned, so that one would hear him yell indeed for a good league all around; or he will be taken and put in a tower to be walled in forever if he hasn't done well by us; or he will be punished for his crimes, more, perhaps, than he has committed.

"But if he had ingenuity enough and knew how to build a large tower, it doesn't matter of what stone, even if it were unmeasured or unsquared, of earth or wood, or of anything else whatever, provided that he had amassed enough temporal goods inside it

and mounted on top of it a catapult that would launch, in front, behind, and to the two sides as well, a heavy fire against us of such pebbles as you have heard me name, so that he might get a good name for himself, and provided that he charged large mangonels with wine in barrels or casks, or with large bags of a hundred pounds—then he could see himself quickly freed. And if he does not find such pittances, let him study up on equivalent arguments and abandon commonplaces and fallacies if he hopes to gain our favor through them. Otherwise we will bear such witness against him that we will have him burned alive, or we will give him a penance more costly than the pittance.

11787 "You will never recognize them by their garments, these false traitors full of trickery; you must look at their deeds if you really want to protect yourself from them.

11791 "And if it had not been for the good protection of the University, which keeps the key of Christianity, everything would have been overturned when, in the year of the Incarnation 1255, there was released, through evil intent—no man living can give me the lie; it is a true case, to take a common example—a book from the devil, *The Eternal Gospel*, that, as it appears in the title, brings the Holy Spirit, for it is thus named. It is indeed worthy to be burned. There is not a man or woman in Paris, in the parvis in front of Notre Dame, who could not have had it to transcribe if he had pleased. In this book he would have found many such grossly erroneous comparisons as these: as much as by its great worth, in brightness or in heat, the sun surpasses the moon, which is much more dark and obscure, and as much as the nut surpasses its shell—don't think that I am making fun of you; on my soul I am speaking to you without guile—so much this gospel surpasses those which the four evangelists of Jesus Christ wrote under their names. One would have found there a great mass of such comparisons, which I pass over.

11825 "The University, which at that time was asleep, raised up its face. As a result of the noise the book made, it awoke and hardly ever slept afterward, but instead armed itself to go out, all ready to do battle and hand the book over to the judges when it saw this horrible monster. But those who had issued the book rose up and withdrew it and made haste to conceal it, for they did not know how to reply, by explication or glossing, to what the opposers

wanted to say against the accursed things that are written in that book. Now I do not know what will come of it nor what result the book will bring about, but they still have to wait until they can defend it better.

"Thus we are awaiting Antichrist, and we are headed toward him all together. Those who don't want to join him will have to lose their lives. We will incite people against them by the frauds that we hide, and we will make them perish by the sword or by some other death if they don't want to follow us. For it is written in the book, where it expresses this idea: as long as Peter has lordship, John cannot show his power. Now that I have told you the rind of the sense, which hides the intent, I want to explain its marrow. By Peter it wants to signify the Pope and to include the secular clergy, who will keep, guard, and defend the law of Jesus Christ against all those who would impede it. By John, it means the preachers, who will say that there is no tenable law except the Eternal Gospel, sent by the Holy Spirit to put people on the good way. By the force of John is meant the favor by which he goes around vaunting himself because he wants to convert sinners to make them turn back to God. There are many other deviltries ordered and set down in this book that I have named for you, deviltries that are against the law of Rome and belong to Antichrist, as I find written in the book. Those of John's party will order all those of Peter's party to be killed, but they will never have the power to overcome the law of Peter, either to kill or to punish, I guarantee you this, since there will not be enough of them remaining alive to maintain it forever so that in the end everybody will come to it, and the law that is signified by John will be overthrown. But I don't want to say any more of it to you now, for it would be a very long subject here. But if this book had been passed, my estate would have been much greater. I already have very great friends who have always put me into high positions.

"My sire and father Fraud is emperor of the whole world, and my mother is its empress. In spite of the fact that men may have the Holy Spirit, our powerful line reigns. We reign now in every kingdom, and it is quite just that we do so, for we seduce the whole world, and we know how to deceive people so that no one can recognize the deception. Or if anyone can recognize it he does not dare reveal the truth. But he who fears my brothers more

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than God places himself under God's wrath. He who fears such simulation is no good champion of the faith, any more than is he who wants to avoid trouble when he might come bringing accusations against us. Such a man does not want to listen to the truth nor have God before his eyes; and God will punish him for it, without fail.

11918 "But it doesn't matter to me how things go, once we have honor among men. We are considered such good men that we have the prize of being able to punish without being reproved by any man. What men should be honored except us, who do not cease praying openly before people, although it may be otherwise behind their backs? Is it a greater folly than to encourage chivalry and to love noble and splendid people who have pretty, elegant clothing? If they are such people as they appear to be, as fine as their fine apparel, so that what they say agrees with what they do, isn't such a situation a great sorrow and outrage? If they don't want to be hypocrites, may such people be cursed!

"Certainly we shall never love such, but Beguins with large coifs and faces that are pale and sweet, who have these wide gray robes all spotted with filth, knitted leggings, and broad boots that look like a quail-hunter's pouch. Princes should give over to them the job of governing them and their lands, in peace or war; a prince should cleave to those who want to come to great honor. And if they are other than they seem, and by that means steal the world's favor, it is there that I want to fix my position, in order to deceive and trick.

11953 "Now I do not on that account want to say that one should despise a humble habit, as long as pride does not dwell underneath it. No man should hate a poor man on account of the habit he is dressed in, but God doesn't value him at two straws if he says that he has left the world and then abounds in worldly glory and wants to use its delights. Who can excuse such Beguines? When such a pope-holy gives himself up and then goes seeking worldly delights, and says that he has abandoned them all when afterwards he wants to grow fat on them, he is the cur that greedily returns to his own vomit.

11969 "But to you I dare not lie. However, if I could feel that you would not recognize it, you would have a lie in hand. Certainly I would have tricked you, and I would never have held back on

account of any sin. And I would indeed desert you if you were to treat me poorly."

The god smiled at this wonder, and everyone laughed with amazement and said, "Here is a fine sergeant, of whom people should indeed be proud!" 11977

"False Seeming," said Love, "tell me: since I have brought you so near to me that your power in my court is so great that you will be king of camp followers here, will you keep your agreement with me?" 11981

"Yes, I swear it and promise you; neither your father nor your forefathers ever had sergeants more loyal." 11986

"How! It is against your nature."

"Take your chances on it, for if you demand pledges, you will never be more sure, in fact, not even if I gave hostages, letters, witnesses, or security. I call on you as witness of the fact that one can't take the wolf out of his hide until he is skinned, no matter how much he is beaten or curried. Do you think that I do not deceive and play tricks because I wear a simple robe, under which I have worked many a great evil? By God! I shall never turn my heart from this kind of life. And if I have a simple, demure face, do you think that I may cease doing evil? My sweetheart Constrained Abstinence has need of my providence. She would long ago have been dead and in a bad plight if she hadn't had me in her power. Grant that we two, she and I, may carry out the task." 11990

"So be it," said Love, "I believe you without guarantee." 12010

And the thief with the face of treachery, white without and black within, knelt down on the spot and thanked him.

Then there was nothing but to take up their positions. "Now to the assault without delay," said Love aloud, and they all armed themselves together with such arms as would endure. When they were thus armed and ready, they all sallied out, full of ardor, and came to the strong castle, which they would never try to leave until they were all martyred or captured there. They divided their forces into four parts and went off in four groups, as soon as their people were divided up, to attack the four gates. The guards on the gates were not dead, sick, or lazy, but strong and vigorous. 12015

Now I will tell you about the conduct of False Seeming and Abstinence, who went against Foul Mouth. The two of them held a council between them on how they should act, whether they 12033

should make themselves known or go disguised. By agreement, they worked out a plan of going stealthily as though they were on a pilgrimage, like good, pious, and holy people. Constrained Abstinence straightway put on a robe of cameline and fixed herself up as a Beguine; she covered her head with a large kerchief and a white cloth, and she did not forget her psalter. She had paternosters hanging on a white thread-lace. They had not been sold to her; a friar had given them to her. She told him that he was her father and visited him very often, more than any other in the convent; he also visited her often, and gave her many a fine sermon. He never omitted, on account of False Seeming, to confess her often, and they made their confession with such great devotion that it seemed to me that they had two heads together under a single headpiece.

12065 I would describe her as a woman of fine stature, but a little pale of face. She resembled, the dirty bitch, the horse in the Apocalypse that signified the wicked people, pale and stained with hypocrisy; for that horse bore no color upon himself except a pale, dead one. Abstinence had such a sickly color. According to her face, she was repentant about her estate. She had a stick of larceny, darkened with the brown smoke of sadness, that she had received as a gift from Fraud, and a bag full of cares. When she was ready, she went off.

12082 False Seeming, who was also equipping himself well, had dressed, as though to try it out, in the clothing of brother Seier. He had a very simple, compassionate face without any appearance of pride, a sweet, peaceful look. At his neck he carried a Bible. Afterward, he went off without a squire, and, to support his limbs, as though he had no power, he used a crutch of treason. Up his sleeve he slipped a very sharp steel razor, that he had made in a forge and that was called Cut-Throat.

12097 Each one went along and approached until they came to Foul Mouth, who sat at his gate, where he saw all the passersby. He picked out the pilgrims who were coming along, behaving themselves very humbly. They bowed toward him with great humility. Abstinence saluted him first and went near him, and False Seeming saluted him afterward. He saluted them in return, but never moved, since he neither suspected nor feared them. When he had

seen them he recognized them well enough by their faces, it seemed to him, since he knew Abstinence well, but he knew nothing whatever about constraint in her. He did not know that her life of thievery and pretense was a constrained one, but thought instead that she came out of good faith. But she came from another level, and if she began with good faith, it was lacking from that point on.

12119 Foul Mouth had certainly seen Seeming also, but he did not recognize him as false. He was false, but he had never been convicted of falsity, for he worked so hard on his appearance that he covered up his falsity. But if you had known him before you had seen him in these clothes, you would have indeed sworn by the king of heaven that he who before had been used to being handsome Robin in the dance was now become a Jacobin. But without fail, and this is the sum of it, the Jacobins are all worthy men—they would maintain their order badly if they were such minstrels—and so are the Cordeliers and the barred friars, no matter how large and fat they may be, and the friars of the sack and all others. There is not one who does not appear a worthy man. But you will never see a good consequence result from appearance in any argument that one may make, if a deficiency annuls any existence. You will always find a sophism that poisons the consequence, as long as you have the subtlety to understand the double meaning.

12147 When the pilgrims had come to Foul Mouth, where they were supposed to come, they put down all their equipment very close to them and sat down next to Foul Mouth, who said to them:

"Now then, come on; teach me your news, and tell me what business leads you to this house."

"Sir," said Constrained Abstinence, "we have come here as pilgrims to perform our penance with pure hearts, clean and whole. We nearly always go by foot, and our heels are very dusty. We are sent, both of us, through this misguided world to give an example and to preach in order to fish for sinners, since we want no other catch; and we come to ask you for shelter in God's name, as we are accustomed to do. To better your life, we want to go over a good sermon in a few brief words, as long as you should not be displeased."

12172 Foul Mouth spoke straightway: "Take such shelter as you see—

it shall never be forbidden you—and say whatever you please. I shall listen to whatever it is.”

12177 “Many thanks, sir.”

Then Lady Abstinence began first: “Sir, the chief virtue, the greatest and most sovereign that any mortal man may have, through knowledge or possession, is to bridle his tongue. Every-one should take trouble to do so, since it is always better to keep silent than to utter a wicked thing, while he who listens to it will-ingly is neither worthy nor God-fearing. Sir, you are stained with this sin above all others. For a long time you have told a falsehood, for which you have been badly to blame, about a young man who came here. You said that he was only seeking to deceive Fair Wel-coming. You did not tell the truth, but lied about it, perhaps. He neither goes nor comes here now, and perhaps you will never see him. On that account Fair Welcoming remains locked up, when he used to play with you here the loveliest games that he could, most
12205 of the days of the week, without any base thought. Now he does not dare solace himself here. You have had the young man chased away who used to come here to divert himself. Who incited you to harm him so much, outside of your evil mind, that has thought up many a lie? It was your foolish talk that brought this situation on. It howls and cries and chatters and quarrels; it foists blame on people and dishonors and brings trouble to them on account of a thing that has no proof whatever outside of appearance or a lying invention. I dare you to say openly that whatever appears is not true. It remains a sin to contrive something which brings reproof. Even you know that very well, and your wrong is greater for that reason. Nevertheless the young man doesn’t make anything of it; he wouldn’t give the bark of an oak for it, however it may be. You may know that he was not thinking of any evil, for he would
12229 have gone and come; no excuse would have held him back. Now he does not come here and has no concern to do so, except by some chance, just in passing by, and he does so less than others. And you, with your lance ready to attack, watch over this gate, without stopping. The simpleton wastes his time the whole day long. Night and day you watch. In truth, you do no real work there. Jealousy, who expects something of you, will never count you worth much. And it remains a shame that Fair Welcoming is kept as a pledge

when no loan brings in interest, and that he dwells in prison with-out any forfeit being made. There the captive weeps and languishes. If you had committed no more wrong in the whole world than this one misdeed, one should, without troubling you further, shove you out of this job and put you in prison or in iron chains. If you don’t repent, you will go to the pit of hell.”

“You lie for certain,” said Foul Mouth. “Now may you be
12250 unwelcome. Have I entertained you for this, that you should speak shame and vilification about me? To your great misfortune you took me for a shepherd. Go now and lodge somewhere else, you who call me a liar. You are a pair of tricksters who have come here to accuse me and mistreat me because I speak the truth. Is that what you come trying to do? I’ll hand myself over to all the devils, or you, good God, may destroy me, if, not more than ten days before the castle was built, I was not told—and I tell you in turn—that that fellow kissed the rose. I don’t know if he took any further comfort of it. Why should I be led to believe such a thing unless it were true? By God, I say it and say it again, and I believe that I was not lied to; and I will trumpet it to all the men and women in the neighborhood, how he came here and there.”

Then False Seeming spoke: “Sir, all that they say around the
12276 town is not gospel. Now you don’t have deaf ears, and I will prove to you that these reports are false. You certainly know that no one loves wholeheartedly a man who speaks ill of him. For all the other knows, he may know very little about him. And it remains true—I have always read it—that all lovers willingly visit the places where their sweethearts live. This young man honors you; he loves you and calls you his very dear friend. Everywhere that he meets you he shows you a gay and friendly face and never stops greeting you. At the same time, he does not press you too much or tire you; others come here much more. Know too that if his heart were tormented by the rose, he would have approached it, and you would have seen him here often. In fact you could have caught him red-handed, since he could not have kept away from it if he had been spitted alive, and he would not now be in the situation that he is. You can understand then that he isn’t thinking at all in that direction. Truly, neither does Fair Welcoming, even
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though he is being sorely rewarded for it. By God! If the two of them really wished it, they would cut the rose in spite of you. Now that you have slandered the young man who loves you, you know very well, and never doubt it, that if his intention had been such, he would never have loved you at any time, never have called you friend. If it were so, he would plan and watch for a chance to attack the castle and break in, for he would know; either someone would have told him or he could have known by himself that he could not have access to it as he had had before. He would have noticed it immediately. But now he acts in quite another way. Thus in subduing such people you have indeed completely deserved the death of hell."

12327 False Seeming proved the case to him thus, and Foul Mouth did not know how to reply to his argument, since he saw the appearance of logic in every case. He was about to fall into repentance and said to them, "By God! It may indeed be so, Seeming; I consider you a good master, and Abstinence a very wise woman. You seem indeed to have spirit. What do you recommend me to do?"

12336 "You will be confessed on this spot. Without anything more, you will tell this sin and repent of it. For I am from an order and thus am a priest, the highest master of confessing that may be, as long as the world lasts. The whole world is my charge; no priest-curé, sworn entirely to his church, ever had any such right. By the high lady, I have a hundred times more pity on your soul than your parish priest, no matter how much he were your special one. Moreover I have one very great advantage. There are no prelates so wise or learned as I. I have a license in divinity, and in fact, by God, I have lectured for a long time. The best people that one may know have chosen me as confessor on account of my sense and my knowledge. If you want to confess here and abandon this sin without further ado, without making any further mention of it, you will have my absolution."

12361 Straightway Foul Mouth got down, knelt, and confessed, for he was already truly repentant; False Seeming seized him by the throat, squeezed with his two hands, strangled him, and then took away his chatter by removing his tongue with his razor. Thus they finished with their host; they did nothing else to kill him, but tumbled him into a moat. They broke down the undefended gate, passed through it, and found all the Norman soldiers sleeping

within, so much had they vied with each other in drinking wine that I had not poured. They themselves had poured out so much that they all lay sleeping on their backs. False Seeming and Constrained Abstinence strangled them, drunk and sleeping as they were. They will never again be capable of chattering.

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